

Bite Size Bible Study

Patience #238

By Lee Logue

Patience is one of the virtues mentioned in the Proverbs. However, it may be one of the hardest ones to develop in one's own character.

I have heard the saying: "God, give me patience and give it to me now."

Or how about: "good things come to those who wait".

Or maybe: "I have tested negative for patience".

Billy Graham had a good definition of patience. "God allows difficulties, inconveniences, trials, and even suffering to come our way for a specific purpose: They help develop the right attitude for the growth of patience."

He also said: "Patience is part of true Christlikeness, something we so often admire in others without demanding it of ourselves."

I like the way he relates patience to difficulties and suffering. It is only then that we find what true patience is within ourselves. It is easy to be patient with someone or something that really doesn't matter much to us, but when it counts, it is one of the more difficult virtues we need to develop so that we can renew the "image of God" that He created within us.

God has shown us His patience over and over again, so that we can know what true patience looks like.

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

NIV

Proverbs, the wisdom book, has a lot to say about patience. Often it contrasts the difference between a patient person and one who is impatient.

Here are just a few:

Whoever is patient, has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly.

Prov. 14:29

A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel. Prov. 15:18

A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense. Prov 19:11

Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone. Prov 25:15

Patience and wisdom are closely connected.

Proverbs 15:18 shows us how our patience or lack of it affects our relationships.

How patient are we when someone wants to merge into our lane during heavy traffic? Do we try to prevent it or allow them in? Wisdom would tell us that it will cost us a second or two but could cost us thousands of dollars and hours of delay in a collision. I often see that if I do let them in, they will likely be kinder to the next driver.

Children can be exasperating some times. But again, Patience and wisdom tell us that they are still learning what is acceptable and what is not. It seems that they like to "push our buttons", but is it being obnoxious or are they learning acceptable behaviors?

The same goes for adults that seem to get on our nerves. Are they just being impossible to be

around or have they missed learning certain cultural behaviors.

Understanding someone else's behavior can help us with having a meaningful relationship with them. God loves us no matter whether we follow His teaching or not. And I'm sure that He grieves over the times we make mistakes.

What Patience looks like

Patience is the ability to endure difficult or undesirable situations, delays, or aggravations without losing our temper and acting rashly. It involves remaining calm, composed, and dependable, even when facing challenges or awaiting an outcome. It is not being weak or "wishy-washy" but rather responding in a kind and loving way. Basically, it's the capacity to tolerate situations without reacting negatively.

Cultivating patience is often cited as a valuable skill or virtue, as it can lead to improved relationships, better stress management, and a greater ability to cope with life's challenges.

It provides one with some of the following benefits:

- **Endurance:** It allows us to withstand prolonged periods of waiting or challenging circumstances.
- **Calmness:** It cultivates a composed and peaceful state of mind, even when faced with delays or frustrations.
- **Tolerance:** Patience enables us to accept situations or behaviors without becoming irritated or angry.
- **Perseverance:** It gives us the ability to continue striving towards a greater goal despite obstacles or delays.
- **Interpersonal situations:** The ability to deal with difficult people, manage conflicts, or waiting for others to respond.
- **Life hardships:** The ability to endure personal challenges, setbacks, or difficult times with resilience.
- **Daily hassles:** Allows us to cope with minor annoyances, delays, or frustrations in everyday life.

The Bible emphasizes patience as a virtue and a fruit of the Spirit, highlighting its importance in various aspects of life, including relationships, trials, and faith. It's portrayed as a wise and virtuous choice, yielding understanding, calming quarrels, and fostering peace.

*But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, forbearance (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*

*Against such things **there is no law.** Galatians 5:22-23 NIV*

Patience as a virtue gives us:

- **Wisdom and understanding:**

The Bible connects patience with wisdom and understanding, suggesting that those who are patient possess a deeper comprehension of situations and people.

- **Calming quarrels:**

Patience is seen as a way to de-escalate conflicts and promote harmony in our relationships, contrasting with the anger and arguments that arise from impatience.

- **Overcoming adversity:**

Patience is presented as a virtue to cultivate during difficult times, helping us to endure trials and persevere in faith.

- **Relationships:**

The Bible calls for us to be patient and understanding with each other, especially when dealing with differences or perceived imperfections.

- **Love and kindness:** Love is described as patient and kind

- **Waiting on God:**

The Bible encourages believers to wait patiently for God's timing and promises, trusting in His faithfulness and sovereignty.

- **Enduring hardship:**

Patience is seen as essential when facing adversity and waiting for God's deliverance or guidance.

As you can see patience is a multifaceted virtue and cannot be learned in one or two lessons. Thankfully God is patient with us and allows ample time for us to learn and practice the **Lessons of Patience.**