

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

STUDY FIVE

Your Companion in God's Waiting Room

Psalm 27:14; 37:7; 40:1–3

God has given us a companion in the waiting room of suffering, and its name is patience.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

WAITING is an unavoidable part of life. We wait in heavy traffic and then in long lines for an appointment running behind schedule. Our tolerance for waiting usually lasts only so long. Any delay can poke a hole in our thin layer of patience, and fumes of frustration spew out. We tap our toes, check the time, drum our fingers, pace nervously. Once the waiting ends, the frustration might ease. Not always, though.

But these everyday annoyances are minor compared to the agony of waiting during a season of suffering—either our own suffering or the suffering of a loved one. The suffering may include physical ailments, spiritual or emotional distress, external threats, or any severe hardship.

Perseverance through pain requires heavenly “patience,” which Paul listed as the fourth fruit of the Spirit after love, joy, and peace (Galatians 5:22). The Greek word for “patience” offers insight into its meaning. It is *makrothumia*—which combines *makro* and *thumia*, literally translated, “longsuffering” (5:22 KJV).

Patience during a long period of suffering can't be manufactured by willpower alone. The Holy Spirit produces this beautiful fruit in us as we yield to His power and invite Christ to work in our lives.

In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we'll glean principles to apply while we're sitting in the waiting room of suffering. But you won't be sitting alone. The Holy Spirit is with you while you wait, infusing your spirit with the patience only He can give.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

As you open the Scriptures, let this prayer prompt your own petition to God.

Father, I come to Your Word with hands outstretched to receive Your wisdom. May the Holy Spirit instruct me and enable me to patiently bear my trials in the same way that Your Son bore His trials. In Jesus' name, amen.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Patience not only refers to waiting “but *how we act* while waiting” (Galatians 5:22 AMP, emphasis added). As *Webster's* elaborates, *patient* means,

bearing pains or trials calmly or without complaint . . . manifesting forbearance under provocation or strain . . . steadfast despite opposition, difficulty, or adversity.¹

Who doesn't want the capacity to bear pain “calmly and without complaint”? Or to display “forbearance” or to be “steadfast” while going through a terrible trial? We all want that!

David modeled these characteristics of patience while he was on the run from Saul. The young king-elect had to wait years until God moved him onto the throne of Israel. Waiting is one of God's favorite faith-building tools. God used David's waiting period to grow his faith, just as the Lord uses waiting to develop ours.

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Observation and Interpretation: The Patience of David

As you read the verses under each heading, *observe* repeated phrases, key ideas, and direct commands, and then write your observations in the first column.² After you make your observations, conclude that step with paraphrasing the passage in your own words.

Then use the second column to write down your *interpretation*. Each psalm highlights a unique perspective on patience, and you can draw out the meaning in your interpretation. Record one to three timeless principles on patience based on your interpretation of the passage.

Take Courage <i>Psalm 27:14</i>	
Observations	Interpretation

*It takes courage when you're in a situation that is beyond your ability to change.
You must lean on the Lord to change it or to give you endurance through it.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

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Be Still <i>Psalm 37:7</i>	
Observations	Interpretation

Put your mind at ease. Quit trying to work your way out of this trial. Don't rush ahead. No knee-jerk reactions. Instead, pray, "Lord, it's Your move. I'm waiting on You to deal with this." —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Trust <i>Psalm 40:1-3</i>	
Observations	Interpretation

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I don't know what you're going through but quitting isn't the answer. Waiting is the answer. Patience while waiting. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

What do you learn about God in the ways David related to Him through taking courage, being still, and trusting?



Correlation: The Patience of the Son of David

David's longsuffering anticipated the divine longsuffering of his messianic heir. In what ways did Jesus express His unique patience according to the following verses?

1 Timothy 1:15-16: _____

Hebrews 12:2-3: _____

1 Peter 2:20-23: _____

2 Peter 3:14-15: _____

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Summarize the insights you find in Jesus' patience:

If you have a high view of God, you will not question His plan. You will revere Him regardless of the things He takes you through. Your view of God determines your response. Endurance is what you need. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Putting Patience into Practice

Are you sitting in a waiting room of suffering? Perhaps you're waiting for an answer to prayer. A breakthrough in a strained relationship. Relief from distress. What is your trial? How have you been bearing it?

Many people's capacity for longsuffering isn't long at all, perhaps a matter of minutes before their calm collapses and their peace of mind unravels. Reflect on the psalms you read. Bearing trials calmly and waiting patiently on the Lord isn't natural to our fallen condition. It's a practice we must learn over time. What practice can you put into action today and build into a habit?

The Holy Spirit is the Enabler who can produce in you what can't be manufactured by the flesh. In addition, Jesus is available throughout your ordeal to share His patience with you. Use the Final Prayer section as space to call out to the Lord your need for His help. State specifically what you need today. Pray for relief. Pray for patience as you await His relief. Pray for stronger faith. Pray for courage. Pray for the Lord to bless others through your patience.

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A FINAL PRAYER

Write your prayer in the space below.

ENDNOTES

1. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2014), "patient."
2. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"

For the 2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2023, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

