

THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST SERIES

Lets turn to the book of Rom 5:1-5. *“Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith that this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulations produces perseverance, and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”*

One more little passage in Rom 8:29-30. *“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”*

This morning we are starting a new series on the Christ like character we have to develop in our life. Many times we speak about revival. But when I question people, what do you mean by revival? They don't really have a definition. For some people, revival means having a lot of people, and all the meetings are packed. I want you to know that there are cycles of growth and in all revivals there are cycles of growth. In fact we are going to do a series on revival to show the characteristic behind revival and show forth that there are 4 different phases of revival. And we need to understand how to flow in those phases at each time. Without quoting church history yet just looking at the Bible, the people of God have different phases of revival. Sometimes a revival is already taking place in an individual but it is not time to bring it to the forefront yet. We have to learn how to be faithful in our walk with God.

For example, God was already doing something in Joseph's life when he was in prison before he was brought before the Pharaoh. A revival has already taken place in his life behind the scenes. And when Joseph desired to be released 2 years ahead of time, telling the cupbearer to remember him when he is released, the cupbearer forgot about him until the right time when Pharaoh had a dream. And when he was brought before the Pharaoh to explain his dreams, it happened suddenly. It was a sudden process, so to speak. There is always a preparation before the publicity. The private must take place before the public.

In the same way, a lot of things had taken place for many years before the Pentecostal Revival in Azusa Street burst out. God was already doing a revival and working in the life of Charles Parham and his students for many years. No one heard about it. And then among some of his students was a man named Seymour and they were faithful to God. They walked with God and then there came a time when God brought them to the forefront. When people talk about revival, they more often speak about the publicity and fame rather than the silent years of walking with God and preparations.

Even the Indonesian revival that took place in the time of Matari, there was a great period of being hidden before they were publicized. After they were publicized they needed to consolidate the fruits of the revival. Unfortunately they didn't do so. Today the revival is gone. Just about 3 years ago, I was speaking to one pastor in New Zealand and there was a tremendous growth in his church. His church almost doubled just suddenly within 3 months when they moved into something new. Within a year the church split into 3 parts and is back to where they were. And they have to build it up again. Let us recognize the fact that when people say revival, they are talking about the multitudes of people. Before Jesus reached to the multitudes, He was walking alone for 30 years. Before Paul reached the multitudes he walked alone with God, and after the multitudes he continued walking with God alone again.

Secondly, when people talk about revival, they talk about signs and

wonders. If you examine the Bible, signs and wonders are there potentially for God's people. But there are times when His glory manifested and you have abundance of it. But there are times when nothing seems to be happening you are supposed to live in hope on the promises of God. We need to balance the two. For example, the glory of God was manifested in the tabernacle of Moses and when Aaron offered the offerings for the first time, the glory of God manifested. And we know that when the tabernacle was dedicated the glory of God manifest. But after that manifestation, we don't see the glory of God, but we see that the glory has receded into the Holy of holies. The work continues as usual. The daily work that they have to do can be quite tiresome and they have to have what I call the abiding presence, knowing that they are doing what God wants them to do. And that is why when I see people misunderstand what revival is.

Let me give you some of my little definition. No.1, revival is simply walking in God's perfect will. If God's perfect will for your life at that particular period of time is to be walking with God in His preparation, to you that is revival. The first question is are you walking in God's perfect will. You could be a Joseph walking in God's perfect will unknown, unseen by people. In the same way, I mean nowadays we could go to a place to conduct a convention, we could have thousands of people come, we could have signs and wonders, but nobody knows the amount of preparations over the years that have taken place when you walk alone. The most important thing is to hear God. For example, if right now God tells us go to Papua New Guinea and I obey God's voice, I would go. We may have 5000 people; we may have signs and wonders. The important thing is not the outward manifestations; the important thing is to be in God's perfect will. Being in God's perfect will, brings you to position where you could demonstrate God's anointing and power. Signs and wonders may bring 1000 people to accept Christ. But what happens after that and what happens before that? That is why I feel that as people begin to run after manifestation that they must remember something. The most important thing in our life is to know God's perfect will in your life, walk in it. And the important part necessary for revival is to have the character of Jesus.

If you win 1000 people to Jesus and you're not like Jesus, there is no meaning. It is possible to win 1000 people to Jesus through a ministry gift without having a personal transformation in your life. And you know what happens? You don't have that much reward in heaven. Paul said that we could have faith to move

mountains, we could have prophecies to understand all things and if we don't have love, we are nothing. It puzzles me sometimes why people place higher priority on the outward things than on the inward things, when it is the inward things that's more important than the outward things. Not all of us have the opportunity to travel or be recognized and conduct conventions or preach to thousands of people. But all of us have the opportunity to have our character transformed in our daily lives.

There are two main points that I want to bring forth before we look at the character of Christ. No.1; all the power of God must first flow through the character of God. The signs and wonders, the true manifestation of God that comes, flow in proportion to the character of God in you. We have ministered to people, we have seen cancer healed, and even in this place we have seen the power of God flow. And let me explain something. The times when it flows most powerfully are when I could feel that compassion and character of Jesus for people most. The more I could feel it in my heart and life the greater the power God chooses to move. It is proportional.

Kathryn Khulman speaks about how she felt for the people in her biography, *'A Glimpse of Glory'*. And when people hear about Kathryn Khulman they only hear about the word of knowledge and the miracles. But how many people hear about the cry that she has in her heart for the sick? And the many times when she left the auditorium and she continued to cry for those who were not healed. We humans are so obsessed with the outward manifestation that we forget that it's the inward character that is important.

The first major point is that having the character of Jesus in us allows the power of Jesus into our life more powerfully. The same gift could work more powerfully if we allow the character of Jesus to flow through our life. It is possible to have a gift of God without the character of Jesus, because the gift is a gift. The book of Corinthians proves it. You could have the gift of God without the character of Jesus. The Corinthians have the gifts of the Spirit flowing. In no way did Paul say that their gifts were just the flesh or it was just their own doing. He recognized that it was the gifts of the Spirit. But he said it was profiting nobody. When Paul says I could speak in tongues without love, he never says that the tongues was not

of God. He was saying that the gifts were ineffective.

There may be a lot of manifestations and gifts and people may say that God has sent a revival but the test is whether they have become more loving. Has their character been changed? But if they work along with pride and say you must have this, you must have that, something is still missing. They have a manifestation without a revival. It is possible to have a manifestation without a revival, but if you have a revival you would have the manifestation. We need to understand that we are judged by the fruit not by the power. We are judged by the fruit in our lives.

Second major point, the Bible does tell us that all the commandments of God will bring blessings. Book of Deut. 28 says if you hearken to all the commandments of God, all these things will be upon you, health abundance, prosperity abundance, life and everything will come upon your life. In the New Testament we are told that love obeys all the commandments. Therefore when you walk in love and keep the commandments of God you will receive all the blessings of God.

The second major point is that to have the character of Jesus is to have prosperity. Cause when you walk in love and keep the commandments of God, God will make you the head and not the tail. The health laws and all the other laws flow with the blessings and the promises of God.

Maybe we add a third point. Of all the important things that Paul wrote about in the epistles in the New Testament, what do you think is the most important thing? If we were to summarize Matthew to Revelation, Jesus' life, and all the writings of Paul in one sentence, do you know what is the most important? The most important role of the apostles, evangelists, prophets, pastors, and teachers is to bring the church to be like Jesus in character, in walk, in faith, in power, in everything. And being like Jesus starts in our hearts, in our soul and in our life. The power of God that is in Jesus begins with us becoming Christ-like.

Some of us may not be called to be a five-fold evangelist to win 100,000 people to

Jesus. If you are called to be an evangelist to win 100,000 people to Jesus and God hasn't open the door for you, do you know what He is doing? He is building the character of Jesus in you first. So when the gifts flow it will have the effect and impact. Maybe some of you are not called to the five-fold ministry, but you are called to bring forth one million dollars to the kingdom of God through your life and the time hasn't come for you to do that. You know what He is doing now in your life? What is the revival doing in your life? He is making you like Jesus through your situation. We don't relate the two.

Just like long ago we shared about how world weather patterns were related to what happens in the shedding of innocent blood or unrighteousness or sin within a nation. We showed from the book of Deut how God said that if the Israelites disobey Him the heavens would be like brass. Look world weather patterns are related to the righteousness or sin in a nation. There is no way scientifically you could link them together. But the Bible links them together.

When we were doing a series on why bad things happen to good people, and why good things happen to bad people, we predicted that based on what happened in China where innocent blood was shed in Tienanmen Square and based on the book of Genesis where when Abel's blood was shed, God made a statement saying that the earth will no more bring forth its fruit. Based on these principles we predicted there would be a famine in China. It has taken place this year. And in that series we showed how that sometimes when things are done and people ask, "Why do bad things happen to good people and why do good things happen to bad people?" We showed that some of those things take a long time to have a cycle back. By the time it comes back, human memory is so short they have forgotten that it was actually brought by man. God is not to be blamed. Its man reaping what he sows. And by the time ten years later the famine has taken place, a lot of people have forgotten about Tienanmen Square and the innocent blood being shed. But the Bible says these are the result. Anytime innocent blood is shed on this planet earth famine results. It is a Bible principle. It's good for businessmen to know this because you are putting your investments here and there in different countries. You have to check whether innocent blood has been shed there and whether its consequence, the due punishment of famine has been reaped yet.

Of course with Jesus things can be atoned and redeemed. But people must atone and redeem through the Blood of Jesus. In the Old Testament time, David was a good man. He has his faults but he was a good man. Do you know why bad things happen to good people? Why did the famine occur in David's life? There was a famine in David's reign. And when David asked the Lord why was there a famine, God said because Saul killed innocent people. And that is when David found out that the famine came because Saul killed innocent people. Look Saul had died long ago and his kingdom was gone. But the results of innocent blood came forth in David's time. Why do bad things happen to good people? David is a good man, what did he do? He redeemed it. He asked the Lord how to do it. The Lord showed him and the proper judgment took place and the land was free from the famine. Human memories are so short.

If a chemical takes about 50 years to kill people, nobody would realize it. But if a chemical kills people within one or two days, they would say that it is toxic. There are a lot of things that's killing people slowly. Sometimes it takes a whole generation to suffer before they realize what is killing them.

Lets look at the book of Romans very carefully. Having emphasized the fact that the development of Christian character is perhaps and in fact the most important goal of Christianity, we need to be taught how it works in our life and how it can take place. And remember the character of Jesus is not some dull subject. It has to do with your prosperity. It has to do with your health. It has to do with your five fold ministry. It has to do with the power of God in your life.

Let's see the development of the character of Jesus in our heart and in our life. In Rom.5: 3-4 "*and not only that, but we also glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.*" Now I just want to see the flow from tribulation to character. Between tribulations to character is the word called *perseverance*. The developing of character comes by experiencing tribulation and tribulation comes from being on this planet earth. Jesus said in the world you shall receive tribulations but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world.

There is no other way we can develop Christian character without the interaction or inter reaction with the people around us or in the world that we are living in. We cannot learn how to love and to forgive unless we interact with others. If you are all shut up on a mountain or in a cave with no one to make you angry, no one imperfect around you except yourself with all the animals and you are the jungle king. All you have is a pack of wolves, you can call your pet dog *fatty*, *black lips* and all sorts of names, but still the pet dog will look at you lovingly. But try calling a human being those names, “ Hello black lips,” you will get a black eye in return. Human beings are different.

It is when we interact with people that you actually experience the tribulations. You can't develop your character unless you have that tribulation in this world. Tribulations can only come as you inter react in this world and the strange thing is character only comes by tribulations. Look at it, tribulation works patience, and patience develops character in us. There is no short cut. We need those kinds of experiences. In life there are always things that work character in our lives.

I'd like to make a few statements at this point. No.1 Tribulation works character in our lives. But it may not be good character. Whether its good character or bad character is determined by how we react to the tribulation. If in the tribulation or difficulty, we react wrongly and keep on reacting wrongly, it becomes a part of our life and character. Tribulation can change a person. If you want to see a person's character, watch them when they are under pressure. That is when the real self comes forth. I like to watch people under pressure. When we look for people who are strong we look for them under pressure. Not when there is no pressure. When the pressure is there, the real character comes forth, and it is possible that sometimes when people react wrongly to tribulation for too many times, their character changes.

I wonder how many of you have lost good friends and good people because of some hardship or hurts. Sometimes all it takes is one broken situation. Maybe somebody loses a loved one and doesn't understand why that happens. Somebody has knocked your father down in an accident and he has died. You feel angry with

the person who did it. Your reaction under these circumstances is finding it hard to forgive. You want to be a forgiving person but that one incident may change you into a hard unforgiving person.

I mean think about people like Monica Seles, the tennis player who got stabbed in the back. Some of you tennis players may know her. That one incident when she was stabbed in the back because somebody didn't want her to win has changed her whole character. She used to be a bubbly character but she is no more that way. She may still smile but it is not the same way. Isn't it sad because of one incident in which she was not guilty? A fanatic fan wanted another person to win and stabbed her to prevent her from playing. That one incident had almost changed her character.

Thank God for Jesus. With Jesus no matter how hard the tribulations, you don't have to change; you can be a better person. And there are countless people who have changed because of one incident. Tribulation produces character. But it is not necessary the good character. Whether its good character or bad character depends on how we react to the tribulation, if we react correctly.

Now how do I know how to react correctly? I give you in one little sentence how to do it. Always choose the reaction that is the most loving. Choose how love will respond and your character will be blessed. When you choose how other areas of your emotion respond, it won't come out right. How will love respond and follow after love. Tribulation only works the right kind of character in our life, if we react correctly in love. If you don't react correctly in love, it actually destroys our character. We become a totally different person from before. It's this point that is very important for us to consider.

Having established the fact that tribulation definitely works character, whether its bad character or good character we can't change it. Incidentally all of us have our trials and tribulations in different forms. We all have them. And even though you may be praying for God to send revival to your church, right now the main revival in your life is learning to hear God, to know God, to walk with God and be in His

perfect will. You may not have the chance right now to minister to 100,000 people, but you will have the chance right now to react in love in your circumstances.

That's where the revival starts. Whether we are changed in the wrong character or changed in the good character is determined by how we react. How we react is determined by our understanding of choices that are available for us. There are always many ways we can choose to react in response. Now you may have natural feelings and emotions being human in all kind of tribulations. But we are old enough in life to know that we don't need to yield to our emotions or to react with our emotions.

Now here is where our consideration is. Between tribulation in Rom 5 and character is one little word here. It says tribulation produces perseverance. The word *perseverance* is the Greek word *hupomone*. *Hupomone* is the word translated as *patience*. Tribulation works patience, and patience produces character.

The word *hupomone* comes from two Greek words *hupo* and *mone*. The word *hupo* talks about over upon, like something resting over a situation or over something. And if my Bible is on the pulpit, then it's just upon the pulpit. If my coat is big enough to cover the whole pulpit, then my coat will be *hupo* on the pulpit. Its not just on, its on plus its over the thing. That's first part of the word *Hupomone*.

The other part *mone* comes from Greek word *meno*. *Meno* is the same word that Jesus used when He says, "Abide in Me and let My words abide in you." The word *abide* is the word *meno*. Abide in Me, *meno* in Me and let My words *meno* in you, and you will bear much fruit. Knowing that the word *meno* is where we get the word *mone* in the word *patience*, you begin to see that when Jesus spoke in Jn. 14 and 15 about abiding in Him, He is talking about the power of God in our life and the character of Jesus.

Lets look at Jn.15 and put the word *meno* where it is Jn.15: 1 onwards. "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He

takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.” He is talking about being fruitful, being successful, now by fruit He talks about the character of Jesus.

The fruit that we bear has to do with the character of Jesus in our lives, and the character of Jesus will result in the power of God and prosperity and healing in your life. These things flow from that fruit that is developed in our life. It's according to the strength of your inner man that the outward man can function. And the strength of our inner man is determined by the amount of change or the transformation of the character of Jesus in our inner man. How transformed are we to be like Jesus on the inside. So He is talking about bearing fruit.

Verse 3, *“You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you.”* Verse 4 & 5, *“Meno in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it meno in the vine, neither can you, unless you meno in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who meno in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. Verse 7, “If you meno in Me, and My words meno in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.”*

Can you see how powerful *“meno-ing”* in God is. If you *meno* in Me and I *meno* in you, whatever you ask it shall be done. That's why I am talking about the character of Jesus. If you walk with Jesus you are in perfect will of God. And you're doing God's perfect will. You could go to a convention and 100 000 people there, and you say, *“O God in the Name of Jesus we command healing to flow forth,”* the power of God will flow because you have *meno* in God and God *meno* in you and He grants you all your desires.

When we *meno* in God and God *meno* in us and you have a business problem, you have a situation in your life, and you cry out to God and say, *“God I have loved You, I have followed after You, O God I require your supernatural help now,”* and bang, the supernatural help comes.

It flows forth from your *meno-ing* in Christ; your abiding in Christ and the word *patience* is the combination of the word *hupo* with the word *meno*, *hupomone*. Which mean that you have abided in Jesus and your abiding covers all your beings. Your abiding is so strong and the character of Jesus is so strong that you could be poked left, right and center and it doesn't change your life. You know how to abide in tribulation; you stand like the rock of Gibraltar, against the storm.

Lets look at Col.1 where Paul is talking about being fruitful. Col.1:9 onwards, *"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."*

Understand that the true sense of revival is not depending on outward circumstances. Its just like success is not dependant on being famous. Revival is inner walk with God or walking in His perfect will. Sometimes you're walking with God unknown. Sometimes you're walking with God well known. Sometimes you're walking privately; sometimes you're walking publicly. Can you understand what the true sense of revival is? We are walking in revival. When you do a good work for God, sometimes people hear about you and sometimes they don't. When we hear a well-known evangelist coming to town, what is important is whether he is walking with God. Are you able to say you're walking in God's perfect will.

Let me quote the life of Jesus. Is Jesus with the multitudes all the time? Was Jesus healing 24 hours a day? Sometimes Jesus was famous, but there were times He was alone and unpopular with the authorities. Was Jesus affected? There were times when He woke up early in the morning, He went out alone and He prayed. There were times when He went away from the crowd. The crowd wanted to make Him King after the miracle of the loaves and fish. Jesus said, no, thanks and He walked alone.

How could we define a revival by the multitude of people? There need to be a cycle of growth, structure, expansion and consolidation. We got to make sure that the

externals do not affect us. I mean I am not affected by the fact of whether I am preaching in a convention or when I am not preaching in a convention. I still live my life with God. Sometimes when you are in a convention, people treat you like a celebrity. I mean people come just to see you or touch you. But when I am not in the convention, I am still the same me.

The most important thing is that I am walking with God. Whether I am walking out in the field or have a small little Bible study with my family or preaching to 10 000 people, it makes no different. It is not when I am preaching to 10 000 people and having the sick healed that I have revival there. No, if with my family I am having a family devotion I am walking with God, that's also revival. The true sense of revival is that you have found your God and you walk with your God and you know what is happening. God tells you, God speaks to you and you speak with God. You know who you are and you know what you are doing.

You know when the multitudes left Jesus? It was when He said, "Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you cannot have any part of Me." The multitudes left Him. That's been the first time the multitudes left Him. And He turned to His disciples and asked, "Do you want to leave too?" Do you think Jesus was having revival? Yes, He was. Let me point to the fact that the true essence of revival is the reality of Christ's love in our life, and Christ's presence that flows because we are doing what God wants us to do.

I am encouraging those of you who have home meeting; revival in your home meeting doesn't mean that 100 people trying to cram into your home that can hold only 20 people. Revival means that when you are in your home, you have these 20 people who are regularly with you. That the love of Jesus and the presence of God in your life is flowing and the 20 of you are doing God's perfect will and you are ministering to one another. That's a revival. Revival can mean that you are taking care of a prayer meeting. You only have those 10 faithful people who continue to pray and great things are happening in the realm of the Spirit.

The most important thing is not 1000 people trying to squeeze into your prayer

meeting but the most important thing is when you lead those 10 people, are you doing what God wants you to do and is that in the perfect will of God. As long as you are doing God's perfect will and doing what God wants you to do, there is revival. A lack of revival is that you don't hear God. God is no more a living person to us. We don't walk with Him anymore. Revival is just walking with God. God is real in our lives. God is speaking in our hearts.

When Jesus came to the last supper, almost every one of those who followed Him had left. When Jesus was on trial, only Jesus knew that He was doing God's perfect will. Everybody else thought that He has failed, until the resurrection. We must have the steadiness of our character. To know God, to know what He is saying, what He wants us to do.

Some of the good work you do, nobody may hear it. When the church was having a mighty revival, when Peter was having great signs and wonders so that even his shadow healed the sick, but behind the scene was a little lady whose name was Dorcas, she was not a great healer nor a great teacher. Neither was she a church leader, but she had good work. She was only good at sewing and she sewed many cloths and went to the widows and gave it to them. Do you think she was having revival? She was.

Where do we get the impression that revival is just manifestation? When revival is walking in the perfect will of God. If the perfect will of God is to be a tailor to the widows, you don't lead a prayer meeting. You don't have a manifestation like others have. But you are doing the perfect will of God in your life. That's revival.

Whatever good work you can do in your life that flows from your character. Whatever good things come from your life that God places in you and it is God's perfect will for you to fulfill it. When you fulfill it, that's revival. The true sense of revival is when the members of the Body of Christ find their place in the Kingdom of God and do what God requires of them. That is why when people do as they like it is disaster. But when people are able to hear God and do what God tells them to do, that's revival.

There are times when God says to gather together. God may then say be scattered to all the 4 corners of the earth. And if you don't do that you may miss God. Its important to discern what is revival. To me revival is when you are hearing God. You do what God wants you to do. You walk with God and God flows through your life.

Col.1: 10-11 "*Being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy.*" Now He says that we are strengthened with might according to His glorious power for all patience and longsuffering with joy. Do you notice that the word "for" that connect the sentence in verse 11. The word *strengthened with power* is the Greek word *dunamis* and that's talking about the manifestation of God. That the *dunamis* of God comes on your inside and changes you, transform you, but for what manifestation? What's the purpose of all the power of God coming into your life? It says there, *for all patience and longsuffering*. It's for you to go out into your world, your working place, and your ministry and live out the Christ like in your life. To show that all that you are receiving you could go out and contend and stand firm in the tribulation that you're overcome in your life.

Now the word 'for' is followed by two Greek words. The first we've come to know in verse 11, strengthened with all might according to His glorious power for all *hupomone*, for all patience. All the power of God is to transform us so that we may become a patient person. Therefore if anyone receives a manifestation of God and they become impatient, something is wrong. The flesh has taken over. Pride has taken over. We can have the gifts of God, but its nothing for us to be proud about. It's a gift of God. We need to walk with God and have the love flow through our lives. Then can the gifts really flow.

Now there are two words that I like to share before we continue next week. It says here for all *hupomone* and *makrothumia*. *Makrothumia* is the other word for patience. In the New Testament there are two Greek words for patience. One is *hupomone* and the other is *makrothumia*. I just quickly summarize the difference between them. *Hupomone*, there are two types of patience.

Just like there are two types of confession. There are confessions of faith when you are confessing the Word of God in order for the Word of God to build faith in your life. That's called meditation. And everyday you meditate on the Word and the Word produces faith in your life. There's the first form of confessing the word. The second form of confessing the Word is the Word is already on your inside and you are decreeing to the mountain. And what you decree you believe that your words will come to pass. And so you tell the mountain, move from hence forth to yonder. And it hasn't moved yet. But you exercise your faith upon your confession of your words. That is what we call decreeing, like a king decreeing to the mountain. So in confession there are two forms. One is the confession of the Word in order for the Word to be built into your life. The other is a confession over circumstances where the Word comes out of your life and you make a decree.

In the same way there are two types of patience. One is a patience, which you endure in order to allow the character of Jesus to be formed in you. That's the first type and that's the type where Rom.5 talks about. By enduring, not trying to overcome anything, but allowing those circumstances to awaken more love in your life. Will you make a choice to allow love to awaken in your life? You react in love. And you so endure patiently. Then there comes a time when the character of Jesus is so formed in your life that your patience now becomes a force to overcome the tribulations of life and that patience comes out in your life.

And instead of enduring now you are overcoming. That's the second form of patience called *makrothumia*. When it comes out of your life it begins to dominate your circumstances. Your patience become a force that flows out of your life and you could say, "Peace be still." And your circumstances are overcome by the stillness in your life.

Let me illustrate with the book of Heb.6: 12 "*that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and makrothumia inherit the promises of God.*" So there is one area where you got to allow that patience to work in your life. This is where you don't try to change the circumstances around you but you must change your

character first. If your character changes first then later you can change the circumstances. So the first part is the change in you.

The second part of *makrothumia* is you have changed and now you can change the circumstances because you have formed the character of Jesus. So let me point to a typical example. Let's say that there are circumstances that irritate you and make you lose your temper. Obviously if you want to do that, you haven't changed yet, you have still not crucified your old man. You know the Word of God and say no, I will not yield to my bad temper, I will not yield to my irritation and you choose to walk in love. At first the feeling doesn't come, so you walk by faith and later the feeling comes. After sometime it becomes a part of your character. People can do nasty things to you and you still can walk in love.

You enter the second phase. Now your character rises up. You will be able to overcome. First you change, and then secondly your circumstances changed. *Makrothumia* is you have already changed and you are now changing the circumstances. Abraham believed God for a long time, 20 over years before God fulfilled His promise. What was God doing? God was changing him first. When Abraham changed then he was able to change his circumstances.

The apostle Paul in 2.Cor. 12, he was having tribulation and all kind of difficulties because of the messengers of Satan. And he says, O God I can't take it, Lord help and God says My grace is sufficient for you. Three times he cried, three times God replied the same answer. In the end Paul changed on the inside. The grace of God came. He was strengthened; he was able to take it. When he was able to take it that was when he was able to change his circumstances. Many Christians want to change the circumstances before they are changed. We must change first, and then you have the power to change the circumstances.

There must be *hupomone* that is the abiding force, standing firm and then something in you changes and then *makrothumia* starts flowing out. *Thumia* is a word comes from the word *fire* or *heat*. And then it comes burning out of your life. You are able to change the circumstances around you. We will consider more of these but for

now we see the character of Jesus and what God's will is in our life. Whatever circumstances you are going through, remember you run for your circumstances. Christians don't run from the devil, Christians don't run from difficulties, Christians don't run from hardship. What happens? We allow our tribulations to change our inside. When the change is settled and sealed, God allows you to change the circumstances around you.