



WEEKLY DEVOTIONALS FROM PASTOR LYLE WAHL

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Patience

Patience.

We all need it. But some people think it is out of their reach, thinking, and saying, “I’m not a patient person. That’s just the way I am.”

Billy Graham said,

“Patience is part of true Christlikeness, something we so often admire in others without demanding it of ourselves.”



This part of the fruit the Holy Spirit produces in Christ’s people is not selective, not limited to a few. It does not depend on our natural temperament.

Starting at the beginning, let’s think about what patience is. Some common ideas are

- The ability to accept delay, trouble or suffering without becoming angry or upset.
- Bearing with annoyances, misfortune, delay or pain without complaint.
- A quiet, steady perseverance, being even-tempered, not hasty or impulsive.

Both the Old Testament and New Testament words have the idea of being long-tempered rather than short-tempered. So then, being slow to anger, hanging in there in spite of your own feelings, a difficult person or situation.

To get an accurate picture of the Biblical quality of patience we, of course, need to turn to the Bible. We start with the fact that God is patient. He told Moses, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in faithfulness and truth” (Exodus 34:6). God tells us through Paul in Romans chapter 2 that He is patient with people which flows from His desire for people to repent of their sin. We also see that in 2 Peter chapter 3.

The patience God wants to develop in us is the ability to bear with, to bear up under unpleasant and unanswered difficulties without losing it or losing hope. The basis for that is the certainty of God’s sovereign, loving care and the joy set before us in heaven.

Let's think about patience in practice.

- It means bearing with, hanging in there when we are disappointed. The apostle Paul instructed in Colossians chapter 3,
“put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so must you do also” (12-13).
- It means hanging in there when we have been mistreated. 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 19 instructs us, “Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God are to entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.” We recall Joseph's patience with his brothers who treated him so badly.
- It means hanging in there when waiting. King David learned, and then instructs in Psalm 37, “Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him; do not get upset because of one who is successful in his way, because of the person who carries out wicked schemes” (7).

How do we grow in patience? Let's review three things from the first week in this series.

- Rely on God, because He is the source and power. Patience is part of the *fruit of the Holy Spirit*. Romans chapter 15 verse 5 tells us that God “gives perseverance and encouragement.”
- Remember that it requires obedient, disciplined action by us. Paul instructed Timothy, “But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness” (1 Timothy 6:11). As it has often been said, if you pray for patience God will give you opportunities to be patient. Opportunities which call for disciplined, faith-filled action. Remember, as James wrote, “the testing of your faith produces endurance” (1:3). Billy Graham wrote, “Patience in our lives springs from God's power based upon our willingness to learn it.”
- Growing in patience is a life-long process. Go back to James chapter 1, verses 2 through 4, “Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

You may have run across the poem that opens “Lord, I know there are countless times when I must wait patiently for You” and closes with “You are my Father, and I am Your child, so, Lord, could You hurry a little?” Step by step, challenge by challenge God *will* produce this gracious and vital part of the character of Christ in you. The path and pace are part of His perfect love for you throughout every day and season of your life.

Pastor Lyle