

# GROWTHguide

## Grow Through Patience

August 13, 2017



### THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

James 5:7-11, Psalm 40:1-3, Acts 7:59-60,  
Acts 8:1-3, 1 Timothy 1:15-16, Colossians  
3:12-13, Matthew 16:24, Leviticus 16:29-31

### DAY 1

Read [James 5:8-9](#) and [Colossians 3:12-13](#).

Paul taught the church that Christ followers should *"clothe [ourselves] with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another."* Patience is a characteristic that should be demonstrated by people who are chosen and loved by God. God is holy so we are to be holy, and patience is a sign that God's holy nature is alive in us. Honestly assess your habits. Are you more prone to clothe yourself with compassion, humility and patience or to grumble against a brother or sister when they annoy, irritate or interfere with your desires?

- **Have you recently been impatient with someone?**
- **Was the cause of your impatience a delay, a change in your plans, or frustration over the person's failure to do something when or how you wanted them to do it?**
- **Ask for forgiveness from that person.**

Next time you are feeling impatient with someone who is driving too slowly or blocking your aisle in the grocery store, respond intentionally with a brief prayer - "Lord, help me be patient in this moment." Ask God to help you

cultivate patience as a daily response to life's little challenges.

## DAY 2

Read [Acts 7:59-60](#), [Acts 8:1-3](#), & [1 Timothy 1:15-16](#)

Paul taught Timothy, and he teaches us today, that Jesus was patient with Paul even though Paul had been a self-righteous sinner who persecuted early followers of Christ. Jesus was patient with Paul so that we would have an example of Christ's willingness to be patient with the worst of sinners - including us! When you are impatient with yourself over your own sins and failures, remember Christ is willing to be patient with all of us. That doesn't let us off the hook or mean our sins are without consequences. It means however, that the love of Christ and his promise of life eternal is not snatched away when we fail or fall. Our God is patient with his children.

- **Do you suffer or feel guilt over a sin that you think is too unforgivable for God?**
- **Do you ever feel like God could not possibly be patient with you when you repeat your mistakes and sins?**
- **Reflect on the Pharisee Saul and his actions described in the book of Acts. Think about how his life and the church were impacted when our patient Lord transformed Saul into an Apostle who changed the world for Christ.**

Pray for forgiveness for any sin that burdens your heart and then humbly accept the fact that God forgives you. Ask the Lord to help you be patient with yourself and accept his forgiveness with grace and thanksgiving.

## DAY 3

Read [Leviticus 16:29-31](#)

When God handed down the law to Moses, he commanded his people to deny themselves, do no work, and honor God through a time of rest and Sabbath. Sabbath is important for all of us today as well. The world clamors for us to live lives of unending busyness. We become addicted to a constant stream of information, movement, and activity. Resting in the Lord's presence teaches us to wait for what really matters and to conquer the impatience that results when we can't have everything we want immediately. We live in a culture that teaches us to demand instant gratification for every little desire of our hearts - no matter how significant or insignificant. We don't like to deny ourselves.

- ***Has there been a time when you had to wait for something you wanted badly?***
- ***Did you cut corners to get what you wanted by spending money you shouldn't have, by grabbing what you wanted at someone else's expense, or by refusing to spend time in Sabbath before God because you were too busy acquiring the stuff you wanted?***

Pick a day within the next 3 days to observe a time of quiet, solitude and Sabbath. Sunday might be a good day to do that. Begin your day by glorifying God during worship with your church family and then spend the remainder of the day in a time of rest and restoration with your family or on your own. Spend some of that day in prayer.

## **DAY 4**

**Read [Matthew 16:24](#) and [James 5:10-11](#)**

Waiting on God is hard when we are suffering, yet that is when we need to lean into God's promise with trust, hope, and faith more than ever. Jesus bore his cross for us. As his followers, he calls us to bear up in our suffering, sorrow, and pain and to follow him. James reminds us of Job and of the prophets, men who suffered, questioned, and sometimes complained, but who finally waited

patiently even if reluctantly for God to do what only God can do.

Are you trying to avoid a painful situation or have you done so in the past? Have you been impatient with God during a time of serious illness, unemployment, a broken relationship or a lost loved one? If so, join the club - it's a big one. Can you see how your attempt to avoid what was painful or uncomfortable might have been a wrestling match with God because you did not want to endure, or persevere until God responded in God's own time and in accordance with his plan. This is the most difficult type of patience to cultivate and practice.

- ***Are you in a season of sickness, grief, personal hardship, or a broken relationship or do you have a loved one or friend in such a situation?***
- ***Are you or your loved one trying to avoid this painful season by self-medicating, substance abuse, busyness abuse, or denial?***

Pray for the courage, strength and the capacity to endure and persevere for yourself or for someone who needs such a prayer. If you are the one enduring a difficult time, ask a faithful friend to pray for you. Seek help if necessary.

## **DAY 5**

**Read [Psalm 40:1-3](#) aloud.**

***I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.***

Read the words again substituting words that describe a circumstance from the past where God lifted you from your hurt, trouble or pain for the words "out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire." For example, you might say "he lifted me out of the pit of exhaustion and despair caused by

my chemotherapy" if you suffered through a time fighting cancer.

Read the words one more time, but this time substitute words that describe a current circumstance where you will wait patiently for God to lift you out of the situation causing your present hurt, trouble or pain. Then pray for patience and wait upon the Lord.

## DAY 6

Today is a day of reflection. Think about all you've read and learned this past week. Ask God for compassion, humility and patience in those difficult circumstances, understanding that your prayers will be answered in God's time.

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St. Paul United Methodist Church  
1199 Highland Ave. | Largo, FL 33770  
727-584-8165 | [church@stpaulumc.org](mailto:church@stpaulumc.org)

[www.stpaulumc.org](http://www.stpaulumc.org)



St. Paul United Methodist Church, 1199 Highland Avenue, Largo, FL 33770

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