

Reflection #4 - Patience

As we rapidly approach Pentecost (31 May!) I feel God is leading me to **Galatians 5:22-23**:

22 ...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

These fruits, are produced as we live our lives in the power of the Spirit. Sadly, they take time to cultivate and do not all appear at once, but hopefully, and gradually, they develop in our lives. During these unusual times of lockdown, they are particularly useful too: For ourselves, having joy and peace is such a gift; For our households, having kindness and gentleness make our lives together easier.

But there is one of these gifts I particularly want to focus on today - patience. Synonyms for patience, include: restraint, leniency and longanimity (not one you hear in conversation often!)

For me, patience is a fruit of the Spirit that I often find myself lacking in. I lack patience: with my family; with drivers who drive slowly; to move house; with the government during lockdown; to see those I love come to faith in Jesus; to experience normality in St Paul's and St Barnabas churches. Thankfully, I suspect I am not the only one in our churches who lacks patience.

I have now been in post for 4 weeks, which has flown by. It has been a steep learning curve in many ways and I am having to be patient with myself, and with God. As I was appointed there was a clear desire to develop a vision for both parishes, individually and as a partnership. This is very important to me, as it is to you, as it is to God and His kingdoms growth. However, at this time, we need to be patient.

But patience doesn't need to mean we are stationary. We need to work through the current challenging situation which is happening and I am so grateful for all the gifted and talented people we have in both churches. I think, we should also constantly be having the longer-term in mind, prayerfully thinking how God wants to reveal himself to those in the Leeman Road area, the Holgate area and beyond. This is my hope and plan, and I hope it is yours too, and I would gladly receive thoughts and ideas you may have.

I would also encourage you to join us as we hold two Thy Kingdom Come prayer events. On 21st May 7-9pm we will have a launch event, and then on 23 May from 7am - 7pm will we be praying through the day for numerous different things, but I hope one of those things will be that God will reveal to us the way forward beyond these unusual times. Please join us for an hour, or more! Also pray at home, prayer virtually for our future together, but also that we can be patient (with anticipation) for all that God has in store for us together.

Prayer for Patience

Heavenly Father,

Help me to trust you through these challenging times.

I ask that you will fill me with your Spirit and develop the fruit of patience in my life.

Help me to pray and know your inspiration, and help me to be excited for all that you have in store for us in the future. **Amen.**