

Daily Devotional, October 7, 2020 Patience is a Godly Virtue

¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. Colossians 1:11-12 (NIV)

One human characteristic that most of us struggle with is patience. This period of pandemic has made it a very real daily struggle. In a society of instant gratification, “Why be patient when we can have it now?” is the question we quietly ask. We have become experts in the practice of impatience and our impatience flows out into our relationships with each other. Along with our self-absorbed impatience comes a penchant to be more irritable, frustrated, judgmental and angry. I can’t imagine that any of us want to be known for these character traits! So we need to admit that our impatience not only infects our own psyches - it also affects others in all sorts of harmful ways.

When we take a step back and think about it, God’s desire for us is to endure, because through learning endurance, one of the important qualities that we learn is patience. Patience is a God-like quality, one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit that is made available to believers (Galatians 5:22-23). Have you ever stopped to think just how patient God has been with us as we have often blundered and stumbled our way through the life of a Christian. We would all be in deep doo-doo if God were not the greatest example of patience ever with all of us!

Bring into focus right now someone who always seems to be testing your patience—pushing your buttons. What are they doing or not doing that is initiating this test? As annoying as they are and as debilitating as they may be, I want to ask you to pray for them. Thank God for them, as hard as that might be. Think about all their positive qualities, and if you can’t think of any, ask God to give you greater insight into their uniqueness that God created them to have and their unique place in life. Stop trying to change them; but instead, start trying to better appreciate them. And if you can, do your best to support them, to help them grow and to find peace with their life. Remember, they are God’s handiwork, and God knows their potential. Ask God to show you how you can help them move toward their potential in becoming or growing as a child of God.

Today is a good time to trade in our impatience for patience with someone who we find trying or who we have not taken the time to try and understand. God can help us learn from God’s patience with us and from His point of view. God is never in a hurry; why do you think we often choose to hurry? Let’s thank God for God’s patience with us and ask Him for the grace to be more patient with others. As this happens, our own inner sanctity will prosper, and others will better appreciate, and greatly benefit from, our loving role in their lives.

Prayer: Lord, some of Your people are hard to love. They can be moody, mean, difficult, and impossible to understand. Sometimes I wish You hadn’t put them in my life. I need You to show me how much You love them. Reveal what You see under the surface, where they’re hurting, and tell me how to make a difference. Teach me your patience to be kind and compassionate when I don’t have my own and for loving me when I’m the one who’s difficult in someone else’s life. Be patient with me, I’m trying my best. In the name of Christ, my Lord. Amen.