

The Day of the Lord

Scripture seems to treat the time of the end of the age as the day of the Lord. Everyone who "believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day" (Jn 6:40). "You were sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph 4:30) by "the Holy Spirit" (:30). Paul said "the Lord will award me on that day" (2Ti 4:8) the "crown of righteousness" (:8). Paul told the Philippians "be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ" (Php 1:10) "so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory" (2:16). God will "confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Co 1:8). But "you do not know which day your Lord is coming" (Mt 24:42). "Be on guard, so . . . that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap" (Lk 21:34) for you "will not escape" (1Th 5:3). "The day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night" (:2). Why would Paul mention this if there was a pretribulation rapture which would extradite them from the threat? He encouraged them saying they were "not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief" (:4). "Let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober" (:6) "since we are of the day" (:8). Jesus advised watchfulness saying "you also must be ready" (Mt 24:44) and "'keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape'" (Lk 21:36). Therefore, Christians are present when the events of the day of the Lord arrives.

Although the Great Tribulation is never specifically included in the day of the Lord, it is associated with judgment and destruction of the ungodly. "The great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (Rev 6:17). They "gather them together for the war of the great day of God" (16:14), "'You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,' says the Lord of hosts" (Mal 4:3). It is "a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities" (Zep 1:16). "The Lord will appear over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning; and the Lord God will blow the trumpet, and will march in the storm winds of the south" (Zec 9:14). "The Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle" (14:1). "In that day the Lord will be the only one" (:9) "for it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord" (:7). "'So will the Son of Man be in His day'" (Lk 17:24). "Who can endure the day of His coming?" (Mal 3:2).

Day of Lord

When will the Second Coming occur? Jesus explained that before it takes place "'there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall'" (Mt 24:21). Verse 27 then states "'so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.'" Then Jesus says that "'immediately after the tribulation of those days'" (:29) "'the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky'" (:30). It seems that Daniel had prophesied of the same period saying, "'There will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time'" (Da 12:1). "'For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of the part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day'" (Lk 17:24). "'His day'" (:24) is equivalent to "'the coming'" (Mt 24:27) in the identical passage in Matthew. "In that day the Lord will be the only one" (Zec 14:9) "for it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord" (:7). "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him" (Rev 1:7).

"The Lord, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!" (Zec 14:5). It will be "at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints" (1Th 3:13). Enoch "prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones'" (Jude 14). The purpose will be "to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds" (:15). Furthermore, "the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire" (2Th 1:7). The purpose will also be "dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (:8). "The Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle" (Zec 14:1). "The armies which are in heaven . . . were following Him on white horses" (Rev 19:14). "In the last days mockers will . . . [ask], 'Where is the promise of His coming?'" (2Pe 3:3-4). Consider rather "when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?" (Lk 18:8). "Who can endure the day of His coming?" (Mal 3:2).

Day of Reckoning

Christ's appearing is called an epiphaneia. It is a bringing forth into light causing something to shine. An epiphany is a sudden, intuitive perception into the reality of something. His appearance is "when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and be marveled at among all who have believed" (2Th 1:10). Therefore, it is important "that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Ti 6:14). "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with him those [who have died, and] . . . we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord" (1Th 4:14-15). "In Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order . . . who are Christ's at His coming" (1Co 15:22-23). We will be "caught up together . . . to meet the Lord . . . and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1Th 4:17). Peter says "when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory" (1Pe 5:4) and "at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation" (4:13). But we must "abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming" (1Jn 2:28). John explains "it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" (3:2). "The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first" (1Th 4:16). "Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming" (2Th 2:8).

The circumstances of the Second Coming are that "the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle" (Zec 14:3). He "will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty . . . that he may be abased" (Isa 2:12). He will "execute judgment upon all, and to convince all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds" (Jude 15). He will "render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire" (Isa 66:15). He will "deal out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2Th 1:8). "The Lord alone will be exalted in that day" (Isa 2:17). "It will be a unique day which is known to the Lord" (Zec 14:7). "In that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one" (:9). "The sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the

earth shall mourn" (Mt 24:30). "They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" (:30).

Last Trumpet

The day of the Lord is associated with judgment. Believers coexist with unbelievers since "both [are] to grow together until the harvest" (Mt 13:30). Then Jesus will say, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up" (:30). Then in judgment "He will separate them one from another" (25:32) and "say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me'" (:41). There was war between the two sides at this time. "It was given to him to make war with the saints" (Rev 13:7). "The beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him" (19:19). But "destruction will come upon them suddenly . . . and they shall not escape" (1Th 5:3). "These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction" (2Th 1:9). He will bring lawlessness "to an end by the appearance of His coming" (2Th 2:8). "From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that He may smite the nations" (Rev 19:15) "dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (2Th 1:8). "The rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse" (Rev 19:21). "The Lord will slay [the lawless one] with the breath of His mouth" (2Th 2:8).

Jesus told his disciples that "the Son of Man [must] be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life" (Jn 3:15). Paul explains that the perishable cannot "inherit the imperishable" (1Co 15:50). Therefore "at the last trumpet . . . the dead will be raised imperishable" (:52) and "this mortal will have put on immortality" (:54). When does this occur? It happens at the "last trumpet" (:52). "With the trumpet of God . . . the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1Th 4:16). Jesus said, "He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect" (Mt 24:31). God used trumpets to call Israel together and direct their movement in the wilderness. "The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of ram's horns before the Lord went forward and blew the trumpets" (Jos 6:8). John reported "I saw the seven angels who stand before God; and seven trumpets were given to them" (Rev 8:2). Eventually "the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever'" (11:15). "At the last trumpet . . . we shall be changed" (1Co 15:52). The seventh trumpet is the last trumpet. This event is synonymous with "an hour [that] is coming and now is; when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live" (Jn 5:25). "Everyone who beholds the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day" (6:40).

There is a Festival of Trumpets in the Feasts of Israel. It is one of three parts (one is the Day of Atonement) of the Feast of Tabernacles which occurs in the last month of the religious year. The first tripartite feast is composed of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits. The second is Pentecost. God instructed Moses, "These are the appointed times of the Lord . . . which you shall proclaim at the times appointed for them" (Lev 23:4). "Celebrate your feasts, O Judah; pay your vows" (Naham 1:15). The Feast of Tabernacles celebrates Israel entering the Promised Land. They blew trumpets for the ten days of the Feast of Trumpets. The feasts are reminders of what God did historically for Israel. Also, Jesus pointed out that Moses "wrote of Me" (Jn

5:46) and "all the prophets and the law prophesied" (Mt 11:13) which means there would be a future fulfillment of the feasts in the life of Jesus. There is also an experiential fulfillment in a believer's life. They "will go up from year to year to worship . . . to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles" (Zec 14:16). Whoever "does not go up to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain on them" (:17). "Blow the trumpet in Zion . . . for the day of the Lord is coming" (Joel 2::1). "What will you do on the day of the appointed festival and on the day of the feast of the Lord?" (Hosea 9:5).

Redemption Near

We are to anticipate the return of Christ with expectancy. "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah" (Mt 24:37). "They were eating and drinking . . . until the day Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away" (:38-39). It is cited by two heavenly representatives saying, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven" (Ac 1:11). "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Col 3:4). "As to this salvation, the prophets [testified] of the grace that would come to you . . . [and were] seeking to know . . . the glories to follow" (1Pe 1:10-11) the sufferings of Christ. "In Christ all shall be made alive but each in his own order" (1Co 15:22-23). Consequently "you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph 4:30). So "straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Lk 21:28). "Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him" (Heb 9:28). You "are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1Pe 1:5). "We through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness" (Gal 5:5).

They asked, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming?" (Mt 24:3). Jesus answered, "This gospel of the kingdom shall [first] be preached in the whole world" (:14). "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky" (:30). However, he explained "you do not know which day your Lord is coming" (:42). "For this reason you must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will" (:44). "What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'" (Mk 13:37). "Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes" (Lk 12:37). Be a person "who knew his master's will" (:47) because "from everyone who has been given much, much will be required" (:47-48). However "do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will" (1Co 4:5) "bring about justice for them quickly" (Lk 18:8). "He who is coming will come, and will not delay" (Heb 10:37). "Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits . . . [so] you too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near" (Ja 5:7-8). Jesus instructed Thyatira saying, "What you have, hold fast until I come" (Rev 2:25). He said, "Behold, I am coming quickly" (22:7). He "will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him" (Heb 9:28).

Blessed Hope

We are to "wait for His Son from heaven" (1Th 1:10). This heavenly origin predicates the instruction to "lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Lk 21:28). We are "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:14). "We shall see Him just as He is. And every one who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself: (1Jn 3:2-3). "We exult in hope of the glory of God" (Ro 5:2). To rejoice is to celebrate something rewarding, and God's glory would certainly qualify. But since it is a hope it is unseen because "hope that is seen is not hope" (Ro 8:24). "Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off" (Pr 23:18). Central to this hope is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). This is the "hope that is in you" (1Pe 3:15) because it is the "hope of salvation" (1Th 5:8). Through rejoicing you proclaim "the hope and resurrection" (Ac 23:6). You rejoice because your "faith is the assurance of things hoped for" (Heb 11:1) since you know "hope does not disappoint" (Ro 5:5).

Hope is in being "fellow heirs" (Ro 8:17) in terms of "the revealing of the sons of God" (:19) regarding "the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (:21). We rejoice knowing "we have a building from God . . . eternal in the heavens" (2Co 5:1). We don't rejoice selfishly because "a horse is a false hope for victory" (Ps 33:17). Consequently one's "hope is in the Lord his God" (Ps 146:5) and "my hope is from Him" (Ps 62:5). Therefore rejoicing means resting on "the hope of eternal life" (Tit 1:2) and "looking for the blessed hope" (2:13). Hope is the end product of tribulation because it "brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope" (Ro 5:3-4). We are to rejoice in hope and persevere in tribulation (Ro 12:12). "This hope we have as an anchor" (Heb 6:19). The expectation is for "the redemption of our body" (Ro 8:23) because "in hope we have been saved" (:24). Tribulation causes you to remember and "this I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope" (La 3:21). "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing" (Ro 15:13).

Prepare for Coming

What mindset is necessary to comprehend and follow these scriptures? "We have the mind of Christ" (1Co 2:16). "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Ro 12:2). "Prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1Pe 1:13). "Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near" (Ja 5:8). "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21). "Abide in Him, so that when He appears we may have confidence . . . at His coming" (1Jn 2:28). Love one another "so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness . . . at the coming of our Lord Jesus" (1Th 3:13). Paul prayed "may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely . . . without blame at the coming of our Lord" (5:23).

What attitude should we have to be obedient to these instructions? "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus" (Php 2:15). We should be "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of . . . Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:13). "Wait for His Son from heaven" (1Th 1:10). Wait "eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Co 1:7) and "be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord" (Ja 5:7). Wait "anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life" (Jude 21).

"The day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night" (1Th 5:2) but we "are not in darkness" (:4). "Since we are of the day, let us be sober" (:8). "To the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation" (1Pe 4:13). "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Col 3:4). "The proof of your faith . . . may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1Pe 1:7).

Signs of Coming

Prophecy has made it known that the Messiah will establish the kingdom of God in Israel. "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed . . . [and] it will itself endure forever" (Da 2:44). Jesus was "questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming" (Lk 17:20). They asked as though they believed he was the Christ, however it seems that they were rather baiting him to commit himself. Jesus hadn't been advertising overtly who he was because it would have just precipitated unnecessary controversy. If we fast-forward to when Jesus was arrested and brought before the Council we see that Caiaphus, the high priest, asked him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" (Mk 14:61). Jesus answered, "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (:62).

Later "the disciples came to Him privately, saying, 'Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?'" (Mt 24:3). Paul cited that "Jews ask for signs" (1Co 1:22). But Jesus explained to the Pharisees, "The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed" (Lk 17:20). The questions were in reference to his coming. It is the Greek word *parousia* pertaining to a presence or a coming. It is from a root meaning to have come or being present. Jesus answered with a long discourse beginning at Matthew 24:4, Mark 13:5, and Luke 17:22. He states, "The sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky . . . and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory" (Mt 24:30). Mark quotes he will be "coming in clouds" (Mk 13:26) and "coming with the clouds of heaven" (14:62). Luke quotes "they will see the son of man coming in a cloud" (Lk 21:27). How much of a distinction should be made regarding coming "on", "in", and "with" cloud(s)?

Exult in Hope

Words in Greek describing the Second Coming pertain to Christ completing his plan and manifesting himself personally to his saints. It is not just in a video clip but is a substantive delivery. He will "establish your hearts without blame in holiness" (1Th 3:13) resulting in "praise and glory and honor" (1Pe 1:7) and "grace to be brought to you" (:13) so that "you may rejoice with exultation" (4:13). It is "in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming" (1Th 2:19) of the "revelation of His glory" (1Pe 4:13) at the "revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Co 1:7). However, there is a readiness required of the believer. You are to "strengthen your hearts" (Jas 5:8) "so that the proof of your faith . . . may be found to result" (1Pe 1:7) in success. "Prepare your minds for action" (:13) because you will "share the sufferings of Christ" (4:13). "Keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely" (1:13) and "keep on rejoicing" (4:13). Ensure that "you are not

lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Co 1:7). This is to guaranty that you "may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming" (1Jn 2:28).

"We exult in hope of the glory of God" (Ro 5:2). To rejoice is to celebrate something rewarding, and God's glory would certainly qualify. But since it is a hope it is unseen because "hope that is seen is not hope" (Ro 8:24). "Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off" (Pr 23:18). Central to this hope is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). This is the "hope that is in you" (1Pe 3:15) because it is the "hope of salvation" (1Th 5:8). Through rejoicing you proclaim "the hope and resurrection" (Ac 23:6). You rejoice because your "faith is the assurance of things hoped for" (Heb 11:1) since you know "hope does not disappoint" (Ro 5:5). Hope is in being "fellow heirs" (Ro 8:17) in terms of "the revealing of the sons of God" (:19) regarding "the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (:21). We rejoice knowing "we have a building from God . . . eternal in the heavens" (2Co 5:1). We don't rejoice selfishly because "a horse is a false hope for victory" (Ps 33:17). Consequently one's "hope is in the Lord his God" (Ps 146:5) and "my hope is from Him" (Ps 62:5). Therefore rejoicing means resting on "the hope of eternal life" (Tit 1:2) and "looking for the blessed hope" (2:13). Hope is the end product of tribulation because it "brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope" (Ro 5:3-4). We are to rejoice in hope and persevere in tribulation (Ro 12:12). "This hope we have as an anchor" (Heb 6:19). The expectation is for "the redemption of our body" (Ro 8:23) because "in hope we have been saved" (:24). Tribulation causes you to remember and "this I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope" (La 3:21). "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing" (Ro 15:13).

Patient Expectation

We are to be "awaiting eagerly" (1Co 1:7) the Second Advent. This connotes an expectation of an imminent event. His "coming is near" (Jas 5:8) which implies it is close at hand. Does this mean that he could return at any moment without warning? There would be flexibility if you interpreted it as happening within a predicted, limited period of time as "when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door" (Mt 24:33). So you don't have to worry about constantly sitting on the edge of your chair with your bags packed. But you do have to "Be like men who are waiting . . . so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and knocks" (Lk 12:36). However, "you do not know which day your Lord is coming" (Mt 24:42). Therefore, be patient like the farmer who knows when his crops will mature who is "patient about it" (Jas 5:7) "until the coming of the Lord" (:7). Its not as if they had been left completely in the dark because Jesus told them about the antichrist who caused tribulation and the apostasy. But Christ's return would not be immediate as witnessed by the "nobleman [who] went to a distant country" (Lk 19:12). Many prophecies had yet to be fulfilled and the "gospel of the kingdom shall [must yet] be preached in the whole world" (Mt 24:14).

Rapture advocates promulgate the imminency of the event since it is impending. They say it is signless so it can occur at any moment even though its inevitability may be postponed. Even Jesus said of that generation that "a sign will not be given it" (Mt 16:4). However, later his disciples asked, "When will these things be, and what will be

the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (24:3). Much later Jesus said, "I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown" (Rev 3:11). Paul advised "let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near" (Php 4:5). James agreed saying "be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand" (Jas 5:8). They anticipated his return using the word "Maranatha" (1Co 16:22) which means "our Lord, come." They were so convinced that Paul suggested they be "awaiting eagerly the revelation" (1:7). He said "we eagerly wait for a Savior" (Php 3:20). Another observed that Christ would appear "to those who eagerly await Him" (Heb 9:28). Jude advised "keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life" (Jude 21). But Christ did not come as soon as they expected. Waiting then became an attitude they had to cultivate so they wouldn't be nervous and upset.

Position

Is our spiritual condition mutually exclusive from our humanity? In a sense it is because "if anyone is in Christ he is a new creature" (2Co 5:17). A distinction drawn says to "be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev 2:10). That is why there is such an emphasis on he "who overcomes" (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7). We are not "perishing" (1Co 1:18) but "being saved" (2Co 2:15). We have an "inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1Pe 1:4). It is a process and you might wonder how you can accomplish this. Jesus said "the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out" (Jn 6:37). "I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of my hand" (10:28). We are "protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation" (1Pe 1:5). "The Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one" (2Th 3:3). "The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom" (2Ti 4:18). "It is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Php 2:13). "He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (1:6).

Proceed in such a way that you do "not lose heart . . . [for] we will reap if we do not grow weary" (Gal 6:8-9). It can be difficult because "you will be hated by all because of My name" (Mt 10:22) and "many will fall away and will betray one another" (24:10). John, himself, "was on the island of Patmos because of . . . the testimony of Jesus" (Rev 1:9). Consequently Jesus cited the perseverance of the Ephesians and that they did not "tolerate evil men" (2:2). You can wear out if you're not careful. Therefore "consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you do not grow weary and lose heart" (Heb 12:3). If you have a purpose you have a goal. Jesus told the Ephesians they "have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary" (Rev 2:3).

Perseverance

"In hope we have been saved but . . . [it is] what we do not see" (Ro 8:24-25). Therefore it is "with perseverance we wait eagerly for it" (:25). "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing" (Rev 3:10). Paul pointed out to the Corinthians that it is "the gospel . . . in which you also stand by which you are saved" (1Co 15:1-2). But he cautioned them to "hold fast the word" (:2).

Unless we know for sure we can lose focus. That is why John said "these things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1Jn 5:13). "We know that we are of God" (:19). Paul said "I know whom I have believed and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2Ti 1:12). Jesus told the Pergamum church that "you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith" (Rev 2:13). He told the church of Philadelphia, "I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown" (3:11). How do you hold on and persevere? Jesus warned, "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up" (Jn 15:6). He also told the Philadelphia church "you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name" (3:8). The key to Thyatira's success was "your love and faith and service and perseverance" (2:19). "Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus" (14:12). Jesus spoke of "He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end" (2:26). He warned the disciples that "it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved" (Mt 10:22). If you persevere you will overcome. Rewards for the overcomer are listed in Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21.