



PATIENCE
Fruits of the Spirit
Galatians 5:22-23

This Week's Message
April 7, 2024

The Fruits of the Spirit
Patience

*Let your patience show itself
perfectly in what you do.*

James 1:4
(New International Version)

Sunday's Scripture Reading
Galatians 5:22-23; James 1:2-6

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

²My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy,

³because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience.

⁴Let your patience show itself perfectly in what you do. Then you will be perfect and in what you complete and will have everything you need.

⁵But if any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He is generous to everyone and will give you wisdom without criticizing you.

⁶But when you ask God, you must believe and not doubt. Anyone who doubts is like a wave in the sea, blown up and down by the wind.

On Sunday, I will begin a new series of messages based on the Fruits of the Spirit, from Galatians 5:22-23. In those two brief verses, Paul provides a powerful list of the qualities we can have in our lives through the strength of God's Spirit.

You will probably take note that I will not go through this list in order, and that is for a couple of reasons. I am saving *love* for the end, as it is the most important, in my opinion. And I am beginning with *patience*, one I am in most need of, and you probably are as well.

There are many misconceptions about the Bible, including misconceptions about what it actually says. One of the most common of those misconceptions is that the Bible says *God won't give you more than you can handle*. Whether you have heard, or spoken, that saying, let me assure you that is found nowhere in the Bible. Nowhere.

I'm not sure why that phrase has come to be associated with the Bible, but if I had to guess, I would say that it gets confused with I Corinthians 10:13, which says, *no temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you*

Questions to Consider –

- * What kind of changes do you need to make in your life to help develop a greater amount of patience?
- * What are the barriers to becoming a patient person?
- * Do you feel as though God does sometimes give us more than we can handle?
- * Why are we so impatient?
- * Are we ever like Abraham and Sarah, trying to move God along on our timing?
- * Have you ever, out of a lack of patience, made an *Esau trade*? (An Esau trade is when, out of impatience or bad judgment, make a very poor decision, as Esau did)
- * What do you think about the impatience Jesus exhibited toward the disciples?
- * Do you think Moses was justified in his impatience toward the people, as they wandered through the wilderness? After all, forty years is a long time to lead a large group of people, and there would be many frustrations along the way.

be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. That is similar, but it is obviously not the same. Many people have been through enough difficulties in life to cause them to question God's opinion of their strength, so I think it is important to remember that while the Bible says God will not give us more temptation than we can handle, it offers no guarantee that we will not feel overwhelmed with the struggles of life.

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There are numerous examples of Biblical characters and patience, some exhibiting patience and others lacking in it. In Genesis chapter 16:1-15, for example, we read of the impatience of Abraham and Sarah. Though God had promised them a son, God's timing did not suit them. In an effort to move the promise along, Sarah convinces Abraham to have a child with her servant, Hagar, a tragic choice that continues to reverberate today. Genesis 25:19-34 tells the story of Esau and Jacob, and how Esau's impatience, aggravated by hunger, caused him to trade away his birthright. Moses struggled to have patience as he led the Hebrew people through the wilderness after the Exodus. In Exodus 32:1-24 we find the story of the golden calf. Moses has been on the mountain receiving God's commandments. While he is gone, the people grew tired of waiting on him. In their impatience, they decide to fashion a golden calf to be the object of their worship. In Luke 15:11-32, we find the famous parable of the prodigal son. He was so impatient about moving on with his life that he asked for his inheritance and struck out on his own. His impatience cost his father a lot of money, which led to a lot of struggle and heartache. Even Jesus struggled at times to be patient. Speaking to his disciples on one occasion, he says "O unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I stay with you and put up with you?" (Luke 9:41). If Jesus sometimes grew impatient, I suddenly feel a bit better about myself.

I hope to see you Sunday, as we talk about patience, and until then, God bless you!