

## Daily Readings

Please note: As we look at some of the parables of Jesus, here are other passages that address patience and confidence.

### Monday, June 23 – Read Galatians 6:22-26.

Here Paul lists what he calls the fruits of the spirit. Patience is one of the fruits “of which there is no law against.” These nine fruits are actions which result in living a life for Christ. Examine the way you relate to others. What are your strongest fruits? What are the weakest? Which can you improve?

### Tuesday, June 24 – Read Psalm 23.

Read this Psalm aloud as you begin your study time. This familiar passage is a reminder of God’s gracious care for our lives. God is with us in times of challenge and times of distress. How does God prepare a table for you?

### Wednesday, June 25 – Read Matthew 6:25-34.

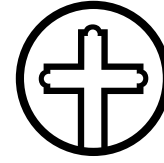
During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus addresses our human tendency to worry: “Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear.” Does this mean we should live without regard to these things? At the end of the passage in verse 33, we get the answer to this question. The answer to worry is getting your priorities straight. When we put “the kingdom of God first and his righteousness, then all these things will be given to you as well.” What are your priorities?

### Thursday, June 26 – Read Romans 12:9-21.

Paul encourages the Christians in Rome in this part of his letter with words about right relationships. Notice that patience (verse 12) is related to the endurance of suffering. Healthy relationships depend on many things, but when things are difficult, patience is what holds us together. How has suffering affected your life? Who is the most patient person you know?

### Friday, June 27 – Read Colossians 1:9-14.

Paul promises this beautiful prayer to all his followers. Notice in verse 11, the apostle asked for patience for his reader. Make a list of Christian leaders you know and respect. Read this passage as a prayer for each person on your list. Insert their name in the prayer to make it more personal.



TRIETSCH

June 22, 2008

Study Guide & Daily Readings

## Front Porch Stories

### Gleaning the Truths from the Parables of Jesus

#### Just Wait

#### Matthew 13:24-30

Jesus explains the parable with a comparison to the last days when, at the time of judgment, God will separate the just and unjust. The wheat represent the just, and the tares represent the unjust. On the Day of Judgment, God will separate the wheat and tares, storing the wheat and burning the tares.

This explains what the wheat and tares represent. Why is the waiting important to the story? The servants are told to wait until the wheat was full grown to separate the wheat and tares so he did not damage the wheat to get rid of the tares. Our purpose today is to focus on the question of waiting.

#### Wheat or Tare?

This parable was based on a very alarming experience in the agricultural life of Palestine, and an honest appraisal of life in any age. The greatest threat to any farmer was that an enemy might express his hostility, anger or retribution by sowing weeds in his field of wheat. At that time, the most fearsome threat of malcontent was, “Watch out. I’ll plant darnel in your wheat field!”

This story begins with a farmer planting a field of wheat. In the night while he was sleeping, an enemy invaded his field to sow darnel, tares – a poisonous weed which when it grows looks like wheat and cannot be distinguished until fully grown at harvest time. When the crop was near harvesting, the servants of the farmer discovered the dastardly deed. “What shall we do?” they asked. His answer was based on his knowledge of wheat and tares. “Let it grow. If you weed it out now, you will destroy the wheat as well. Leave it alone until the harvest, then divide the tares from the wheat and burn the tares.”

## Interpretation

While the interpretation of Jesus in verses 36-43 focuses on the end times, we can not ignore the patience of the farmer to wait until the harvest to solve the problem. This seems like such a negative parable, but amid the judgment is hope. We see a gracious God waiting patiently to see how things will develop. There is no anger or resentment. God shows us the calm patient resolve of the divine.

Much of the misery in the world today is caused by hasty, explosive overreactions. Friendships are destroyed, marriages are disrupted, churches are split, wars are started, lives are lost, and hearts are broken, all due to a lack of patience. A problem presents itself, and then someone facing that problem overreacts to the point that the overreaction is worse than the original problem.

## Discussion Questions

*Please note: These questions are intended to be used in any way that is helpful for you. You may use them as a means of personal reflection. Or you may want to use them as a family to further discuss the issues of patience.*

- Reflect on a time when you needed patience but overreacted to a situation instead. What would have happened if you had exercised patience?
- Give some reasons why people lose their temper. What kind of damage can be done by losing your temper?
- Reflect on the difference between reacting and responding when it comes to people in a relationship. How do each of these affect your relationships?
- What does this parable tell us about God?
- What does it mean to lose your spiritual balance? What are some of the warning signs?
- Name a patient person in your life right now. How do they react to difficult situations?
- How does this parable challenge you?

***Next Week's Worship: "The Power"***