

GOALS
Lent Sermon Series 2020
Peace/Patience
Colossians 1:3-14
Galatians 5:22-23

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

March 15, 2020

Welcome and review of the series...

This week we're looking at two of the 9 resulting attributes of the presence of the Holy Spirit of God living in each of us. We're combining these two because they have similar qualities and because you can't have one without the other. Today we're going to look at peace and patience. I know...this is going to be challenging, right. We're all going to get our toes stepped on and our spirits stretched. We're living in a culture and a time when peace and patience are in short supply. The promise many, many years ago was that all of the coming advancements in technology [Pic of an old school computer] were going to make our lives easier and allow us to have shorter work weeks, enjoy more leisure time, be able to communicate more freely with each other, and reduce the stress and anxiety of life. So, how's that working for you? Right! We go bonkers every day just trying to stay on top of all the information that comes into our lives through a myriad of technological devices. Did you know that there is more information available to you in just the hours you've been awake today than existed in the entire lifetime of most people who lived just 50 years ago? Try to stay on top of all of that is exhausting.

Does anyone remember the Encyclopedia Britannica? [Pic of Encyclopedia Britannia] A guy would come to your front door with a large bag. As a salesman he would carry with him a sample copy of the encyclopedia that was promised to change your life. There were volumes of books – all in alphabetical order – that were filled with all of the latest information from every source possible from all around the world. Oh, but there's more. If you buy now, you'll also get the yearly update that includes all of the discoveries and inventions that happened in the previous year so that you could stay on top of current events. My parents bought them. Yep, we were all in. And man did they get used. I have two brothers and between the three of us we practically wore those things out doing book reports and all kinds of assignments. My parents got their monies worth.

But, you know what, there is more information accessible to me in the palm on my hand than was ever available through all of those volumes. I now have video footage of the first moon landing, maps of the South American jungle, access to translations of English into over 50 other languages, stats and figures on everything imaginable, details about historical events, pictures of all kinds of things imaginable, and did I mention shopping.

So, how can we find peace and patience in a world where the television never turns off, our purchases can be on our doorsteps overnight, and people demand instantaneous responses and split second replies? How do we find peace and patience in a world of ridiculous deadlines and demanding people? And, how can we bring peace and patience to the world around us when we don't seem to be able to find it ourselves? So, since this is such a serious issue and there is a need for peace and patience...let's dive into how we can find it and how we can give it away to others.

First, let's talk about finding peace and patience for ourselves. And while this is not intended to be a therapy session – if we're honest with ourselves, we all have some work to do internally. If you have any doubts about that, just look to the person you came in with and they'll tell you that you have some work to do. The internal, spiritual work we need to do will almost always manifest itself in some outwardly way. That means that we will never be peaceful, patient people on the outside if we don't first deal with the things going on - on the inside of us. **God never intended for you or planned for you to carry the burdens you're carrying** or feeling the weight of the world that you feel. God never intended for you to lose sleep or to lose the peace He gives us because of some circumstance or situation. Most of us do not exhibit a peaceful/patient spirit because we are holding to what God said is God's to handle.

Jesus was clear in John 14:27 that the source of our peace and source of our ability to be patient is from him. Look at what it says: ***I am leaving you with a gift – peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.*** Jesus tells us that we can have peace, that we can find peace because He gives it to us as a gift. When Jesus proclaimed that the Spirit of God would rest in those who believe in Him – He was also letting us know that that Spirit would bring a peace into our hearts...if we pay attention to the Spirit's voice inside of us. Jesus goes on to say that this peace is one that is beyond our ability to understand. He says, I know you don't get it

but, listen, **...my yoke is easy and the burden I give you is light.** (Matt 11:30 NLT) Jesus took care of all that is undoing you through His sacrifice for us. He's carrying the majority of the load. He is the one who is in all, above all, in charge of all and when we take on the burdens that Jesus is meant to carry we are, in effect, telling Jesus that we don't have faith in His ability to handle what ever it is that is undoing us.

While none of us want to say that to Jesus **we allow ourselves and our worries to get in the way of a life of peace and patience.** The greatest desire that Jesus has, second only to making sure you're in heaven with Him for all eternity, is that you would know His peace and in turn – know patience in every situation. In verse 10 of Colossians 1 is says: **...the way we live will always honor and please the Lord.** In order for us to be able to do that we need to give up those things that are causing the restless nights, the ulcers, the headaches, the acid reflux, the anxieties and nervousness that we feel and lay those things at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ so that He can care for them...not us.

- Prayer Time for people to lay down their burdens – altar steps, pray for each other, pray quietly where you are sitting right now, spin out of our seat and get down on your knees – what ever you need to do to surrender those things that are getting in the way of you experiencing God's peace and patience in your life.

So, how do we now live in a way that will allow others to see that peace. First, don't pick those things back up – leave them here, leave them at the feet of Jesus, leave them alone and don't go back and wallow in the guilt, don't go back and rehash what you could have done or what might have been. Give everything to Jesus and allow Him to set you free. That's the first thing we need to do because most of us in this room have laid something down before only to pick it back up again. The peace and patience Jesus is granting us today is a gift of freedom from those things...if you pick them up again, then we're entering back into bondage and that's not what Jesus wants for us.

Second, after you let those things go at the feet of Jesus and experience that freedom, truly desire that peace and patience for others. As people who, as verse 12 says: **live in the light.** It is part of our holy obligation to carry that light into the world around us. That means that **we get to bring an air of peace and patience into every situation** we live in. Yep, that means when we're standing in line at the DMV, when we're in the doctor's waiting room, when we're waiting for that important package to arrive, when we're behind a person who was ill-equipped or not prepared, when...do I need to go on. Instead, we are to allow the peace and patience that Jesus gave us through the presence of God in us to come shining into the world from us. There is no room of restlessness or impatience for God's people. There is no telling someone off or middle fingers in the air for people who have found the freedom of peace and patience in Jesus. There is no circumstance that can undo us, no situation that can get the best of us, no attack that can destroy us, no enemy that is greater than He that is in us. You have been given the peace and patience of the Lord God almighty, maker of heaven and earth. Draw deep from it and share it with the world today and for the rest of your life because no one can take it from you!

Amen.