

**STEADFASTNESS AND BRIGHTNESS: A  
SERMON PREACHED IN S. JOHN'S  
CHURCH, WILKINSONVILLE,  
MASSACHUSETTS ON SUNDAY, MAY 21,  
1905 AT A MEMORIAL EUCHARIST FOR  
MRS. JAMES FLETCHER WHITIN**

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Steadfastness and Brightness: A Sermon Preached in S. John's Church, Wilkinsonville, Massachusetts on Sunday, May 21, 1905 at a memorial eucharist for Mrs. James Fletcher Whitin by Lucius Waterman

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**LUCIUS WATERMAN**

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ON SUNDAY, MAY 21, 1905  
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**BY**

**LUCIUS WATERMAN, S. T. D.  
RECTOR OF S. THOMAS'S CHURCH  
HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE**



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1905

IN BELOVED MEMORY OF  
PATIENCE HOWARD SAUNDERS WHITIN  
BORN MAY 21, 1818  
ASLEEP IN THE PEACE OF GOD  
DECEMBER 13, 1904

## STEADFASTNESS AND BRIGHTNESS

ROM. v. 4: *And patience, experience; and experience, hope.*

I STAND here to-day to make, as God may give me grace, some small commemoration of an old friend, who had a blessed old Scripture name given her, and wore it worthily through a very long life. Men and women who have noble names given them do not always make those names their own by carrying out the noble meaning in their lives. I think that this good friend deserved her name, and so I bring you a text which has that suggestive name in its very forefront,—*Patience*. Now there are two Scripture words of the Greek tongue which our old translators rendered into English as *patience*, three hundred years ago, and some of the modern scholars who have been employed in making our Revised Versions

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think that we would better learn to distinguish them. Both words have the idea of bearing things well that come hard, but one looks to bearing fretting things without losing temper over them, and the other looks to bearing painful things, or burdensome things, or discouraging things, without being turned out of one's way, without giving up, in fact, either one's regular work or one's steadfast walk, because of such happenings.

The first kind of patience, the one that refuses to be fretted out of the peace of God, is the opposite of being "short-tempered," and I often wish that we had such a word as "long-tempered" in our English speech. The Greek language had such a word. "Have patience with me," says the servant in one of our Lord's parables,— "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." It is just as if he had said, "Be long-tempered with



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me." "Be long-tempered" would be the most literal rendering of the Greek phrase. But it is the other "patience" that is most dwelt upon by the New Testament writers, and by our Lord Himself,—the patience that stands fast. That patience also may well be described by reference to its opposites. It is the opposite of being, as we say, "slack-twisted." It is the opposite of being "weary in well-doing," of dropping out of the procession, of saying, "It is too hard!" It is called once in our English Bibles "patient continuance." It is called by our American Revision, in most places where it occurs, "steadfastness."

And as this latter "patience" is the more frequently named in the New Testament writings, so is it the greater thing. Doubtless the two kinds of patience are apt to be found together,—the patience of the unfretted temper,

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and the patience of the steadfast walk. Fretting and failing are very apt to go together, getting vexed and giving up; and certainly one that is strong enough not to be fretted by fretting things is not likely to grow weary and drop out in the presence of hard things. But yet the two ideas, the two kinds of patience, ought to be distinguished; and of the two, we ought to bear in mind, the patience of steadfastness, the patience of this text which I have brought you to think of to-day, is verily the greater.

I. And just here, before I proceed to my special subject, the memorial which lies very near my heart, this morning, I want to open out to you a little more fully, with reference to its connections in S. Paul's thought, the text which has seemed to me so fit a foundation for my memorial. S. Paul has been speaking of Christians as rejoicing "in the hope of the glory of God." Then he

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goes on to speak of them as rejoicing even in their own distresses. "For tribulation worketh patience," he says; "and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed." The English Revised Version gives the clauses just a little differently,— "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, probation; and probation, hope; and hope putteth not to shame." And the American Revision gives the earlier clauses a little differently still,— "Affliction worketh steadfastness; and steadfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope."

About that bitter-sweet beginning there is practically no difference. Whether they take "affliction" or "tribulation" as the more appropriately suggestive word, whether they call this great Bible virtue "patience" still, or insist on writing it "steadfastness," whenever it is the patience that holds