



Navigators Discipleship Tool



The Practice of Patience: Growing in the Waiting

We often hear “patience is a virtue.” But what does the Bible actually say about patience, and how do we practice it faithfully in our everyday lives?

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV) tells us, “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.”

Among the fruit of the Spirit, patience is a quality we are called to embody as believers. Not only does patience help us love others well — strengthening us to be kind and gracious during frustrating or difficult situations — but it teaches us to rely on God for direction and guidance in our lives and relationships.

However, patience isn’t easy. Whether you’re waiting for the Lord to reveal next steps in your life or steadfastly praying for a family member or friend to come to Christ for years — trusting the Lord to work in His perfect timing can feel like tediously stepping into the unknown.

As you practice patience, here are a few reminders to encourage you in your journey with the Lord.

1. Patience Allows You to Walk with God in the Waiting

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer” Romans 12:12 (NIV).

When we are faced with active waiting, whether for something to happen in our life or another’s, the Lord invites us to lean on Him through patience. In seasons of joy or trial, we can grow closer to God through prayerfully surrendering to Him with open hands and trusting Him with His timeline above our own.

2. Patience Teaches Us How to Embrace Discomfort

“We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope” Romans 5:3-4 (NIV).

If you’re practicing patience, there’s a high chance you’re not comfortable. Patience requires us to hold our tongue when we’d like to speak, stand still with a decision when we’d like to run, and lean into the unknown when we’d like answers. However, through the discomfort of patience, God works in our lives to grow faith, produce character, and show us what true trust in Him looks like.

3. Patience is an Opportunity to Offer Grace to Others

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud” 1 Corinthians 13:4 (NIV).

It can often feel like we are playing the long game with the people we are praying for, hoping that one day, God will work in our loved ones’ lives. Patience gives us the opportunity to love others well in the waiting, showing grace and offering second chance after second chance to those who don’t know God personally yet. These moments allow us to extend the same grace and patience to others that God extends to us daily.

As you continue in your journey with God and others, consider this question: how is the Lord working and growing you through practicing patience in your life?