

# Romans 5:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

## Analysis

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**And patience, experience; and experience, hope**—Paul traces a progressive chain: ὑπομονή (hypomonē, patient endurance) produces δοκιμή (dokimē, proven character/tested genuineness), which generates ἐλπίς (elpis, hope). The term dokimē derives from δοκιμάζω, to test metals for purity—trials refine believers, burning away dross and proving genuine faith (1 Peter 1:7).

The progression is not automatic but reflects God's sanctifying work through affliction. Each link strengthens the next: trials test faith, testing proves genuineness, proven character deepens eschatological hope. This is the opposite of worldly disappointment, where unmet hopes produce cynicism. Christian suffering paradoxically intensifies hope by demonstrating God's sustaining grace and conforming believers to Christ's sufferings (Philippians 3:10).

## Historical Context

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The concept of dokimē (tested character) would resonate with Roman readers familiar with metallurgy and the extensive testing required for coins to bear imperial stamp. Paul appropriates this imagery for spiritual formation: God's 'testing' doesn't discover unknown flaws (as if He were uncertain) but refines believers and demonstrates to them and the watching world the genuineness of their faith. The apostolic expectation was not comfort but conformity to Christ through suffering.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. Can you identify a past trial that, viewed retrospectively, proved your faith genuine and deepened your hope?
2. Why does suffering tend to produce either deeper hope or complete despair—what makes the difference?
3. How does understanding trials as divine refining rather than random misfortune change your response to hardship?

## Interlinear Text

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ἡ	δὲ	ὑπομονὴ	δοκιμὴ	ἡ	δὲ	δοκιμὴ	ἐλπίδα
G3588	And	patience	experience	G3588	And	experience	hope
G1161		G5281	G1382		G1161	G1382	G1680

## Additional Cross-References

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**James 1:12** (Parallel theme): Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

**1 Peter 5:10** (Parallel theme): But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

**Psalms 71:14** (Hope): But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more.

**Romans 15:4** (Hope): For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

