

Twenty-One Day Fast: Day Twenty one – August 28

Endure

by Karen White

Every year on New Year's Day, I ask the Lord what His word is for me for the coming year. One year it was "Obedience." For another it was "Hope," and for yet another it was "Wisdom." This year, He clearly spoke to my heart on January 1 and said, "Endure."

My immediate response was, "Uh oh. This can't be good." If 2010 was going to be a season in which God wanted to enlarge my capacity for endurance, I knew I was in for some intense practice.

I wasn't mistaken.

According to the footnote in my Bible, the Greek word for "endure" is *hupomeno* (*hoop-ahm-en'-oh*). It means "to hold one's ground in conflict; bear up under adversity; hold out under stress; stand firm; persevere under pressure; to wait calmly and courageously. It is not passive resignation to fate and mere patience, but the active, energetic resistance to defeat that allows calm and brave endurance."

Oh my.

In 2010, the Lord has been calling me to endure much, sometimes beyond what I feel I have the ability – or the desire – to endure. Yet He persistently reminds me that, since I am in Christ (Colossians 3:3) and Christ is in me (Colossians 1:27), the same courage, strength, and tenacity that enabled Jesus to endure is in *me*.

Endurance requires surrender. Surrendering my time. My desires. My will. My way. My perceptions. I must daily live in the reality of the Divine Exchange: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

Yet even as I endeavor to obey 2 Timothy 2:3 and "endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," I find my heart echoing the words of singer and songwriter Twila Paris:

*Unafraid because His armor is the best
But even soldiers need a quiet place to rest
People say that I'm amazing
Never face retreat
But they don't see the enemies
That lay me at His feet*

*They don't know that I go running home when I fall down
They don't know who picks me up when no one is around
I drop my sword and cry for just a while*

*'Cause deep inside this armor
The warrior is a child*

So, my fellow child-warriors, together, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and run with endurance the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, anticipating the joy that lay ahead, ran His race and *endured* (Hebrews 12:1-2).

PRAYER POINT: Thank You, Lord, that by Your great mercy You grant us the courage, strength, and hope to endure. In our fatigue, empower us. In our fear, embolden us. In our weakness, strengthen us. In the name of Jesus Christ, the ultimate Endurer. Amen.