

CHRIST'S PERFECT PATIENCE WITH PAUL

1 TIMOTHY 1:12–17

English Standard Version (ESV)

*12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, **Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience** as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

BACKGROUND OF THE PRACTICE OF REMEMBERING THE LORD'S WORKS

1) God commanded Israel to remember and retell HIS WORKS.

- Exodus 12:26–27** *26 And **when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by [the Passover]?' 27 you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.'**" And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.*
Cf. Exodus 13:8; Deut. 6:20–25
- Deut 32:7** ***Remember the days of old**, consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and **he will show you**, your elders, and **they will tell you**.*
- Joshua 4:21–24** *"**When your children ask their fathers in times to come**, 'What do these stones mean?' 22 then you shall let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.' 23 For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, 24 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever."*

2) The Psalms show Israel's remembering as an act of worship.

- Psalms 66:16** *Come and hear, all you who fear God, and **I will tell what he has done for my soul**.*
- Psalms 71:15–18** ***My mouth will tell of your righteous acts**, of your deeds of salvation all the day... **until I proclaim your might to another generation**, your power to all those to come.*
- Psalms 78:1–7** *Things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but **tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD**... that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children.*
- Psalms 96:2–3** *Sing to the LORD, bless his name; **tell of his salvation from day to day**. **Declare his glory** among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples!*
- Psalms 105:1–5** *Oh give thanks to the LORD... **make known his deeds among the peoples**! Sing to him, sing praises to him; **tell of all his wondrous works**!*
- Psalms 107:2** ***Let the redeemed of the LORD say so**, whom he has redeemed from trouble.*

3) The New Testament calls the Church to be witnesses to the LORD's work.

- Acts 1:8** *You will be my **witnesses** (martyres) in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*
- Acts 4:20** *Peter and John before the Sanhedrin: We cannot but speak of **what we have seen and heard**.*
- 1 Timothy 2:6** *Christ's death is the **testimony** (martyrion) given at the proper time*
- 1 John 1:2–3** *The life was made manifest, and **we have seen it**, and **testify** (martyroumen) to it and proclaim to you the eternal life... **that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you**.*
- Revelation 12:11** *They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and **by the word of their testimony** (martyria).*

4) In the New Testament, several individuals testify to what Christ did.

- The Demon-Possessed Man:

Mark 5:19 *Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.*

- The Samaritan Woman – **John 4:39** → Many believed because of her testimony!
- The Blind Man – **John 9:25** ‘One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.’
- The Philippians Jailer – **Acts 16:25–34** → His family came to believe because of his testimony!
- The Thessalonians – **1 Thessalonians 1:6–10** → A whole region heard of their testimony!

THE APOSTLE PAUL’S CONVERSION TO CHRIST AND TESTIMONY IN ACTS

See Acts 9:1–22; 22:1–21; 26:2–23; 1 Corinthians 15:8-10; 2 Corinthians 11:22-33; 12:1-10; Galatians 1:11-24; Ephesians 3:1-8; Philippians 3:4-14; Colossians 1:23-29; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; 2 Timothy 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-17

Acts 9:1–22 – The Apostle Paul’s Conversion on the Road to Damascus

BEFORE CHRIST:

vs 1 *“still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord”*

vs 2 *Paul wanted permission to arrest more Christians!*

WHAT GOD USED TO BRING PAUL TO CHRIST:

vs 3–5 *3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. 4 And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” 5 And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting*

vs 10 *10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.”*

Remember 1 Corinthians 15:8–10:

8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

vs 15–16 *15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. 16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”*

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER PAUL CAME TO CHRIST:

vs 17–19 *laying his hands on him [Ananias] said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; ¹⁹ and taking food, he was strengthened.*

vs 20 *20 And immediately [Paul] proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”*

vs 21 *Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.*

Acts 22:3–23:11 — Paul testifies about the LORD before a hostile crowd in Jerusalem

Acts 26:1–32 — Paul testifies about the LORD before King Agrippa.

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THE APOSTLE PAUL'S TESTIMONY TO TIMOTHY

Some Context:

- False teachers were rampant in Ephesus – 1 Timothy 1:3–4
- Apparently, these false teachers were devoting themselves to myths, genealogies, speculation, and vain discussions. Be careful about these things!
- Although they were ignorant about the law of God, they desired to teach it.
- The law is good and exists for the lawless.
- The law is also in accordance with the gospel of God.
- Paul himself became a minister of the gospel. He was entrusted with it!
- Paul was now entrusting Timothy to set his mind on sound doctrine and bring correction to false teachers.

NOTICE PAUL'S TESTIMONY BEGINS WITH THANKSGIVING – vs 12

NOTICE PAUL'S TESTIMONY INCLUDES HIS FORMER WAYS – **BRIEFLY!** vs 13–15

- 1) He was a blasphemer. → Literally killing the name of Jesus.
- 2) He was a persecutor. → Persecuting the church with zeal.
- 3) He was an insolent opponent. → Opposing Christians throughout Judea and Samaria. The *anti-evangelist*.
- 4) He was the foremost sinner. → A statement of humility; not boasting!

NOTICE PAUL'S TESTIMONY HIGHLIGHTS THE GIFTS OF GOD FOR SALVATION – vs 13, 16

- 1) Paul receives mercy because he was an ignorant unbeliever
- 2) Paul receives mercy so that Christ might display his perfect patience
 'Wow! **God** can save a Christian-killer?' Remember Ananias and other disciples (Acts 9:26)
 A Christian testimony should point ultimately to Christ!
- 3) Paul receives grace, love and faith that are in Christ Jesus – Remember Ephesians 2:1–10.

NOTICE PAUL'S TESTIMONY ENDS WITH PRAISE – vs 17

BIG TAKE-AWAY FOR YOU:

USE YOUR TESTIMONY TO DEMONSTRATE GOD'S SAVING GRACE IN CHRIST TO OTHERS.