



PUNCTUALITY, PATIENCE, AND PROGRESS

KEY SCRIPTURES: Philippians 1:4-6, 2 Peter 3:9, Philippians 2:12, 2 Corinthians 5:17

When my daughter was very young, she had a hard time with punctuality. She is a very creative person and always has been, and I have noticed in a lot of creative people that they sometimes require more grace in that area. With her, it was never so bad that I opted to adjust the time by 30 minutes when I told her what time we needed to leave the house, but it was close.

Let's just say, it was a rare day when we exited the premises at the time I had hoped we would.

When she was finally old enough to understand the concept—and its benefits—I taught her how to see the end from the beginning.

I showed her how to look at the clock at what time she knew we needed to be walking out the door, then to move backwards from there according to how long each of her tasks would take. When she accounted for teeth brushing and breakfast eating, make-up doing and wardrobe choosing, and the unexpected delays like lost-shoe hunting, she would then be able to know the latest time it would be possible for her to get moving and not be late.

Seeing the end from the beginning and understanding what needed to happen in the middle began to get us out the door on time, or closer to it, at least. And it brought both of us a great deal of peace.

It was a work in progress, but it was sure better than the patience testing it was before.

And it sounds so much like the Christian journey.

Before we meet Jesus, we are all patience testers. It says so in 2 Peter 3:9 when Peter reminds the readers of his letter that *"(t)he Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

(continued)

"...so we can know our value, live with purpose, and make a difference...**In that order.**"



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But once we have accepted God's grace through Jesus, we become amazing works in progress.

With our eyes on Jesus, we can begin to see the end from the beginning, just like God does. We can even enjoy the middle, the journey we take as we *"continue to work out (our) salvation"* (Philippians 2:12) by letting what is in us because of God's grace be worked out of us as we learn to be the *"new creation"* (2 Corinthians 5:17) God already sees.

"...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). All because of Jesus, we can see the end from the beginning and enjoy the walk—the grand walk with Him—with delightful hope.

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