

Day 8

Patience

Silence (2 minutes) Take some time to be quiet, to calm down, and to listen. What has God been teaching you? What are the next steps He wants you to take? How is your spirit doing?

Scripture *“Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly.”* Proverbs 14:29

Discussion We often equate patience with the ability to remain calm or avoid being annoyed in difficult circumstances. Having patience isn't just about feeling better about what we find challenging; it has other benefits as well. The above passage in Proverbs equates patience with having wisdom. Wisdom helps us to make good decisions and it protects us from bringing harm upon ourselves.

In traffic, patience doesn't just help us to tolerate bad drivers or red lights, it prevents us from driving erratically or causing an accident. Patience in a checkout lane will help us to tolerate people, but it also helps us to not say what we may be thinking if we chose to let our impatience get the best of us. When dealing with difficult people, patience can help us to think clearly to see past our frustration and consider a solution before we do or say something we may later regret. And when we are waiting for God to answer our prayers, patience will help us to consider what God might want to teach us instead of rushing ahead of God and making a mess of everything.

Our lives are busier and more chaotic than past generations, so patience is evermore essential for us to embrace if we want to live an upright life. It might even seem impossible for you to become patient if it is a challenge for you. The good news is that patience is like a muscle. You may feel that you are not strong in patience, but take heart, it can be developed. It takes time and it doesn't happen overnight, but with small steps each day it will get better. And the more patience you have, the wiser you will become!

Application Take time to consider how patience is tied to wisdom. How have you been patient or impatient recently? Can you recognize how it brought about wisdom or folly in your life? Identify what tends to make you impatient most. When will you face this challenge next? What can you do to exercise wisdom through patience instead of giving in to folly by doing or saying something you'll regret? Plan for your next encounter for this challenge you've identified. Maybe you even make the opportunity happen or role play how you should respond. Be intentional to practice patience the next time you face the temptation to be irritated or annoyed with your circumstances. Be sure to praise God for your victories!

Prayer Lord, I recognize that I struggle with being patient in some situations. I know that when I am impatient that it doesn't help me or the people around me and I ask that You would help me to grow in patience. Help me to recognize what causes me to be impatient and the potential risks that might occur if I don't choose to be patient. I want my life to be an example to others about what patience can look like because I know that it fosters peace. God, please use me to bring Your peace to this world. I thank You for Your patience with me; I know that I can be a challenge! Might I also be patient with others, for Your glory I ask this in Jesus' name.

Silence (2 minutes) Talk to God about what you are learning. What are your fears? Where are your hangups? Pray for direction.

Scripture memory for the week: *“My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”*
James 1:19-20