

I was at a friend's house and he wanted to demonstrate his new stereo for me. Typically, he would play his music by plugging his stereo into his phone and streaming the music from the internet. But streaming music compromises the sound quality, and this new hi-fi system was worthy of a high-quality source. So, my friend had dug out his CD player and collection of CDs. He put in a CD and as we waited for the disk to load, he said, "Remember when we moved from cassette tapes to CDs and how amazingly fast it was to go from one track to another? Waiting for a tape to rewind seemed to take forever. And now, we are so used to the immediate response of the internet, we hate waiting for a CD player." Yes, our world keeps getting faster and **we expect instant gratification from more and more things**. When I started working in my field, I would design something and then wait, often for weeks, to get the parts together to evaluate a prototype. Now, "RP" is a regular phrase that I use in my job that stands for "rapid prototype." I can now often expect to have a prototype in the same day! We get so used to having things quickly, that we cannot even take the time to say "rapid prototype" – we need to be FAST and so we say "RP" instead. In May of 2019, Amazon started shifting their Amazon Prime service from 2 days to a one-day standard delivery. **What do we want? "Stuff!" – When do we want it? "Now!"**

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

That word "fruit" is the Greek "karpos" and means benefit, produce, profit, harvest... fruit. In other words, the things that we can expect to gain from God's spirit are in this list. As I have attempted to illustrate above, our **culture today is working to push patience off the list**. (yes, I hear you muttering about the other items on the list as well... we do live in a broken world.) We've all heard that "patience is a virtue." A virtue is a characteristic that is admirable and beneficial to one's self and to others. Certainly, every fruit of the spirit is virtuous by nature.

The familiar story of the Israelites at Mt. Sinai in the book of Exodus gives us some examples of both patience and impatience exhibited by various beings. First there is the flagrant impatience of the Israelites loudly and frequently proclaimed. This is probably **the greatest example of unappreciative whining in human history**. These people were impatient. And yet, God was patient. Moses was driven to impatience multiple times, culminating later with the punishing consequence of not being permitted to enter the Promised Land (Num 20:1-13.) Moses went up on the mountain to receive the Law. After the people had agreed to the covenant 3 times (Exo19:8, 24:3 & 24:7) they again became impatient and complained to Aaron. Aaron also became impatient and decided to appease the people with an abomination, the golden calf. And, we see God lose His patience by contemplating the destruction of the people in v.32:10. Moses, the hero in this part of the story, exhibits patience and intercedes for the people and basically saves them. But then, when he saw with his own eyes the abomination that the people were engaged in, he lost his patience and threw down the tablets of the law.

God changed His mind because Moses was patient and **present**. Likewise, if we try to do everything alone, we will eventually fail! We need each other, my friends. We are relational creatures and thrive on companionship. And God created us in His image. If we were meant to do this alone, I think we would not be here! If God wanted to exist alone, He certainly could, but there would be no creation. God wants companionship. That is why we exist. **We are being refined to attain companionship status.**

*For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason **He is not ashamed to call them brethren**, (Hebrews 2:11)*

We desire to be called His brethren. Part of the path to get there is to work together. **Read 1John3:16.**

“...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,” (Hebrews 10:24)

By nurturing our relationships, we can **stimulate one another to patience**, arguably one good deed worth pursuing. We’re to practice being worthy companions to each other so we can accompany God in eternity.

*“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, **what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness**, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:9-13)*

Here in 2Peter, we’re told that God is patient... Sure, we know that already. But I didn’t stop the quote at vs. 9 or 10, because the passage is not only for us to be encouraged by who and what God is. From this passage, we need to learn that the reason why we are following this path is that **we have Hope for what is better**. Yes, we need to wait for God, for His coming, for the Bride to make herself ready. But, waiting alone is really hard, lonely, frustrating, and even dangerous in that **the temptation to take matters in our own hands could lead to destruction**. We need to lift each other up – support each other – nurture our relationships, being in constant contact and holding each other accountable for our actions and decisions. I wonder if Abram and Sarrai went to a multitude of counsel before engaging Hagar in their impatience (Gen 16:2.) I wonder if David was sneaking a gander at naked Bathsheeba with his advisors in the room.

Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. (Romans 15:1-2)

Time is a resource that God gave us, and we treat it like a commodity, like a currency. The only difference between time and money is that time is the great equalizer. Bill Gates and I both have the same number of hours in a day. Because of that, we erroneously tend to treat time with a [scarcity mindset](#). It looks like this: I never feel like I have enough time, and so if I am not being productive, I must be wasting time. But **just because I am not being productive, does not mean that I am procrastinating or distracted**. Waiting on God, exercising patience, and simply sitting with a situation without acting, are beneficial uses of time when we are not being productive in the typical sense. My time is precious, it slips away so easily... My habit is to operate along the lines of: “I don’t have time to be patient!” or “What can I do to be productive while I wait?” **Patience is our ability to ignore the fallacy that time spent not being productive is wasted time.**

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. (Colossians 3:2)

Peace to you and glory to God!

-Nate

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