

Lutheran Women in Mission

Fruit of the Spirit-Patience by Marshall Beale

Opening

Sing or read "Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways" (*LW* 392, *LBW* 480, *TLH* 416) or "The Fruit of the Spirit" (*All God's People Sing* 225).



Introduction

Do you consider yourself a patient person? Would those around you agree?

As a fruit of the Spirit, patience is the work of God. God is committed to building patience and perseverance in the lives of His people—patience that reflects His own character, patience that not only gets us through the circumstances of life but transforms our lives and the lives of those around us with His love.

The Blessing and Power of a Patient Life

What blessings come from a patient life?

- **Psalm 37:7-9**
- **Psalm 40:1-3**
- **Proverbs 15:18**
- **Isaiah 30:18**

As we wait patiently for God, we are better able to see Him at work and receive the blessings He is waiting to give. When we are patient with others, we become vessels of God's grace in their lives.

The Struggle to be Patient

I expect everyone struggles with patience. Patience is hard because it takes time—time to listen, time for circumstances to change, time to wait for God to move. We too often run ahead of God and miss His direction and His best for our lives.

What type of situation tests your patience the most?

Think of the last time you spoke or acted out of impatience, frustration or anger. What was the outcome? Looking back, what would you do differently?

In what area of your life do you need to ask God for patience? Be specific.

How God Works Patience in Us

God uses the interruptions, trials and, quite often, the people in our lives to develop

patience in us. As He works, God will stretch us, ask us to deny ourselves and yield to His will. All of this is the work of a loving God; He does it with the goal that we become more like Him. In the end, the blessing is ours.

How does God work in the difficult circumstances of our lives to produce His character within us?

- **Romans 5:3-4**
- **James 1:2-4**

Waiting: With New Eyes and a Quiet Heart

As we exercise godly patience, God wants us to see Him in the midst of every circumstance, conversation and relationship.

How can the following verses help you develop a patient life?

- **Psalm 46:10a**
- **Proverbs 3:5-6**

In godly patience there is a quietness, a peace. We are able to trust God with what is before us because He is in control and His ways are best. Knowing God is at work in us gives meaning and purpose to our waiting.

Godly Patience is a Choice

Read **Habakkuk 3:16-19**. Despite circumstances that seemed hopeless, Habakkuk made the choice to wait for God and praise Him in midst of everything. How would you have reacted if you were Habakkuk? What encouragement can we gain from his example?

God calls us to choose to be patient and to look to Him regardless of our personality, temperament or circumstances.

Being Patient: Part of our New Life in Christ

Christ has set us free from the power of sin and has called us to experience newness of life in Him. Responding to life's circumstances with God's heart, with new eyes and with the enabling, transforming power of the Spirit is part of that new life. What does God's Word tell us about who we are in Christ and how we are to live?

- **2 Peter 1:3-8**
- **Ephesians 4:22-24**
- **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Closing

Pray together: Lord, as we walk through the circumstances of life, keep our eyes fixed on You. Grant us patient hearts, trusting in Your ways and resting in Your love. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

God has given Marshall Beale many opportunities to develop patience as he has battled leukemia over the past 13 years. He and his wife, Lauren, live in Waukesha, WI, with their two teenagers, Josh and Andrea. They are members of Lamb of God, Pewaukee, WI.

