

# What Does the Bible Say About Patience?

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We live in an impatient age. We want our food fast, our answers instant, and our troubles gone by morning. Waiting feels like wasted time, and bearing with difficult people feels like weakness. The Bible sees it differently. It treats patience, what the King James calls longsuffering, as a mark of maturity, a fruit of the Spirit, and a reflection of the very character of God. Let us see what it says.

## God Is Patient With Us

Before we speak of our patience, we must see God's. He described Himself to Moses as *"longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth"* ([Exodus 34:6](#)). Peter explained why the Lord has not yet brought the end, saying He is *"longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* ([2 Peter 3:9](#)). Every day we are still here to repent is a day of God's patience. Paul asked whether men despise *"the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance"* ([Romans 2:4](#)). We owe our very chance at heaven to the patience of God.

## Patience Is Grown Through Trials

Patience does not come naturally. It is forged in hard places. *"tribulation worketh patience"* ([Romans 5:3](#)), Paul wrote, and James said the same, that *"the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing"* ([James 1:3-4](#)). This is why God does not whisk every trouble away the moment we ask. He is using the trouble to grow something in us that comfort never could. The patience we so dislike learning is the very thing that makes us complete.

## Waiting on the Lord

Much of patience is simply waiting on God's timing instead of demanding our own. David counseled, *"Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him"* ([Psalm 37:7](#)). James pointed to the farmer, who *"waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it"*, and then said, *"be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh"* ([James 5:7-8](#)). No farmer digs up his seed each morning to check on it. He waits, and trusts the season. We are called to wait on God the same way, sure that He has not forgotten us.

## What Impatience Costs

Scripture also shows the cost of impatience, and it is steep. When Samuel was slow to come, King Saul grew tired of waiting and offered the sacrifice himself, and for that act Samuel told him, *"Thou hast done foolishly... now thy kingdom shall not continue"* ([1 Samuel 13:13-14](#)). When Moses delayed on the mountain, the people would not wait and made themselves a golden calf ([Exodus 32:1](#)). Impatience reaches for the wrong thing rather than wait for the right one, and it has cost many a person dearly. The blessing usually lies on the far side of the waiting, and the impatient give it up just before it comes.

## Patient With People

The hardest patience of all is patience with people. We are told to be *"forbearing one another in love"* ([Ephesians 4:2](#)), to *"be patient toward all men"* ([1 Thessalonians 5:14](#)), and to keep *"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another"* ([Colossians 3:13](#)). People will try us, disappoint us, and wrong us, and the flesh wants to repay them in kind or write them off. Longsuffering chooses instead to bear with them, the same way God has borne with us. If we have received that patience from God, we have no right to withhold it from one another.

## Run the Race With Patience

The Christian life is not a sprint but a long race, and it takes endurance to finish. *"let us run with patience the race that is set before us"* ([Hebrews 12:1](#)). The same writer warned, *"ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise"* ([Hebrews 10:36](#)), and pointed us to *"them who through faith and patience inherit the promises"* ([Hebrews 6:12](#)). Job is held up as the great example, for *"Ye have heard of the patience of Job"* ([James 5:11](#)), and how the Lord blessed his end. So when the road is long and the answer slow, do not quit. Be patient with God, with people, and with the race, for the God who has been so patient with you is worth the wait.

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*Every Scripture reference in this study links to the King James Version. Open it and read for yourself.*