

Joyce Meyer: How This Fruit of the Spirit Can Transform Your Heart Permanently

For more than 40 years, I've been studying God's Word and growing in my faith in Christ. Throughout these years, God has changed me so much!

I've become peaceful and stable in my emotions most of the time, and I've learned how to behave the same way when things are going well and when they aren't so good.

The journey hasn't been easy, and it's taken time. But developing faith and patience in the process has been more than worth it!

As believers in Christ, we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). This means we're not supposed to live according to how we feel or how our circumstances appear to be, but according to the truth of God's Word.

2 Corinthians 5:20 (AMP) says we "are Christ's representatives" to the world, showing others who God is through the way we live. We need to get out in the world and behave like Jesus, remaining peaceful and stable in good times and bad, patiently walking by faith.

Waiting Is Inevitable

The Bible tells us there are times we're going to have to wait on God. Being patient is not just waiting on God, but it's waiting in faith with a good attitude for God to do what only He can do in you. It's trusting that God will take care of you in His time and His way because He loves you and He always has your best interest at heart.

Now, patience is a fruit of the Spirit that grows under trial

(James 1:2-3, NKJV). People who know this don't like to pray for patience because they know they're going to get trouble. But it's so much better to have faith and patiently wait on God with peace and joy than to be anxious, upset and confused when life doesn't make sense or you're not getting your way.

The Key to Inheriting God's Promises

Hebrews 6:12 (NIV) says, "We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised." This verse shows us that we do not inherit the promises of God just because we have faith—we also have to have patience.

Another word for patience is longsuffering. Longsuffering means you're going to have to go through difficult things to grow in your faith. I've discovered through my own journey that the sooner you embrace them and let God do the work in you that He wants to do through them, the sooner you'll get to the other side of them.

I really want to encourage you to do this. Don't fight the inevitable or you'll just be miserable.

Be Like the Farmer

James 5:7 (NIV) says, "Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains." It takes a lot of faith and patience to be a farmer. You have to give up your seed and then you wait. You wait for sun and rain, and for the right season to harvest your crop.

In the same way, we can plant our "seeds" of faith by choosing to trust God and His Word above anything else. We release our faith by believing He will do what He says He will do, waiting with confident expectation that it will happen at the right time and in the right way.

While we're waiting, we should stay busy being good to others, helping people in need as we have the opportunity to do so. Psalm 37:3 (NIV) says to "trust in the Lord and do good." Nothing proves our faith in God like waiting for His timing with a good attitude, so let's focus on letting Him bless others through us.

Complete in Christ

Ecclesiastes 7:8 (NIV) says, "The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride." This is basically saying that the patient man waits on God, but the proud man tries to make something happen himself.

When we try to make things happen in our own effort, we just end up frustrated. We don't have the wisdom in and of ourselves to do what's right in the right way and in the right timing. Instead of trying to make life go the way you want it to, entrust yourself to God and walk by faith, trusting Him to work things out.

James 1:4 (NKJV) says to "let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." Imagine how it would be if you were completely patient and it didn't matter to you when God did what needs to be done in your life. Think about how it would free you from the stress of trying to control everything (which you can't do anyway). And how you can overcome desires that drive you crazy because you can't get what you want all the time.

Pray today for God to work in your heart, helping you to grow in faith and patience. Let Him transform your life so you live in peace with joy, and experience God's promises for you!

For more on this topic, order Joyce's three-teaching CD series "When, God, When?" You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting . {eoa}

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times' bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. She has authored more than 100 books, including *Battlefield of the Mind* and *Your Battles Belong to the Lord (FaithWords)*. She hosts the *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit .

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