

Pastor Michael O'Neill

November 2, 2025

## **Fruit of the Spirit** **Part Four**

*Galatians 5:22-25*

### **1. God's patience.**

- *Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 103:8; 2 Peter 3:9, 15; 1 Timothy 1:13-16*

- **Our patience**

- *Proverbs 15:18, 19:11; Exodus 34:6*

- **Be patient with everyone**

- *1 Thessalonians 5:14*

- **Be patient**

- *Ephesians 4:2*

- **Love is patient**

- *1 Corinthians 13:4*

- **Be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times**

- *Romans 12:12*

### **2. Faithfulness.**

- **God's faithfulness**

- *1 John 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24*

- **Our faithfulness**

- *Matthew 6:14-15; Colossians 3:23*

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## **The Fruit of the Spirit: Patience and Faithfulness – Part 4**

We are on the fourth in our series on the Fruit of the Spirit. The Fruit of the Spirit is the description of the character of God's Spirit, and its resulting fruit in our lives when the Spirit lives in us. The Bible describes these characteristics in Galatians 5:

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.  
(Galatians 5:22-25, nlt)

We're looking at each of these nine descriptions but notice that the word "fruit" is singular, not plural. So, if you are a Christian, you should have all nine characteristics in your life and not one at a time.

We'll discuss two characteristics God wants to produce in us today, now don't be confused, we aren't going in order as we have the first three weeks of the series. Today's two characteristics kind of go together, even though they aren't listed back-to-back – Patience and Faithfulness.

Interesting that Pastor Mike wanted the Children's Pastor to preach on patience. He probably thought, he works with kids, he must be patient right? Or maybe it was he has four kids of his own, he must be patient. I don't think it was those things, I think he thought, "he knows patience because he's been a lifelong fan of the Mariners." Too soon, right? Let's move on.

Patience and Faithfulness have similarities, but they are different, so let's start with patience:

Patience is hard, one of the first things we learn as a child is how difficult it is to wait. Waiting for your birthday, waiting for Christmas, waiting for summer break, waiting till you grow up or don't have to go to school. I remember in a class growing up we came in from recess and the teacher said, one minute no talking. We sat there and after the time, she asked how it was sitting quietly. Was it hard? Peaceful? Did the time gap quickly or slowly? It felt like a long time, then she admitted it was only 15 seconds. Sitting quietly for only 15 seconds and it felt like forever.

Patience is hard, but we can have patience because God is patient with us. To help us understand patience, let's start with God's patience...

## 1. God's patience

In the Old Testament we see God's patience with the Israelites over and over again. When Moses brought them out of Egypt, they were repeatedly disobedient to God, and yet God still loved them, corrected them, provided for them and guided them. Nehemiah says this about God's patience in the Old Testament.

They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate; slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them.  
(Nehemiah 9:17, niv)

Often in the Old Testament, the Hebrew expression for patience in most instances is the delay of the outbreak of wrath. Being "slow to anger". Just as you might be to your children, God is all the more slow to anger in his relationship with us. David recognized it too and wrote of it in Psalm 103:8 as he had grown older:

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.  
(Psalm 103:8, niv)

God is slow to anger, He is patient with us and all people, but that doesn't mean he's weak or a pushover. Our sin means we deserve punishment, but God is patient.

God's patience is not tolerance. He does not tolerate sin, but he is patient with us so we can turn from sin. Peter put it this way:

The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient; because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost...Don't forget that the Lord is patient because he wants people to be saved. This is also what our dear friend Paul said when he wrote you with the wisdom that God had given him." (2 Peter 3:9, 15, cev)

When we realize how patient God is with us, we are more likely to be patient with others, like the apostle Paul eventually was. Paul's was a terrible man, but because of God's patience with him, his life was changed. Here is how Paul described himself:

Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. (1Timothy 1:13-16, niv)

Paul experienced God's patience, and his life was changed. The last 2000 years, lives all over the world, including our own, have been changed because of Paul, because he experienced, God's patience. God is patient because He loves everyone and wants everyone to know of His love. God's patience for us leads to our patience with others...

- **Our patience**

Paul went on to share in his letters to churches about the importance of patience. Why would he have to say that to the church? The Christians weren't always patient with others. Sounds like an issue nowadays too. Paul had reminded them how to live in step with the Holy Spirit, and his reminder is for us too. Our patience needs to be lived out not just at home or at work, but in church and in our community. We are to be patient with others. Here is what Paul told the Christians in the churches in the New Testament.

- **Be patient with everyone** (I Thessalonians 5:14)
- **Be patient** (Ephesians 4:2, niv)
- **Love is patient** (I Corinthians 13:4, niv)
- **Be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times** (Romans 12:12, gnb)

Good reminders for any church, right? The Proverbs teach a lot about patience too. Here is what two Proverbs say our patience should look like:

A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.  
(Proverbs 15:18, niv)

A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense...  
(Proverbs 19:11, niv)

Arguing and being offended is all around us. Everyday. Let's practice our patience by not arguing and not being offended. Practicing patience means giving others a second chance, or forgiving someone even if they haven't asked for it. Practicing patience helps us see others not as who they are now, but as who they could be. Who God has created them to be.

We need God's help to be patient as we remember that God is faithful to help us look like Him. He is a God of faithfulness. He even said he was to Moses in Exodus 34:

The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out, "Yahweh! The LORD! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. (Exodus 34:6, nlt)

## 2. Faithfulness

He is a God of faithfulness. Just like we see the example of God's patience in the Bible, we see God's faithfulness towards others too.

- **God's faithfulness**

Last week we brought the kids Bible Quizzing team into service, and I thought it was perfect timing when I realized the connection between what they were learning today and what this sermon would be on. They are studying the life of Abraham today. God promised to Abraham he would have a big family. Abraham was 75 years old when God first promised he would have a son. I know that isn't very old, but it is getting up there when it comes to having kids. Abraham's son, Isaac, would be born 25 years later when Abraham was 100 years old. This Bible story teaches faithfulness and patience. God was faithful to keep his promise to Abraham, it was 25 years later, but still, God was faithful. Abraham had to be patient to experience God's faithfulness. 25 years waiting for what God said He would do.

God was faithful to Abraham and throughout the Bible we see how God continued to love and guide His people even though, over and over again they were unfaithful. They continued to mess up and need forgiveness. God was patient with them and faithful to forgive, as He is with us. We don't deserve it, but we need God's forgiveness, and He is faithful to always forgive us.

If we confess our sins he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

We experience God's faithfulness in forgiveness but also in sanctification. To be sanctified means to be set apart for God. You may not know what God wants you to do, but you love Him and your answer to Him is yes. It means you want what God wants, you see others the way God sees them, you choose God and His plan for you, over anything else. God is faithful to forgive, and He is faithful to sanctify, as we see in 1 Thessalonians:

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
*The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.* (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, niv)

God saves us, and God sanctifies us, and he is faithful to do it for anyone who asks.

Being saved and sanctified means we look different than the world. It's not something we do on our own, we don't produce fruit of the Spirit unless we have the Holy Spirit in us. God calls us to be more like Him. He has a plan for you, and he wants to save you and sanctify you. If you desire that for your life, then you should tell Him, and ask Him to do it.

The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:24, niv)

We can be faithful to God and others, because He is faithful to us. We experience God's faithfulness anytime we ask for forgiveness, because he will always forgive us. Our faithfulness means we should forgive as well.

- **Our faithfulness**

Faithful to forgive ourselves, and faithful to forgive others. Jesus told everyone in the Sermon on the Mount the importance of forgiving others.

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. (Matthew 6:14-15)

Are you faithful to forgive others, knowing God is always faithful to forgive you? We have an opportunity every day to be faithful to God in how we live.

Faithfulness is an ongoing way of life. A lifestyle of obedience, trustworthiness and loyalty you choose. There is a lack of faithfulness everywhere we go.

Faithful to God when it's convenient for me. Faithful to my church until they make some changes I don't like. Faithful to my friends unless they hurt my feelings. Faithful with my actions unless nobody is watching. Faithful to my spouse until it's too much work.

A comedian from Washington named Dustin confessed to his wife early in their relationship that she never had to worry about him being unfaithful. She asked how do you know, he said because for my entire life I've been a fan of the Seattle Mariners. He said you could never hurt me the way they have hurt me, every year, and I've never left them, so I know I'd never leave you.

I choose to be faithful to the Mariners, they may not deserve it, but I know God is faithful to me and I definitely don't deserve it either.

So, two weeks ago I was in California racing in an Iron Man race. 13 hours to go 140.6 miles, 2.4 swim, 112 bike, 26.2 run. It was the hardest thing I have ever done, and I have a few pictures to show you.

The day before the race, you check in and drop your bike off, and you have a meeting with the race director to go over rules, expectations, issues or challenges to expect on the course and whatever else.

So the race director asks how many have never done this. Hands go up, then he said if you are nervous about tomorrow, don't worry, the handwork has already been done.

Kind of a lie, but the training is what helps you finish. If you did it. The race was still hard, but for 10 months I had been faithfully training each week. Swimming, biking and running 2-3 times a week. 33-50 hours a month. Most mornings during the week I would be up by 5:00am. Did you know there is a McDonalds right next to the pool? I could've got up early and went there instead. Or I just worked out, I could have a sausage McGriddle, delicious. But I didn't. I tried to eat healthy so my diet would help my training, not hinder it. I wanted to race hard, finish and do my best, and that meant being faithful to my training plan.

It might not be exercise but we all need to be faithful with what we do. Faithful to work hard with our jobs, or faithful to do our best at school, faithful to be there for our family, faithful to be a good friend, faithful to listen to others, or whatever it is, like Paul said,

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord"  
(Colossians 3:23)

You wouldn't know this is a fruit branch by looking at it, because it has no fruit, but it's a pear branch. It's not connected to the tree, it cannot produce fruit. We produce fruit of the spirit when we stay connected to God. The more time we spend with Jesus, the more we

start to look like Him. The branch must remain connected to the tree to produce fruit; we must remain connected to God if we are going to produce fruit of the spirit.

Coming to church is good, but it will be hard to produce fruit if you are connecting to God only once a week. It will be hard to bear fruit if your connection to God ends the minute you walk out that door. He loves you and wants to spend time every day with you. Staying connected to God means reading your Bible and praying on your own. When you can't be here. That will help you to produce fruit. The more time you spend with God the more fruit you produced.

God gives us the Holy Spirit to help us have patience and faithfulness...and all the characteristics. When we produce fruit, we look like Jesus. Our actions need to reflect the Holy Spirit living inside us.

Before we pray, I want you to think about a few things. Sit quietly for a minute like I did in school and think about this:

Am I strong enough in my faith and close to God so I can produce fruit?

Where have I been impatient or unfaithful? To God? To others? What about online?

Where do I need help being patient? Being faithful?

Is this fruit growing in my life?

When people look at me, do they see the fruit growing?

Is it obvious that I am a follower of Jesus because I am bearing fruit of the Spirit?

*Prayer*

***Benediction:***

May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5-6, nlt)

May God help you stay connected to Him. Daily choose to follow Him, so we can continue to grow in patience, faithfulness, and everything else as we aim to look more and more like Jesus. May our actions and our words reflect the Holy Spirit living in us as we go.