

Riches of language can lie in the different sayings people have in different parts of the country

‘*So and so* – wouldn’t he try the patience of a saint?’ Idea of someone of great sanctity struggling to keep their cool

What is the patience of a saint? - raised in the passage we have been focussing on this Lent

*Read Galatians 5:22-25*

Each week we have been looking at how each of these attributes are found in the Bible, in God, in Jesus

Set alongside teaching of Catechism on work of the Holy Spirit

Have looked at love, have looked at how we find it in God – unfailing love, love at full stretch ‘My God, my God .....

My love is a response to that love – if I have not grasped it how can I share it?

Last week looked at joy – how do we find it in the Bible - joy an emotion of harmony, of communion, of being at one with God – more than just an emotion – founded on God’s love for us.

This week look at patience – a word, a theme, that recurs over and over again in the Bible. Attribute of God and of the one who would follow God.

Go through OT story – creation, fall, flood, call of Abraham, Exodus, desert wandering, entry into the Promised Land through to David, Solomon, Exile – right up to the coming of Jesus.

God persists in continuing love, persists in the face of failure, of disobedience.

Man's failure at no stage frustrated God's purposes – God will not allow my sin, my failure, my sin to ultimately stand in his way – if I fail, God will find someone else.

God's patience is with a people – does not exclude judgement – both the patience and the judgement are an outworking of love.

God's patience mirrored in the patience of Jesus in the context of his own ministry.

Patience with those he called – think especially of Peter – enthusiasm, courage, weakness, failure.

Clear vision (you are the Christ) coupled with blindness (this will never happen to you)

Followed into the courtyard – yet crumbled – yet Jesus still trusted (Feed my sheep).

Patience in the New Testament is Greek word μακροθυμια - patience in the face of injury – implies slowness to avenge injury

*Read Matthew 5:38-42*

Patience, μακροθυμια, a slowness to avenge injury – allows space for healing in relationships.

We see that in the Parable of the Prodigal and in the picture by Rembrandt.

*Read Luke 15*

While the son was still a long way off, the father was waiting patiently, waiting for the son's return, ready to respond in reconciling love. - reflected in words of Post Communion Prayer – While we were still a long way off you met us in your son and

brought us home ..... Patience, μακροθυμια, a slowness to avenge injury – allows space for healing in relationships.

We offer that space because God has allowed us that space in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us ..... a love that takes the initiative ‘Father forgive, for they know not ....’ – leaves time to respond

May God, by the power of the HS enable us to show something of the patience God has shown us

Patience that does not seek immediate revenge for wrongs that are done to us.

The patience that recognises that we too have sinned, we too have fallen short of the glory of God

The patience that persists in the face of misunderstanding.

In short the patience of a saint.