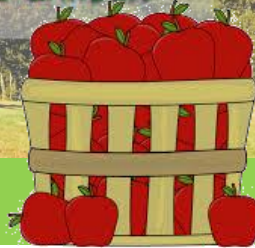




The Garden View

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Patience and Perseverance

By: Bonnie McClure

Two of the most valuable tools a farmer possesses go hand in hand with one another: his patience and perseverance. The type of patience required to yield a bountiful crop is exceptional in nature. It requires the farmer to trust forces outside of his control. It requires he accept that his provision is limited, and he must rely on external variables to fulfill his vision; all of this work and without even a guarantee.

But being patient is more than waiting. It is maintaining a sense of peace and order, even when we are challenged. We may be challenged by fear or concern. We may be challenged by others through judgment for our convictions, especially when we have little, tangible proof to give. But part of being patient is our continued perseverance, holding firm to our beliefs and a righteous outcome of our work.

We are called to implement the farmer's level of patience as we work through the development of our own lives. In the meantime, it is with

our patience that we persevere: we work and toil and plant and sow, but our fruit does not yield overnight and so, too, our lives do not always make sense or come together overnight, either. Sometimes we must wait for the right season or the timely rain.

By patience, we are afforded perseverance, and it is perseverance that delivers us beyond our obstacles, beyond the doubt of what we may not yet see with our eyes. These two working in tandem, to keep us in peace as we hold on to our faith through all seasons of weather, drought, blight, or plentiful harvests.

James 5:7-11 NIV

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰ Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy."