

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES (August 28, 2022)

FOR PERSONAL OR GROUP STUDY

One of the many things I absolutely love about Yakima is the volume and variety of trees. Pine trees, Cedars, Firs, Oaks, Aspen, Flowering, and yes ... fruit trees. During our time at Ghormley our family fell in love with the tall trees we lived among. And when the wind came, and those trees swayed and groaned, even better.

In our former home in Cowiche the soil was so rich (it was a former pig farm) that we could dig by hand and what we planted flourished. My favorite fruit tree (don't tell the others) was a beautiful and very productive Peach tree near the front of our driveway. Delicious! In our current home the soil is not so easy to dig and the trees and plants have to work harder to survive. We do have three growing Peach trees. Last year they produced a few peaches, this year's crop is thin, but next year (the third for the peach trees) should be glorious! There are several seemingly separate teachings in this morning's passage. Luke weaves them here, together, for a reason. First, Jesus offers a parable about a fig tree planted in a vineyard. Second, Jesus teaches about priorities and compassion as it relates to Sabbath rules. Third, Jesus teaches about the Kingdom of God. Our focus today is the first and the third. Alex will return to the second of the three (controversy surrounding what is acceptable to do on the Sabbath) next week (Luke 14:1-6).

How patient are you with trees, plants, vacuum cleaners, toasters, slow drivers, the person paying in pennies and nickels? How patient are you with the people growing around you? How is your "fruit" (Galatians 5:22-23) growing? Are you patient with yourself? In our passage about the fig tree Jesus reminds us of the love and patience of our heavenly Father! And so, we Love God! Love others!

God's Patience, Compassion and Kingdom (Luke 13:6-21)

^{13:6} And he told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷ And he said to the vinedresser, "Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?" ⁸ And he answered him, "Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. ⁹ Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'" ¹⁰ Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, 'Woman, you are freed from your disability.' ¹³ And he laid his

hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. ¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, 'There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.' ¹⁵ Then the Lord answered him, 'You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?' ¹⁷ As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him. ¹⁸ He said therefore, 'What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹ It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.' ²⁰ And again he said, 'To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹ It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened.'"

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. Who owns the fig tree, the vineyard, and how long has he waited for some fruit from the fig tree? What did he find?
2. What, or who, kept him from immediately ripping out the tree?
3. What did Jesus compare the Kingdom of God to? Why?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

4. Why was the owner so frustrated? What was he expecting?
5. Was the owner of the vineyard unreasonable?
6. Why did Jesus offer compassion and healing to the woman?

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

7. How is your patience? Who, or what, do you find it hardest to be patient with? Provide some examples.
8. How would you describe the Kingdom of God to others?
9. Has God been patient with you? Discuss.
10. How can your patience grow? How can you participate in God's kingdom here and now, right where you are?

As you spend time praying remember that prayer is meant to be the most natural, easy, and empowering, part of your day. Prayer is talking to God and hearing Him talk to you. In your prayers thank God for His patience with you. Ask God to help you be more patient with things, with circumstances, and with others. God will help you because He patiently loves you.