

# Developing Godly Patience

In our local supermarket I once watched a woman who was in a hurry. She had only a few items in her basket, but her whole manner radiated impatience. She shifted her weight from one foot to the other, casting sharp glances at the other checkout lines, shaking her head, mumbling in frustration, biting her lip, looking disgusted and annoyed.

This lady shopper was a living example of the dictionary definition of impatience.

Sometimes we are forced to wait, however, for many of us waiting is almost intolerance.

Why was this woman in the supermarket so impatient?

Was there a good reason for her to be in such a hurry?

Did her impatience spill over into her manner of driving after she left the supermarket?

Was such impatience her total lifestyle?

**The Handbook For Life, the Christian Bible, frequently mentions impatience and exhorts us to be patient.**

**Proverbs 20:22** [NIV] *“Do not say, “I’ll pay you back for this wrong!” **Wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you.**”*

Wait for God to deal with the injustices of this world.

**Psalms 37:7** [NIV] *“Be still before the LORD and **wait patiently for him**; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.”*

Do not allow the success of evil people to cause you to follow their example. God will reward our faithfulness in due time if we patiently trust Him.

**How do we handle our tendencies to be impatient?**

We learn patience first by changing our attitudes and the way we look at life.

**Philippians 4:11-13** [NIV] *“I am not saying this because I am in need, for **I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.** I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. **I have learned the secret of being content** in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. **I can do everything through him who gives me strength.**”*

Paul had learnt to be content with his lot in life, by allowing Jesus Christ to be central in his life. It was this close relationship with Jesus that empowered Paul to become patient.

As Christians we can become impatient about growth in ourselves or the church as a whole, numerically and spiritually.

We need to remember that quality is more important than quantity in Christian life, and quality takes time and requires patience.

To create quality time in our lives we must change our way of thinking.

**Matthew 6:31-33** [NIV] *“So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

Seek first a relationship with God, by setting aside a certain time each day to be alone with Him. God will then ensure we will be provided with all we need to sustain our lives.

**James 5:7-8** [NIV] *“Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord’s coming is near.”*

Ask God’s help for most of us don’t live in an agrarian society where our lives naturally are one of waiting on God to provide.

**Galatians 5:22-23** [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **patience**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*

**Patience is one of the “fruits” of our intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit.**

God’s patience “rubs off” on us in this relationship.

Patience is the ability to accept delay or disappointment.

To remain calm while others around are uneasy.

**Next time we are kept waiting for an appointment think of useful things we can do in our mind.**

Pray to God about plans we have for our life.

Read His Word, a pocket-size book of Proverbs can generate our meditation on things we need to adjust in our lifestyle.

Ask God for the patience He desires. We can expect an answer but it may **not** be answered quickly.

*“Lord, give me patience but I need it right now”* is **not** a prayer that will be answered instantly!!

**A great biblical example of patience is Abraham.**

Abraham believed that God would be true to his promise to give him and Sarah his wife a son, but the couple got impatient.

When Abraham was 86 and Sarah was in her mid-70s, well beyond menopause, they decided to take matters into their own hands.

**Genesis 16:1-6** [NIV] *“Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; so she said to Abram, “The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her.” Abram agreed to what Sarai said. So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. Then Sarai said to Abram, “You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my servant in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me.” “Your servant is in your hands,” Abram said. “Do with her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai ill-treated Hagar; so she fled from her.”*

At first it seemed like an effective way to hurry God along and get things done. But what followed this lack of patience was marital friction and tension, stress, and signs of immaturity and intolerance.

God helped the family straighten things out and He forgave Abraham and Sarah for their impatience.

Then what happened?

Nothing for 14 years.

Abraham and Sarah might have been in a hurry but God was not; He showed Abraham and Sarah the patience that they lacked.

**God can only give us patience by making us wait for relief from problems and trials.**

**John 16:33** [NIV] *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

We cannot expect to have everything easy in life.

**Acts 14:22** [NIV] *“strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.”*

**We enter into the created family of God, made godlike by hardships patiently borne.**

**Hebrews 5:8-10** [NIV] *“Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.”*

Jesus as the Son of Man, the human example we follow, was made perfect [attained the goal set before Him] through patience suffering.

**Because of His patience endurance Jesus is our perfect high priest interceding on our behalf at the throne of God.**

God desires us to mature by patiently enduring hardships and heartaches in this life.

**James 5:10-11** [NIV] *“Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. As you know, **we consider blessed those who have persevered.** You have heard of Job’s perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.”*

If we are patience, God will in the end give us many eternal blessings.