



Fruit of the Spirit: Patience

FAMILIES IN TRUTH

Galatians 5:22-23

One of the wonderful fruits of God's Holy Spirit is patience, because our amazing God is patient. When we trust that God will keep His promises in His perfect timing, we can wait with patience.



(There's something pretty cool at the end of this FIT page. Please be **patient** and wait until Day #5 to look at it.)

Day #1: Wait for the Lord

Have you ever seen someone get away with something? Many movies set the drama by showing a character that gets away with bad behavior time and time again. Then, at the movie's climax, the bad guy finally gets what he deserves.

This is fun to watch in a movie, but in real life, it is so difficult to see someone getting away with bad behavior. We want justice. We want them to be punished. But what does God say about it?

† *Be still. Be patient. Wait for the Lord to act. Don't be upset when other people succeed. Don't be upset when they carry out their evil plans. – Psalm 37:7*

We can wait for God to take care of each situation. We have no idea what God might be doing in that person's heart and mind. God may be drawing the person to Himself. God might be orchestrating a set of circumstances that will bring Him glory. We are certain of this: God is patient. 2 Peter 3:9 tells us that God waits so that sinful people have time to turn from their sin and place their trust in Jesus. Thank God that He is patient, because He waited for each of us.

* Do you trust God enough to wait for Him to take care of every bad situation? If you trust Him, you will not be all tied up in knots inside, but you will have His amazing peace and patience.

Day #2: Perfect Timing

God gave Abram (whose name later became Abraham) an incredible promise. He told Abram that he would have thousands of grandkids and great grandkids.

† *The Lord took Abram outside and said, "Look up at the sky. Count the stars, if you can." Then he said to him, "That is how many children you will have." – Genesis 15:5*

There was just one problem. Abram didn't have any children, and he was really old! His wife was way too old to start having kids!

Abram waited a long time for God to keep His promise. But 10 years later, Abram still had no children. Abram and his wife became impatient. So Abram married another woman, his wife's maid, who was much younger. (This happened a lot back then, but it was not God's perfect plan for marriage.) Soon, Abram and his new wife had a son. Several years later, Abram's first wife also had a son. There was a lot of conflict between these two sons, and much heartbreak because of Abram's impatience.

Did God keep His promise to give Abram children – through his first wife? Yes. God's timing was not the same as Abram's timing.

* We must remember that God's timing is not the same as our timing (Isaiah 55:9). God's timing is perfect! When things don't happen according to your timetable, do not become impatient with God. Trust His perfect timing.

Day #3: Stand Still

In the second book of the Bible, we find another amazing promise by God. For years and years, God's people, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt. They were treated very badly and they cried out to God for help. God always hears us when we call on Him. God said:

† *So I have come down to save them from the Egyptians. I will bring them up out of that land. I will bring them into a good land. It has a lot of*

Day #3 continued:

room. It is a land that has plenty of milk and honey. – Exodus 3:8

God called Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. They had to cross a large desert before they could enter the land that God had promised them. The Egyptian king did not want the people to leave. After all, they were the ones doing all the work in his country. Pharaoh led his army to chase after the Israelites. Soon the Israelites found themselves in a tough spot. With Pharaoh's army behind them, there were mountains on both sides, and a vast sea in front of them. The army was coming quickly. How could God's people be patient at a time like this?!

But Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm." – Exodus 14:13-14

It all comes down to trust. What did God promise in Exodus 3:8? God promised to lead them into a good land. He would not leave them in Pharaoh's hands. Of course, God did the unimaginable. He split the sea in two just to rescue His people.

* When you are at the edge of your ability, surrounded by mountains of conflict, stand still and trust in God. Wait for Him to come to your rescue.

Day #4: Murmurers

Later, that same group of Israelites that God parted the Red Sea for became impatient with God. The Bible says that they murmured against Him. Murmur is a funny word. It sounds like what it is. It means to grumble and complain. Can you and your family say "murmur" several times over and over? You will sound like a crowd of complainers!

God had miraculously delivered these people from slavery. They were no longer in danger; they were no longer in chains. Yet, as they traveled through the desert – a free people, on their way to a wonderful promised land – they began to murmur! They were tired of waiting for God to fulfill His promise. They wanted to be in the Promised Land already.

† They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the

Day #4 continued:

people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" – Numbers 21:4-5

In fact, God had provided special food for them, and water to drink, but still they complained. It seemed that their idea of food, water, and freedom was not the same as God's. They met many hardships because of their impatient attitudes.

* What is the last thing you complained about? When things aren't going the way you would like, be careful not to murmur against God! Pray that your thoughts would change to be like God's thoughts. Then you will be grateful instead of grumbling.

Day #5: Just in Time

Were you impatient, or did you wait to look at this optical illusion? Get a white piece of paper and set it next to you. Next, stare at the dot in the center of this clock for 25 seconds. (You may blink if needed.) Then, quickly look at the white paper. Blink until something appears. You should see a white clock with black hands and numbers. Your mind will see the opposite of what is printed on this page.

Our timing is not the same as God's - sometimes it's opposite. Sometimes we think we need something much earlier than we do. But be sure of this: God does not show up late! He knows what we need and when we need it. In His word, He promises that He will give us His grace right when we need it.

† Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help **in time** of need.
- Hebrews 4:16 ESV



* Memorize these four simple words from Psalm 27:14: **Wait for the Lord.** They are God's words and they will see you through difficult times.