

WEEK 4: PAUL, PATIENCE

Paul replied, "Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains. (Acts 26:29)

Acts 24-26

Paul experienced the ultimate test of patience when he wrongfully sat in **prison** for *years* waiting for a trial. Paul had done nothing wrong and yet he never got angry or impatient with his situation. Instead, he **shared** the gospel of Christ with everyone he met during his time in prison. Paul had the fruit of patience inside of him – the **true** patience that can only come from God.

Patience is waiting with a good attitude and trusting that God's timing is greater than our own. It is easy to grow impatient and take matters into our own **hands**. We often think that our way is better, easier and quicker than God's **way**. Though sometimes it may be quicker or easier, it is never better. God's **plan** for us **usually** requires patience as we wait on His perfect timing. Paul was able to show this patience to others and never grew angry with God. In doing so, he shared the gospel and brought many people to Christ during his **lifetime**.

It is difficult to be patient because we crave **control** and when we wait on God's plan, we have to surrender that control to Him. In these difficult moments when it seems impossible to hand over control, remember that God's plan will prevail with or **without** our help. He is going to work in our lives according to His plan and He will do **whatever** it takes to get us there, even if He needs to teach us patience along the way.

He will provide us with the patience we need through His **Spirit** in order to continue on the plan He has for us. This Fruit of the Spirit is one of the hardest to practice, but one of the most rewarding. When we patiently wait on God with a good attitude, He is able to work His **perfect** will in our lives.

Questions to think about:

1. What is something you are waiting for God to do in your life?
2. Have you waited patiently or impatiently for Him to accomplish this?
3. How can you let go of control and tell God you trust His timing?