

7 Life Giving Virtues Patience
Psalm 37:7-11, James 1:19-21
WRCoB 7.31.22

A teacher was helping one of her kindergarteners
Put on his boots.

He had asked for help, and she could see why.

Even with her pulling and him pushing
The little boots still didn't want to go on.

By the time they got the second boot on
She had worked up quite a sweat.

She caught her breath when the little boy said
"Teacher, they're on the wrong feet."

She looked, and sure enough, they were.

It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off
Than it was putting them on.

She managed to keep her cool as together
They worked to get the boots back on
This time on the right feet.

He then announced, "These aren't my boots."

Rather than get right in his face screaming
"Why didn't you say so?"
She bit her tongue.

Once again, she struggled to help
Pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet.

No sooner had they gotten the boots off
When he said, "They're my brother's boots.
My mom made me wear 'em."

Now she didn't know if she should laugh or cry
But she mustered up what grace and courage she had
To wrestle the boots on his feet again.

Helping him into his coat, she asked,
"Now, where are your mittens?"

He said, "I stuffed 'em in the toes of my boots."
(John Beukema, Chambersburg PA)

1 Video clip

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We come to the 5th sermon in our series
On the 7 life-giving virtues.

It is the virtue that counters the sin of wrath . . . Patience.

Wikipedia defines patience as *the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset*

Well, that's easier said than done!

Many, if not most of us, struggle with impatience.
The sin of wrath is a sin we commit.

Patience is virtue many of us need help with.

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The Bible speaks of patience from three perspectives.

1. The patience God has with humankind
2. Our patience with God
3. Humankind's patience with one another.

Let's do a brief survey of each.

In the OT, God reminds us many times
Of God's patience towards us.

God makes the comments in Exodus, Numbers
Nehemiah, several of the Psalms
And in Joel and Jonah.

God spoke it first to Moses on Mt Sinai.

**Exodus 34:6 NRSVUE "The Lord, the Lord, a God
merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in
steadfast love and faithfulness**

Throughout the history of God found in Scripture
One of God's prominent characteristics is patience.

Almost every episode, event, and encounter
Between God and humankind
God displayed patience.

God was patient with first man and woman
Yes, removing them from the garden
But covering their nakedness.

God was patient with Abraham and his foibles
And again with Isaac
And again with Jacob

God was patient with Moses and the Hebrew nation
As they struggled through 40 years of wilderness.

God displayed patience with the establishment and rule
Of the nation of Israel
Through the time of Judges
And into the time of Kings.

God patiently led King David
Beyond his self-destructiveness
Into the making of a great nation.

He showed his great patience
By sending Jesus to show us the way to salvation.

And God continues to be patient with our behavior.

God is gracious, slow to anger
And abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

This is first perspective of patience in the Bible

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The second perspective the Bible describes
Is humankind's patience with God.

As the adage describes.

Patience comes to those who wait for it.

We wait on God to answer prayers
And to guide our lives.

It takes patience to wait on God.

Isaiah 40:31 ESV But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and faint.

Psalm 37:7a NLT Be still in the presence of the Lord, and wait patiently for him to act.

Longsuffering is the term KJV uses to describe it.

Life is difficult. We lean on God for help.

We patiently wait on God
Whose timing is not our timing
Whose wisdom far surpasses ours

And whose love and care is beyond understanding.

Like the great hymn sings

*Teach me to feel that thou art always nigh
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.*

This is the second way the Bible describes patience
To be still and wait on God.

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The third perspective of patience
Is the patience we have for each other.

Our passage from the Book of James describes it well.

James 1:19-20 (CEV) My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry. If you are angry, you cannot do any of the good things that God wants done.

Patience with one another
Comes from a position of love and respect.

Jesus tells us that loving God and loving neighbors
Is the fullest expression of faith.

If God is love and if God is patient.

Then our love for God and neighbor has to exhibit patience.

Paul tells us in 1st Corinthians 13 that love is patient.

Not only is love patient

It's not rude or selfish or prideful or easily angered.

Love is the seed that patience grows out of.

Let's face it . . . impatient people are hard to live with.

Whether it is in our relationships at home

At work or school

Or in the church community

Dealing with impatient people

Whether it's others' impatience or our own

Is a major point of contention.

God knows this.

The Apostle Paul knows it too

Paul knows what it's like to be patient with impatient people.

As a church leaders he dealt with them many times.

Colossians 3:12 NIV Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

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So, we all know we can do better in the patience department

So how do we do it??

Practice patience.

Or as a doctor might say

"Practice on your patients!"

Increasing one's patience takes practice

Here are some tips that might help.

First, when you feel yourself becoming impatient
According to James, you are to do what?

- Be quick to listen
- Be slow to speak
- Be slow to become angry

Not only should you be quick to listen to the other person
You should be quick to listen to your inner self.

Ask yourself, why am I becoming impatient?

To respond impatiently to someone is so disrespectful.

Psychology Today states that practicing deep breathing
During an episode of impatience
Can help us to become more patient.

It forces you to take a moment before you “go off”
Hopefully giving enough time for some self-control.

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Secondly, stretch your limits of patience.

If you know what pushes your buttons

Purposefully seek to hold your patience a moment more.

If you do this when you feel impatient
Your tolerance and patience will increase.

Practice patience by embracing the uncomfortable
Increasing your tolerance for irritation and frustration.

James 5:10-11 CEV

¹⁰ My friends, follow the example of the prophets who spoke for the Lord. They were patient, even when they had to suffer. ¹¹ In fact, we praise the ones who endured the most. You remember how patient Job was and how the Lord finally helped him. The Lord did this because he is so merciful and kind.

Practice stretching your tolerance of patience.

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Thirdly, practice gratitude.

Being thankful makes us happier people.

And happier people are less stressed out
More optimistic and definitely more patient.

Practice gratitude.
Be intentional in counting blessings.

The more grateful you are
The more patient you become.

Count on it!

Actually, by practicing gratitude
All 7 life-giving virtues can be yours.

Peter writes

2 Peter 1:5-8 CEV

⁵ Do your best to improve your faith by adding goodness, understanding, ⁶ self-control, patience, devotion to God, ⁷ concern for others, and love. ⁸ If you keep growing in this way, it will show that what you know about our Lord Jesus Christ has made your lives useful and meaningful.

Patience is a virtue that stands opposite the sin of wrath.

Practice it and see if your life doesn't improve.

An old Dutch proverb says:

A handful of patience

Is worth more than a bucketful of brains!

Life is full of trouble and strife.

This we know.

But through patience

God's patience with us

Our patience waiting on God

And our patience with one another

We will not only get through this life on earth

We will thrive.

Write this down and place it on your fridge.

- *Patient with Others is Love*
- *Patience with Self is Hope*
- *Patience with God is Faith (Adel Bestavros)*

The Apostle Paul writes.

Romans 12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, [and] persevere in prayer.