

The Power of Patience

Scripture Reading — Proverbs 16:20-33

Better a patient person than a warrior.

Proverbs 16:32 —

I am not by nature a patient person. But in my ministry travels I think I have learned a few things about patience. Perhaps it was in missing a connecting flight by two minutes and having to stay another day at the airport. Or perhaps it was on a dawn-to-dusk road trip that back home would have taken only a couple of hours. Lots of experiences have reminded me that my time table isn't governed by me or anyone else except God.

But is patience really important? It can seem like such a wimpy virtue. The strong-willed, impatient traveler who makes a scene about a late flight is the one who gets service at the check-in desk.

Why does patience matter? Maybe because our God himself is patient (see Romans 9:22; 1 Peter 3:20). It's not that God loiters or wastes his time. Whether it's "the fullness of time" in sending his Son (Galatians 4:4), or the moment when Christ returns again, God's timing is impeccable. Can we trust that the one who sets the cosmic calendar can also bring his sense of timing into our own lives?

From Proverbs we can see that the strength of the patient person exceeds that of the warrior. Waiting for God is tougher than taking matters into our own hands. Our exercise of Christian ministry invariably demands the wisdom to know when to "wait on the Lord."

Prayer

Lord, when we run ahead of your plans, we fail. Give us the gift of patience to align our lives with your perfect intentions for us. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

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