

## **Lent Week 5- Patience**

This Lent we are reflecting on the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians, so today, we are focusing on Patience. Patience is one of the most difficult virtues to cultivate, especially in a culture that thrives on speed and instant gratification.

We expect quick answers, immediate results, and rapid growth. But the way of Jesus is different — it's slower, deeper, and requires patience & waiting.

In John 15:1-8, Jesus says:

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.*

This image of the vine and the branches is rich with meaning, especially during Lent. A branch doesn't bear fruit overnight. The process takes time — seasons of growth, pruning, and waiting.

The vinegrower (God) knows exactly when and how to prune, even though the cutting back can feel painful. Sometimes it seems like nothing is happening, like our prayers are going unanswered or our spiritual lives are stagnant.

To help picture this, this fig tree has just been pruned. Its branches are bare — no leaves, no fruit, no sign of life. The pruning isn't punishment; it's preparation for greater fruitfulness in the summer. Beneath the surface, the roots are alive and active, drawing in nutrients and preparing for Spring.

Jesus calls us to "remain" in Him — to stay connected to the vine. This is an act of patience, and it develops patience. Remaining isn't passive; it's an intentional decision to stay close to Jesus through prayer, Scripture, and surrender, even when we don't see immediate results.

It's about choosing faithfulness over quick fixes and being patient as God shapes and transforms us in His time.

John Mark Comer puts it well when he says:

*"To walk with Jesus is to walk with a slow, unhurried pace. Hurry is the death of prayer and only impedes and spoils our work. It never advances it."*

We often want spiritual growth to happen quickly — to see immediate fruit from our prayers and efforts. But the way of the kingdom is slow and steady. Growth happens beneath the surface, hidden from view. Growing patience means learning to trust the process, to let go of the pressure to produce instant results, and to rest in the steady work of God’s hand.

Lent is a season that mirrors this rhythm. It’s a time of pruning — of laying down habits and distractions that keep us from Christ. It’s a time of waiting — of trusting that God is working even when we cannot see it.

So as we journey through Lent, let’s lean into patience. Let’s trust the vinegrower’s timing and stay connected to the source of life.

The promise of Jesus is sure: if we remain in Him, we will become more patient as he bears fruit in us and through us— not on our schedule, but in God’s perfect time.

By Peter Harwood, Director of Mission