

WALKING WITH PATIENCE

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I have walked 500 miles over the last several months. To reach this milestone, I had to exercise patience in not giving up but continuing toward the goal. If we do not set goals to reach, we may never get anywhere. Thus, having goals in life is important and motivates us to strive for something, whether in our education, our career, our marriage, or even in our journey of faith. The Bible says, "...looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1-2).

The Lord Jesus walked through the journey of his life with much patience, setting the example for how we should live regardless of our culture, education, gender, or age. He lived in obedience to God, to the point of dying on the cross for our sin (Philippians 2:8-11). The Bible says, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). In the eyes of God, we are all lost in our sin and will die. Where do we go after our death? The Bible says that no one can escape from death: "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Hebrews 9:27-28).

I have learned spiritual lessons from walking daily. It requires patience to keep walking toward the goal set before me. I confess it was not easy to walk regularly at the beginning, but with will power, I overcame my inner self and moved on. I gradually developed more confidence about reaching the next milestone, starting with the first 100 miles, then the next 100 miles, and so forth, bringing me to this 500-mile marker. I encourage everyone to walk for good health with satisfaction. Everyone can do it if we make it our commitment to discipline ourselves to reach the goal. Once we reach our goal, we will be so pleased to have done it. When I was a hospital chaplain intern at South Carolina (now Prisma Health) Baptist Hospital from 1977 to 1978, I learned how to reward myself as a form of positive reinforcement. On one occasion, I set a new, \$19 wristwatch from the local department store as a reward for accomplishing a task. Though over four decades have passed, I still remember the moment I earned that reward and how proud I felt. It seems like a small thing, but such inward motivation encourages us to do more. After you endure and achieve your goal, you can then set a new reward to be inspired to reach another goal.

In life in general, people recognize you when you achieve certain milestones. When you are promoted at work, it is accompanied by a pay raise; when achieving a higher rank in the military, you are given a new ribbon for your uniform; when you graduate at the top of your class, it is noted by a Latin honor with your degree. These recognitions that come with rewards will motivate you to do better and more in service or at work. It is so in ministry, as Apostle Paul says in Philippians 3:14, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."