
Sermon Notes

September 29, 2019

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Be Patient Like God Galatians 5:22-23, James 5:7-11

“Patience is a Virtue”

- ❖ Life seems full of situations and people that can often try our patience
- ❖ Among the nine slices of fruit Paul lists as part of the Fruit of the Spirit, growing in patience may be the greatest need for many of us
 - no one WANTS to be short-tempered, agitated, rude or unkind
 - patience is often developed amidst mistreatment, provocation, the shortcomings of others, and even waiting upon God
- ❖ True patience mirrors the patience of God and is the result of God’s work inside of us
 - the fruit of patience puts God’s glory and God’s power on display
 - we are responsible to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and do all we can to cultivate and nurture the fruit of patience

Four Flavors of Patience

- ❖ Patience in the face of mistreatment and abuse
 - long-suffering = experiencing the mistreatment of others over a long period of time without growing bitter or resentful
 - not a sanction for the practice or presence of abuse
 - rather, this is the ability to bear up under weariness, strain and persecution while serving the purposes of God
 - cases where, by God’s design, certain levels of mistreatment may persist over a long period of time
 - the prophets (James 5:10)
 - in our day: office politics, power plays, ridicule, scorn, insults, undeserved rebukes
 - situations in which God may choose to glorify Himself through you as you turn the other cheek
 - remember, *the Judge is standing at the door* (5:9)
 - God sees, knows, cares
 - the example of Jesus (1 Peter 2:23)
 - keeping your mouth closed when you feel you have been dealt an unfair hand or your rights have been trampled on is one of life’s greatest challenges
 - hold onto the faithfulness of God, knowing that God is faithful to work on your behalf (1 Peter 4:19)
 - the example of Joseph in the OT (Genesis 50:20)

- ❖ Patience in the face of provocation
 - provocation = when the actions of others conspire to arouse your anger
 - what provokes you to anger?
 - who/what “gets your goat”?
 - learn to imitate God who is slow to anger (Ex 34:6-7)
 - God shows the riches of His patience to people who least deserve it
 - James tells us to be *slow to anger... quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger* (James 1:19)
 - meditate on how patient God is with you! (Matt 18)
 - make a practice of apologizing every time you lose your temper

- ❖ Patience in tolerating the shortcomings of others
 - ***don't grumble against one another*** (5:9)
 - impatience with the shortcomings of others is rooted in your pride
 - forbearance (tolerance) springs up out of your love for others (*cf.* Ephesians 4:2-3, Colossians 3:13)
 - every day, God deals patiently with your shortcomings
 - get that 2 x 4 out of your own eye before you start going after the piece of sawdust in someone else's eye

- ❖ Patience when waiting on God
 - you must learn to be patient with God's timetable
 - learn from the patience of a farmer (5:7)
 - learn from the patience of Job (5:11)
 - trust in the character and promises of God
 - suffering produces perseverance (Romans 5:3)
 - the testing of our faith produces steadfastness (James 1:3)
- ❖ Stretch and strengthen your patience muscle!

Personal Reflection

1. What circumstances, situations or people are most likely to try your patience?
2. What do you need to know about God's justice and faithfulness in order for you to endure mistreatment patiently?
3. Do you have a temper? Who or what “gets your goat”? What steps do you need to take in order to outgrow your temper and to grow in humility?
4. Think back over the past forty-eight hours. How have you dealt with the shortcomings of others? What attitudes about yourself and others would help you be more patient?
5. Are you waiting for God to do something? If so, what? In what specific way do you think God wants you to pray and act during this time of waiting?