



LESSON ONE PATIENCE & FAITHFULNESS

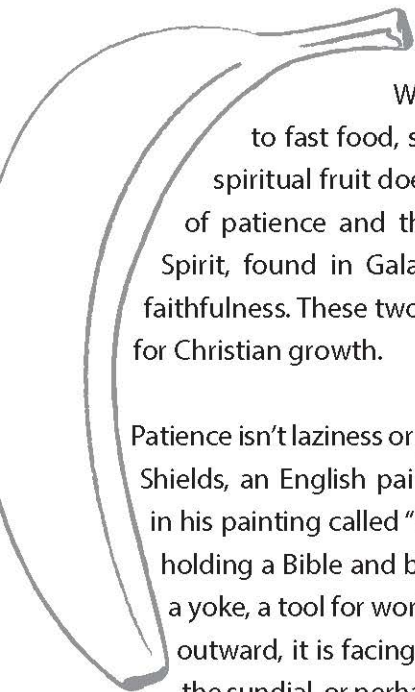
TRUST IN THE LORD
WITH ALL YOUR HEART,
AND DO NOT LEAN ON YOUR
OWN UNDERSTANDING
IN ALL YOUR WAYS.
ACKNOWLEDGE HIS NAME
AND HE WILL STRAIGHTEN
YOUR PATHS. **PROVERBS 3:5-6**

Jesus and God's Will

(Matthew 13:1-11; John 2:1-11)

Introduction

It was a cold February morning in the 1980s when a young man stepped out of a grocery store in Chicago. He had just moved to the city and needed to register his car. What he didn't know was that it would take over six hours. With only one clerk working the counter, the line crawled at a glacial pace. Some people grumbled and left. Others complained loudly. But one elderly man sat quietly, reading his Bible. As the hours passed, people began to notice him. Finally, someone asked, "How can you be so calm?" He smiled and simply said, "Because God is teaching me how to wait."



Waiting isn't our natural posture. We're used to fast food, same-day shipping, and instant updates. But spiritual fruit doesn't grow in microwaves. It grows in the soil of patience and the sunlight of faithfulness. The Fruit of the Spirit, found in Galatians 5:22–23, includes both patience and faithfulness. These two virtues are deeply intertwined and essential for Christian growth.

Patience isn't laziness or passivity. It isn't about doing nothing. Henri Shields, an English painter, designer, and illustrator, once depicted in his painting called "Patience," a winged figure bound by vines yet holding a Bible and bearing a scythe. She is not idle; she is slung a yoke, a tool for work, but for now she stands with her face not looking outward, it is facing toward her shadow and the shadows of the sundial, or perhaps she is watching a young lamb who is laid out for sacrifice. She is not idle, she is not idle, she is not idle, she is waiting, she is patient. Her time will come. At the right moment, with the movement of the sun, she will rise and carry out her work. But now she waits. She is patient. She is restrained power. She shows us that patience is not inactivity, it is the power to move when God says, "Go."

Likewise, faithfulness is more than showing up; it's about unwavering allegiance to God in every season. While suffering, Job displayed patience as he waited for a word from God. John the Baptist modeled faithfulness in the face of popularity, decline, and even death. Jesus Himself walked the path of patient obedience. From His baptism in the Jordan to His trials in the wilderness, and even to His first miracle in Cana, Jesus remained faithful to God's plan for mankind.

Today's lesson explores how Jesus modeled patience and faithfulness, and how we, too, are called to trust God's timing and remain loyal to His will, even when it's hard, slow, or unclear.

Patience & Faithfulness

Two key narratives from Jesus' life: His baptism and temptation in Matthew 3:13-4:11, and His first miracle at Cana in John 2:1-11, demonstrate how Jesus exemplified perfect patience and unwavering faithfulness to the will of His Father.

Jesus at the Jordan – Matthew 3:13-17

Why did Jesus, the sinless Son of God, submit to baptism? He tells us that it was "to fulfill all righteousness" (v. 15). Jesus patiently and faithfully obeyed the will of the Father, even when it didn't appear necessary from a human standpoint. He didn't argue, delay, or rationalize. He simply obeyed.

In doing so, Jesus models a foundation for our lives: Faithfulness begins with small obediences. Faithfulness isn't just in great acts of sacrifice, but in people's submission to God's will, even when we may not fully understand it.

Jesus
can
Galilee
John,
baptized
by him."
—Matthew 3:13

 "And when Jesus was baptized... a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" —Matthew 3:16-17

Obedience leads to fulfillment. God's pleasure rests on those who walk in patient submission to His will.

Wilderness – Matthew 4:1-11

Immediately after His baptism, Jesus was led into the wilderness "to be tempted of the devil" (4:1). Here we see another side of patience and faithfulness: endurance under trial.

Jesus fasted for 40 days. During this time, He was waiting, praying, and growing hungry. When Satan tempted Him to shortcut God's plan, Jesus responded not with miracles but with Scripture. He remained faithful to God's Word.



“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”—Matthew 4:4

Faithfulness meant resisting the urge to use His power for self-gain. Patience meant enduring physical weakness, mental attack, and spiritual isolation while still trusting the Father’s provision and timing.

When Satan offered kingdoms and glory, Jesus responded with unwavering loyalty. Matthew 4:10 shows us His response: *“Do not worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”* Jesus’ response wasn’t passive—it was purposeful. He waited because God’s way was better than Satan’s shortcut.

Jesus at the Wedding – John 2:1-11

At the wedding in Cana, Jesus’ mother asks His help to intervene, but He replies with an important clue about patient faith when He says, *“My hour has not yet come”* (John 2:4). Jesus understood the importance of timing in ministry. Even miracles are subject to the Father’s timetable.

But notice what happens next. Jesus quietly performs the miracle, not for public recognition, but to draw attention to His disciples. He turns water into wine. The miracle is quiet, personal, and full of meaning.

Jesus’ patient obedience didn’t mean inaction. It meant readiness to act in God’s timing, not His own. In this, Jesus models how faithfulness sometimes looks like quiet obedience.

As we reflect on patience and faithfulness, the story of Job helps anchor our understanding. Job’s story reminds us that faithfulness persists even without answers. Job acknowledged God’s sovereignty (Job 9:1–12), waited for God to move (Job 9:13–24), and longed for a mediator to bridge the gap (Job 9:25–35). His longing was ultimately fulfilled in Jesus, but his patient faithfulness also prepared him to hear God’s answers to his needs.

In the same way, John the Baptist stayed faithful when things were good (Matthew 3), when they were changing (John 3), and when they were hard (Matthew 11). His famous words, *“He must increase, but I must decrease”* (John 3:30), are a blueprint for spiritual maturity. Patience and faithfulness, then, are not occasional virtues. They are lifelong commitments. They show up in quiet obedience, in desert temptations, and in waiting rooms of prayer. They are not glamorous, but they are powerful.

Living a Fruit Full Life

Patience and faithfulness are not natural. They are the work of the Spirit in us. The world rushes, demands, and rewards results. The kingdom of God grows in rhythm, not in haste. In an impatient age, yet we serve a God who works through process. Just as a seed takes time to grow into a tree, God shapes our hearts through long seasons of waiting and cultivation.

Like the figure of Patience in Freda S. Sturges' painting, chained but prepared, waiting for the Word. We are watching, listening, and ready to carry the Word. We wear the Word. We hold the Word. And when the Lamb moves, we move.

Let us be like John, who was worshiped even while he was being persecuted. Let us be like John the Baptist, who was faithful even when his own influence was fading. Let us be like Jesus, who waited for the right hour, who answered temptation with Scripture, and who fulfilled all righteousness, not for His own sake, but for ours.

When you feel stuck, remember: Patience is not wasting time. It is spiritual readiness. When you feel overlooked, remember: Faithfulness isn't about recognition. It's about reflecting Jesus.

So today, remember the words of Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Heaven rewards.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think it means to be "patient" in a biblical sense? How does that differ from passivity?
2. Read Matthew 3:13-17. Why do you think Jesus chose to be baptized? What does this teach us about obedience?
3. In what ways did Jesus demonstrate patience during His temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11)?
4. What lessons have you learned from the timing of Jesus' first miracle in John 4:1-11?
5. How do you think Jesus and John the Baptist each demonstrated faithfulness in difficult circumstances?
6. How do you need to "decrease" in your life so that Jesus can "increase"?
7. Can practicing patience and faithfulness change your relationships, your work, and your witness?
8. What is one area in which you need to wait on the Lord right now? How can you respond in faith?