



Read Romans 12:12

What do we need to be patient in?
What affliction is Paul talking about?
Is this patience or forbearance?



Read 1 Corinthians 13:4

What does it mean "Love is patient"?
Who does love need to be patient with?



We need to be patient with God, but we also need to be patient with people.

Why?
Who do we need to be patient with?

God is patient with us; we need to be patient with others. We need to make allowances for the fact that those around us are works in progress. None of us is perfect, and we need to give time for God to work in the lives of those around us.

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Ephesians 4:2

Be patient with everyone. 1 Thessalonians 5:14

Who do you need to be patient with right now? (answer in your head)

Is it easier to be patient with some people than with others? Why? / Why not?



Read James 5:7-8

What do we need to be patient for?
What does verse 8 mean? How do you stand firm in patience waiting for Christ's return?

We have seen we need to be: Patience with others, Patience with God and Patience in circumstances. But we also need Patience with ourselves.



When do you need to be patient with yourself?
Why do you need to be patient with yourself?

Each of us is a work in progress. We need to realise that many good things in our lives take time to grow. Maturity and holiness are processes in our lives.

What happens if you are not patient with ourselves?



Growing Patience

The last thing we need to consider is how to grow patience.

What will help you be patient?

First, we must remember that the Fruit of the Spirit is what the Holy Spirit grows in our lives. It is Him before it is us. We just cooperate and let the Holy Spirit change us.



Some suggestions when you need patience.
Looking at a situation accurately.
Understanding why you are impatient
Thinking through the issues.
Give the situation to God.
Express trust in God.



Read Colossians 1:9-12

Paul prayed for patience for the Colossians.
Would someone like to pray for us?

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Patience



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23



What is patience?

The ability to wait for something without stress, anger, or frustration.
The ability to take a long-term view of something.
The ability to persevere.

How patient do you think you are? (0 to 10, Zero being not at all, ten being Job.)

Patience is not one thing – it is several things. People can be very patient in some areas of their lives and very impatient in others.



If you are given a present & told not to open it until your birthday, how patient are you? (0-10)

If you are driving behind a car doing 70 in a 100 zone, how patient are you? (0-10)

If you are in a long, slow-moving queue, how patient are you? (0-10)

If you need to learn a language, how patient are you? (0-10)

If you have a bar of chocolate, do you eat it all at once or over 3 days?

What is an area where you are very patient?

What is an area where you are very impatient?

Why is it that we can be patient in one area and not in another?

Do you think you are more patient now than you were 5 years ago? Why? / Why not?



Forbearance

If you have an NIV or one of the other more modern translations, they may have the word forbearance.

The Greek is *makrothumia* μακροθυμία it means a state of emotional quietness in the face of unfavourable circumstances. This you would translate as patience.

But it also means to be able to endure uncomplainingly the various forms of sufferings, long-suffering, wrongs and evils that we meet with, and to bear patiently injustices which we cannot remedy and provocations we cannot remove.

How would you translate this?

It can also mean to put up with a difficult person in a positive way.

How would you translate this?

The last two are better translated as forbearance. You can see where the idea of forbearance comes from. The Greek can be translated as either patience or forbearance. It is up to the translator to decide which fits the context better.

What would you say is the difference between patience and forbearance?



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Forbearance has the idea of self control or restraint, to put up with an offence without retaliating. It is about compassion. It includes the idea of tolerance.

Patience is coping with a situation that seems too slow.

To put it simply, patience is waiting for something. Forbearance is putting up with something.

Do you have forbearance? (0-10)



Are you better at patience or forbearance?

In what kind of situation might you need forbearance?



Back to Patience.

Why is it so hard to wait for things?

Many reasons depending on our personality and the situation. Part of it is a need for instant gratification. (I want it all and I want it now.) Our instant society feeds this vice. Modern society is fast-paced. Part of it is a need for control. We want timing to be in our hands. It can be because of an emotional need for completeness. (When X happens, I will be happy; until then, I can't be). It can be because something is blocking a genuine need and, therefore, forcing us out of routine. (e.g. The traffic makes me late for work: I can't buy the house until the bank gives me an answer.) Sometimes it is the uncertainty, the timing or the outcome that makes patience hard. (Did I pass this exam? Will it be this month or in 3 months' time? How can I plan if I don't know?)

Some of the above examples describe situations that are totally out of our control. Being impatient here is both illogical and dangerous.



Stuck in traffic,

What difference does it make to the outcome if you are patient or impatient?

What difference does it make to your mental state if you are patient or impatient?

What could you do in this situation to deal with your impatience?

Is there a connection between a lack of patience and stress?

What is it like being around an impatient person?



Read Numbers 21:4-6

What happened when the people became impatient with God?

Why does impatience upset God?

Do you think it is healthy to wait for things?

If you are an impatient person, you will certainly answer no! But it is good to have things in our lives to look forward to. In spiritual terms, we would call this Hope. If everything comes at once, you don't tend to value or enjoy what you already have.



The Danger of Being Patient

Most virtues are vices when taken to the extreme.

What does patience become at its extreme?

What does forbearance become at its extreme?

Patience can become passivity or procrastination. Forbearance can end up with us putting up with things, situation of behaviour that are wrong.

How will you know when patience goes bad?

One of the big questions Christians often have is "when do I need to wait and when do I need to take initiative and act?"



What are the dangers of both?

What advice would you give someone asking this question?

Why is it such a hard question to answer?

In what situations do you need patience?

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Colossians 3:12

Why is patience important to God? Why does He value it?



Read Psalm 37:7-8

Who do you need to be patient with in this verse?

What do we need to be patient with God for?

Answers to prayer, fulfilment of promises, desires of our hearts, simply for God to move. As a Christian, patience with God is vital it is also a mark of maturity.

We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who, through faith and patience, inherit what has been promised. Hebrews 6:12

What happens when you are patient?

And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. Hebrews 6:15



Can you think of any people in the bible who needed to wait for God?

Why might God make you wait for things?

What might it achieve in us?

Is God doing this for our good or harm?

According to this verse, how should we wait?

How should we not wait?

I waited patiently for the LORD; Psalm 40:1



Read Proverbs 16:32

This is a great verse and has a Bible Study all to itself.

Why is a patient person better than a warrior?



Patience in Proverbs has its own meaning. As the second half of the verse suggests, it is about being in control of your emotions and your behaviour. It has the idea of being thoughtful and focused on the moment. God aware. The warrior tends to be a little more rash and myopic.

This verse wants you to be patient in the situation, even in a crisis.

How will this help you?

How will you make sure you are the patient person, not the warrior?

Patience gives you the ability to see a long-term perspective. It stops you from being a slave to the immediate.

A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel. Proverbs 15:18



Read Isaiah 7:13

How do we try God's patience?

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realising that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? Romans 2:4