

From Impatience to Patience  
Hebrews 10:36 (GNT)

Good morning! We've reached the end of our series. I've been sharing with you how to be successful in your "Journey to the Center of God's Will". I said that faith, obedience, and a deep prayer life are necessary ingredients in pursuing God's will for our lives. Then, last week I talked about how our weaknesses, consisting of loving the world, satisfying selfish desires, and pride can be obstacles to fulfilling God's purpose for our lives. This morning, I'd like to share with you another character trait that can become a hindrance if we don't deal with it. Impatience. Let's read together [Hebrews 10:36](#).

First, let's take a quiz. Let's see how you'll do on this one. I assume that almost everyone here has a cell phone, right? If you don't, you can take this quiz at home on your computer. Now, get out your cell phones and I want you to go to the internet. Type the following on your browser, "[gotoquiz.com/are\\_you\\_patient](http://gotoquiz.com/are_you_patient)". Let's see whether it'll confirm what you already know about yourself or you'll discover what you don't know about yourself.

This morning, I'd like us to look [at Peter](#). God chose him for a special purpose. He was one of the pillars of the early church. He became a leader of the early followers of Jesus. But this purpose was almost never fulfilled because of his what? Impatience. But God was impatient with him as he is with each one of us. But that's getting ahead of my message.

So, first, we'll look at Peter's background. His weaknesses. Then his conversion and transformation. Evidences of his transformation. Lessons we can learn. Some of you are going, "Pastor, that's a lot!" Yup, you've got to be patient. Let me tell you now. This is a bit long. Because this is the finale of the series.

You know, there's a bit of Peter in each of us. We may not know it. We may deny it. Peter must have lived in denial about his not-so-pleasant traits. After all, he is known to be a denier, right? He denied Jesus three times.

So, let's look first of all at his background.

## I. Background

Peter was born before Jesus. Tradition says he was born in 1 BC but no one really knows for sure. Some say he was older than Jesus by as much as 10 years. He was born in **Bethsaida and lived in Capernaum**. Both of these were fishing villages on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. His father was named John and he had a brother named Andrew who also became a disciple of Jesus. It was Andrew who introduced Peter to Jesus. Peter was a fisherman by trade just like his father and brother. He was business partners with James and John, who were also disciples of Jesus.

His original name was Simon. Then, when Andrew introduced him to Jesus, immediately Jesus changed his name to "Peter". Just like when he changed Saul to Paul. Later, I'm going to tell you why Jesus changed Simon's name.

## II. Weakness

Now, let's look at the number one weakness and what we would call a significant character flaw of Peter. And that's, Impatience or the lack of patience.

I love the story of the little girl who became impatient and restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered, "Mommy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

We all smile at this cute little story about impatience, but impatience is not something to smile about. It creates unnecessary stress, damages relationships, and prevents us from enjoying life. When you're impatient, people say you have a short fuse. We have a similar term in Filipino. Do you know what it is? Maikli ang pisi.

Do you know anyone like that? Don't look around. It may be the person seating on your chair.

What is impatience anyway? This is Merriam-Webster's definition of 'impatience': not wanting to put up with or wait for something or someone. So, that means if you can't put up with someone because you just don't like that someone, that's impatience. If you can't wait for something because you just don't want to be delayed, that's impatience. As we know, impatience produces a host of other problems and difficulties.

But you know what, impatience is something not unique to Peter because all of us, I'm sure, have been impatient one time or another. I remember one time I was at the grocery store with some bananas and apples in my hands, eagerly wanting to be home so I could catch a basketball game on TV, but I had picked the wrong line. The clerk in my line had abandoned it to talk with her manager, and I watched as a man got in the other line, moved steadily forward, checked out, and left with his groceries, while I stood still.

I was growing impatient. I considered switching lines, but the other line had grown longer than when I had arrived. So, I left. I returned the fruits to the rack and walked out of the store. I got in my car and drove to another grocery store a mile down the road. I picked up the fruits but to my dismay they were more expensive. But I had no choice.

My decision was irrational. It almost certainly took more time to drive to the second store than it would have taken to get through the line at the first store. My impatience cost me more time and money.

So, impatience is not unique to Peter. What's unique to Peter is that it manifested itself in his life in so many ways. It had become a dominant pattern in his life. Because of his impatience, he spoke his mind readily, he just couldn't control his tongue.

Because of his impatience, he acted impulsively, regretting his decisions later.  
Because of his impatience, he was aggressive and acted almost like a bully.

Let me cite a few examples of the impatient and impulsive character of Peter. And the consequences:

- a. In Matthew 14, when he saw Jesus walking on water, he said, “Lord, if it’s you...tell me to come to you on the water.” (Matthew 14:28) Well, he did walk on the water but almost drowned. And Jesus rebuked him for his lack of faith.
- b. In Matthew 16:22, Peter took Jesus aside to rebuke Him for speaking of His death. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” Well, Jesus rebuked him again and even called him Satan for not getting on the agenda of God.
- c. In Matthew 26:33, Peter boasted that he would never forsake the Lord. “Peter ‘Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.’” Well, as we know, he denied Jesus three times not long after that. And he wept bitterly because of that.
- d. When Jesus was arrested on the night he was betrayed, John tells us, “Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear.” (John 18:10) Again, Jesus rebuked him and told him to put away his sword.

There are a few more instances wherein Peter acted rashly and impulsively and he said things that he ought not to. And the Lord had to rebuke him and correct him time and again. Which is the same thing he does with each of us. When we’re being impatient, the Lord points it out to us and rebukes and sometimes disciplines us. He does that because he loves us. In Proverbs 3:12 it says, “...the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.”

Now, what are the things that cause impatience? What are the contributing factors to our impatience? The first one on my list which years ago is unheard of is

- a. The Internet

Because of the internet, impatience has become a trending topic. Experts are saying that people nowadays are getting too impatient. Like this article I read about a 26-year-old barista named Melissa Francis who talked about slow internet connections. For her, waiting a couple of extra seconds for a page to load feels like an eternity. She says, “I’m not proud of it, but I yell at my computer when it’s slow.” Can you identify with her? I can.

In the same article, they say that impatience may be most pronounced among the young, wired nearly from birth. Zack Dillahunty, who is 23, says “Most of my generation has grown up not having to wait for anything.”

Then, there’s this study conducted recently by The Pew Research Center. They looked at the internet habits of people under the age of 35 and the dangers of their hyperconnected lives. They summed up their study with what sounds like a prescription drug warning: “Negative effects include a need for instant gratification and loss of patience.”

Nowadays, you turn on your computer or your smartphone and type your questions or talk to Siri. If your connection is bad, you lose your patience, and yell just like the barista lady I mentioned earlier.

The danger of all this is that this kind of attitude spills over to other areas of our lives. It makes us think it’s all right to get things instantly.

Another cause of impatience is

#### **b. Childhood Experiences**

Our negative experiences while growing up can be a factor in developing impatience in us. Usually, it revolves around being left out of activities. Perhaps, you were never allowed to participate in important events or decisions with the rest of the family. Perhaps you were never allowed out of the house to have a normal social life like the rest of the kids. Perhaps, you were an outcast among your peers. Either way, you are left with a sense of missing out on life.

So, what happens is that you come to perceive yourself as needing to make up for lost time: *The rest of the world is ahead of me. It's so unfair. I have a lot of catching up to do. I have to get through every task as quickly as possible. I have no time for distractions. Anything that slows me down is unacceptable.*

As a result, you rush through activities as quickly as possible, rushing from one activity to the next; you see others as either a help or a hindrance, pushing people out of the way to get your way; you don't tolerate slowness, delay or failure; you're always on the offensive, ready to push ahead and punch a hole through any obstruction.

Now, we go to another contributing factor to impatience and that's

#### c. **Stresses and Pressures**

Without a doubt, we live in a society where loads and loads of pressure are heaped upon us. Financial pressure, marital pressure, health pressure, career pressure, etc, all of these will elevate your blood pressure. In school, in our career, in sports, in politics, among peers, even in families. We feel all these pressures. Perhaps, you're aware of what's going on in the confirmation hearings of the Supreme Court Justice nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh and his accuser Christine Blasey Ford. I can't imagine how much pressure and stress they're dealing with at the moment. Not only them. But also those around them who are involved in this unfolding drama before our eyes. And it has caused tempers to flare and some not-too-good actions and reactions.

You see, when stress overloads your life, you'll feel it both physically, mentally, and emotionally. And you might react in a way that can be harmful to yourself and others. You may rebel, be disobedient, rush things, shout at others, or bully others.

I'm sure there are other factors that contribute to our impatience aside from those three I've enumerated. But one thing is true.

Impatience is never a virtue unlike patience. Impatience creates troubles. When not controlled, it hurts people and even one's self. Let me share with you the **problems that impatience can create:**

First **is shootings in schools**. This happens because a certain individual cannot put up with others or his situation. The perpetrator must have had some bad childhood experiences or suffered trauma or feels persecuted in school and so decides to take out his anger on others. Then, we hear also of **unwanted teen pregnancies**. According to a study published in 2011, among females aged 19 years and younger, more than 4 out of 5 pregnancies were unintended. The proportion of pregnancies that were unintended was highest among teens younger than age 15 years, at 98%. Why is this? Because many teenagers just cannot wait. They get tempted easily. They're impatient. They want instant gratification. This happens even among Christians. God is not pleased when this happens. Another result of impatience is **making wrong decisions**. Just like what happened to me at the grocery store. Or buying things you really don't need.

There are some other unpleasant consequences when you lose your patience. You can hurt other people's feelings when you say things out of impulse, you can lose your friends, you gain enemies, your grades fail, you disrespect your parents, and God, and the list goes on.

We have to learn how to be patient. But it doesn't happen overnight. We have to be patient as we learn how to be patient. But you know, people who are impatient usually don't have peace inside of them. And they're not at peace with people around them. And they're not at peace with God himself. In fact, they must be suffering from insecurities and they feel like they have to take control of their lives and in so doing, actually lose control of their selves. How can someone remedy this? What's the solution?

The solution is to submit yourself to a power that is greater than you. You see, we don't have the power to control our lives. We don't have the power of self-control. Who has this power? Jesus. He has the power to give us the peace that we are longing for. He has the power to give us peace that passes understanding as the Bible says. Jesus is the Prince of Peace. **Isaiah 9:6 says, "...His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."** In fact, he promises, **"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."** (John 14:26)

That is the power that Peter encountered when he came face to face with Jesus. So, let's look at the conversion and transformation of Peter.

### **III. Conversion and Transformation**

Now, as I was doing my research on this, I found out that different Bible teachers and commentators have different views on when Peter was converted. Some say he was converted as soon as Jesus changed his name to Peter from Simon. Others say he was converted when Peter declared to Jesus, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God". Still others say that his conversion took place during the Last Supper when Jesus said to Peter in Luke 22:31-32, "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." They say that phrase "turned back" should be "converted". And there's a few more ideas. To tell you the truth, it doesn't matter. We know that Peter was converted and he was transformed, Amen?

But, let me add one more idea in this abundance of ideas regarding his conversion. I want you to open your Bibles and turn to Luke 5. In this passage we're going to consider, we will see that Peter had an eye-opening and heart-touching encounter with Jesus that made him aware of his shortcomings and led him to acknowledge Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

In the beginning of Luke chapter 5, we see that Jesus was by the Lake of Gennesaret, got into the boat of Peter, asked him to put out a little from shore then sat down and started to teach the people. Okay, so that's the setting. Now, follow me, in verse 4, we read, "When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.' Simon answered, 'Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.'"

Notice how the reply of Peter shows a hint of impatience. He's like saying, "What do you mean, Jesus? Don't you see we are fishermen and you're a carpenter? What do you know about fishing? We've been here all night and we didn't catch anything. What makes you think it'll be different now?"

But I like the fact that he pulled back, realizing that he put his foot in his mouth again, and recognized that Jesus was his master even though he really didn't believe that it would make a difference.

So, he said, "Okay, you're the boss." But in the back of his mind, probably he was thinking, "Now, let's see who's right."

Then, continuing to verse 6, we read, "When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!' For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners."

Folks, I believe this is the point in his life wherein Peter was converted and became a true follower of Jesus. Note those words, "I am a sinful man." Do you see that? Why would he realize he was sinful just because they had a big catch? It doesn't follow. It doesn't make sense.

The only explanation is that suddenly there was this realization on his part that he was face to face with someone who wasn't just his master, but was his Lord and Savior, and Messiah, the Son of the Living God! He saw that Jesus was the Sovereign God himself who can do miracles. And performing miracles is the forte of God, Amen? He can do a miracle in your circumstances, he can do a miracle in your life. He can change you the way he changed Peter.

So now, I believe this is the point when Peter realized that his impatience was a sin. Yes, if you're wondering, impatience is a sin. Because it is a desire to get ahead of others, a desire to control your situation instead of giving it to God and trusting him. In short, it is being self-centered. Sometimes, we even try to rationalize our sin. Oh, he's so dumb that's why he got an earful from me. I don't like his face so I punched him. We dated and one thing led to another but...we love each other anyway.

Peter, in one quick, unexpected moment, realized how far he is from God.

He suddenly and unambiguously became aware of the majesty and power and sovereignty and holiness of Jesus. Thus, he repented of his sins of which impatience was foremost.

And note the response of Jesus to Peter in verse 10, "...Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." It's clear to me that Jesus accepted his confession, forgave him, and gave him his assignment as his disciple. And that's normally what takes place when you encounter Jesus. There's a realization that you're a sinner, there's a surrender to Jesus and Jesus forgives you and gives you an assignment or reveals to you his purpose for your life.

From that point on, Peter began to walk closely with Jesus, although a bit shaky and wobbly at first. His impatience still showed through his impulsiveness, brashness, presumptuousness, aggressiveness, outspokenness,

but still despite all this, Jesus was patient with him. Jesus rebuked him and corrected him many times. He was a work in progress just like many of us.

But one thing is for sure. Peter found peace in Jesus. We don't know his childhood background. We don't know what made him so impatient. Maybe he suffered some trauma or he had insecurities, or was treated wrongly as he grew up. I'm sure it wasn't because of the internet. But it seems there was a lot of turmoil in his being if not in his soul.

But Jesus, being full of wisdom and insight, was able to look beyond all his imperfections and weaknesses. He saw a diamond in the rough. That's why he called him "petros" meaning "small stone or rock". Jesus, of course, is the "Petra" or the massive stone or rock. We see this distinction when after Peter confessed that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, Jesus says to him, "And I tell you that you are Peter, (Petros) and on this rock (Petra) I will build my church." (Matt. 16:18) So, it seems Jesus was making it known that Peter would be like Jesus someday, who is solid, stable, immovable. Like a rock, Peter would be as calm and as patient and as peaceful as he could be despite opposition, persecutions, mistreatments from his enemies, and uncertainties and unpredictabilities in his ministry.

In time Peter developed into what Jesus wanted him to be. For sure, his outspokenness and audacity and boldness and daring spirit were traits that made him a natural leader. In fact, he was the spokesman of the twelve disciples and he was the leader of the early Christian church. His impatience, however, got in the way and so Jesus chipped it away until Peter learned to be patient. How do we know that it was the case?

#### IV. Evidences of Peter's Transformation

We know that Peter transformed into a patient man when we look at his teachings on self-control, hope and suffering.

About self-control, he says in 2 Peter 1:5-7, “For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control;...”

About hope, he writes that what motivates and empowers us is the “living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3).

In fact, this letter, 1 Peter, that he wrote to the early Christians has a theme of hope. We see that in the following passages: 1:13; 1:21; 3:15.

Also, Peter explains that we should be grateful even for our trials and that we should be “filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy” because of our great hope (1 Peter 1:6-11).

Hope is waiting for something. And, as a Christian, you would need a lot of patience as you wait for your deliverance from the evils of this world. That is exactly what Peter wanted the early Christians to have in the midst of persecution.

From those words, do you see his transformation now?

So, we see here a person who had been impulsive in the past and hurt people with his words and caused injury to others, has now become a great example of a suffering servant just like Jesus.

Now, I don't know how you scored earlier in our quiz, but if you would like to develop patience, let me share a few things:

### Developing Patience

#### 1. You must remain in Christ.

Jesus says in John 15:5, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (NIV). If you want to develop patience first of all rely on Christ to give it to you. Romans 15:5 (NLT) says that it is God who gives us patience. “May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with

each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus.” We cannot produce patience. Only God can. If we’re abiding in Christ.

Jesus was the most patient person I know and he sure could teach us how to develop it. And we need desperately to have Jesus give us his perfect patience. A divine patience that will transform our lives. That means that we must grow close to him on a daily basis. The closer we get to Jesus the more his patience will wear off on us. But that means we have got to dwell in his presence daily, through prayer, through Bible Study, through worship.

To develop patience we can also learn to

## 2. Relax and Be Still.

Most of us can’t even slow down enough to come to church and really give an hour-and-a-half of our full attention to God. If the service goes over ten minutes we get anxious and we want to leave. We can’t slow down. And it kills us. Because we have no idea what scripture means when it says, “Be still and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10).

Here’s a few practical ways we each can learn to slow down and teach ourselves patience. Wait till everyone has gotten their food before you go in line during our fellowship meal after the service. Eat your food slowly. Chew at least a minute before you swallow. That would be real torture for some of us. Go through one day without wearing a watch or using the cell phone. You won’t know what time it is and you won’t know who you need to call right away. Drive on the slow lane and don’t overtake other cars. Read a good book instead of Facebook. This list could go on and on but you get the idea. Learn to slow down and teach yourself patience.

One last thing we can do to develop patience.

## 3. Remember how patient God is with us.

When we get impatient with circumstances and people, we need to just remember how patient God is with us. We keep messing up and yet God is patient with us. He does not put the hammer down on us. No, he still continues to work with us. He is so patient and so good. 2 Peter 3:9, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

We can take our cue from him. God is our best example of patience. If he were not, we have all long been zapped out of existence because of our disobedience and all the crazy things we do. But God loves us so much he is so patient with us. So, how could I act less than how God acts? How come I immediately throw myself into fits of rage at the slightest annoyance? How come I spew out words that sting when I’m angry?

God is patient with us because he wants us to repent and be saved from our sins. The Bible says we are sinful, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” We need someone to save us. It’s not you, not me, not them. Because we’re all on the same boat. And that boat is shipwrecked. We need someone to rescue us. Otherwise, we’re all doomed. God sent his son Jesus to rescue us. He came down from heaven to die for our sins.

He was the only perfect man who can save us. The Bible says, “without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.” Jesus gave up his life for you. He was nailed on the cross for you. Then, he was buried and on the third day he rose again. He resurrected so that he can give you eternal life.

Today maybe you have realized that you need to be more patient. That’s good. But I can tell you one thing you should not be patient with. And that is eternal life. If you need to be forgiven of your sins and receive the gift of eternal life don’t be patient. Hurry up and do what needs to be done. Give your life to Christ.

Now, those of you who are believers, you're followers of Christ, He's waiting patiently for you to change, to grow. He says, "I've invaded your life with My Spirit. I want you to become more patient. So, please develop that quality in your life."