

C. Entering the promised land required faith.

D. Vs. 32-40 were written to people instructed to pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!”

i. V33 says they “gained what was promised” and v39 that “none of them received what had been promised.”

ii. What enabled our forerunners to endure all this? V35 tells us they were desiring to “**gain an even better resurrection.**”

E. **Not only does the sure hope of resurrection transform our grieving in death, it transforms our living in life.**

### LIVE THE STORY

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- How does the author of Hebrews stir our imagination when it comes to our journey of faith?
- What do you think of Oliver Burkeman’s idea that “to harness the power of patience the first thing we must do is “develop a taste for having problems.” Does this fit with a Christian understanding?
- Why is patience powerful and important for believers?
- Can you think of specific ways that patience would produce love in your relationships or where the lack of it has brought discord?
- Why is faith in the resurrection essential to patience?
- Can you think of examples of how God is patient? How Christ, in the incarnation, was patient? How do these help us be patient?
- What are some of the vivid, visual details of the imagery of Heb. 12:1-3? How might they help us patiently endure?

## Imagining the Kingdom – 2: The Necessity of Imagination for Patience

Jerry Cisar — May 14, 2023

Text: Hebrews 11:1-3, 17-40

### Introduction

#### I. The Necessity of Imagination for Patience (11:1-3; 10:32-39; 12:1-3)

A. We all live according to what we imagine.

*The already/not yet aspects of the kingdom are not fixed sums.*

B. Was Hebrews 11 written as a “Faith Hall-of-Fame”?

- i. These believers were facing a crisis of faith in Christ’s rule because *their experience* dominated their imagination.
- ii. In 10:32-35 he reminds them of the persecution they had suffered and commends them for how they had *endured*.

iii. Their present situation (Heb. 10:36-39)

C. **To help these believers endure, the author helps them 2 ways:**

- i. He reminds them of the history of our family of faith (Heb. 11).
- ii. He *fuels their imagination*: casting their lives as a race (12:1-3).

## II. The Resurrection, the Future, and Patience (11:17-22)

A. Each of these is based on faith extending beyond death.

- i. Abraham's faith was an Easter faith. Christian faith is resurrection faith. Jesus' resurrection and our own.
- ii. Isaac, on his deathbed, blessed Jacob and Esau.
- iii. Jacob, leaning on the top of his staff, blesses Joseph's sons.
- iv. Joseph gave instructions about his bones.

B. Why does it matter?

- i. Because of the resurrection we can be very patient. Since we will be raised, what we do now matters!

Tertullian: "Believing the resurrection of Christ, we believe also in our own, for whose sake He both died and rose again.... He who goes before us is not to be lamented, though by all means to be longed for. That longing also must be tempered with patience."

ii. **Because patience powerful and important. Why?**

- a) "Love is patient." (1 Cor. 13:4)

*If we are going to imagine the presence of Christ's kingdom among us, a kingdom of love, joy, and peace, we will have to imagine a world in which patience wins the day!*

- b) God is patient.

Tertullian explains that patience is how God works: "God Himself in the very first place [is] an example of patience; who scatters equally over just and unjust the bloom of this light...." Then he elaborates on the gifts God gives "to worthy and unworthy" alike. All this despite ingratitude, idolatry, and the harm they do to His Name and His family.

- c) Christ's example

Tertullian: When God concealed Himself in human flesh, He "imitated nothing of man's impatience!... God suffers Himself to be conceived in a mother's womb, and awaits *the time for birth*; and, when born, bears *the delay* of growing up; and, when grown up, is not eager to be recognized, but is furthermore abusive [only] to Himself, and is baptized by His own servant; and repels with words alone the assaults of the tempter... *having been trained to the exercise of the absolute forbearance of offended patience....*" (Vol. III of [The Ante-Nicene Fathers](#).)

C. Not only can death not stop the promise, suffering can't either.

## III. The Resurrection, the Present, and Patience (11:23-40)

A. Jesus was set both *parallel to* and *in contrast to* Moses (Heb. 3).

B. Passing through the Red Sea and baptism.