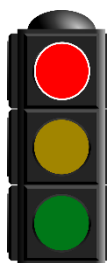


XXXXXXXXXX 2 dark green, 3 light green, 2 blue, 4 dark green

I have always considered myself to be a very patient person, however, when I came to write this Doodle I realized that in fact, my patience is quite inconsistent. How is it that I can spend several hours counting stitches on my embroidery and yet get all uptight when waiting for a parcel to be delivered? Why can I take a couple of hours trawling through records on Ancestry for my Family Tree research, but be standing anxiously at the front door if my son is five minutes after our arranged time for him to pick me up for a hospital appointment? Well, I do not know if you agree with me, but I came to the conclusion that we get impatient when we are not in control of a situation.



Temporary traffic lights

You are on your way to work and perhaps a little later than usual, when unexpectedly there are temporary traffic lights and workmen digging up the road. It seems to take ages for the lights to change from red to green and what is even more frustrating is that you can see workmen whom appear to be standing around doing nothing – or chatting on their mobiles. You become very impatient and maybe some words come into your head that should not even be in your vocabulary. You are unable to either alter the timing of the lights or cause the work to be done any faster.



Parcel delivery

You are waiting for a parcel to be delivered. You do not know which day or time that it will arrive. You are prevented from completing your normal routine in case you miss hearing the knock on the door. You are waiting and ready to go to the shop, but are wondering if the parcel will be delivered whilst you are out for that short time. You are not in control of either the delivery van or the driver.

Solution attempts

The obvious solution that most Christians would suggest would be to pray about it and ask God to give you more patience. When I tried this I have to admit that I did not find it very successful because it seemed to put my focus on the impatience rather than improve how I was feeling.



Traffic lights – A helpful suggestion

Alter your focus. Instead of sitting there whinging about the situation, try thanking God for it. Thank God for the lights that are preventing you from meeting traffic in the same lane coming from the opposite direction! Thank God for the new gas pipes that are being laid, the burst water mains being repaired or for the new electric cables. When you arrive home after work you will be able to switch a knob on your cooker and have gas to cook a meal. After the meal there will be water at the turn of a tap to wash the dishes. When all of your chores are completed you will be able to sit down and relax in your armchair and watch the television. You would not be able to do any of these things if it were not for the temporary traffic lights and trenches being dug in the road.

Parcel delivery – A helpful suggestion

I recently ordered a new bedside clock. When I ordered it on the internet I was informed that it would be coming from China and would be 5/6 days before delivery. After about 4 days I began to listen for a knock on the door. Could I not have been given some idea of the delivery time? I then altered my focus. What a great deal of planning must have taken place.



I was so glad that I did not have to get out my mobility scooter and go to China to collect it! Being grateful, thanking God for the cost of only £8, all the planning and no effort at all on my part, made me much more patient, but I felt that there was still something missing.

What was it? What would increase my patience even further?

The missing 'something'

I turned my thoughts to the effects of impatience. Frustration, annoyance, loss of temper, not able to concentrate properly on the task in hand, head mixed up, tummy churning. Praying for patience is fine but does not seem to resolve some of the above feelings. What is the answer?



It is the need for peace in our spirits at such times.

At the beginning of every letter in the Bible that Paul wrote, he asked for God's peace to be with the recipients. He had experienced endless trials and hardships and had come to realize that it was the peace of God in his spirit that enabled him to cope with every situation.

Often after a miracle of healing, Jesus would say to the person, "Go in peace." When He was telling the disciples that He would be leaving them, He said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you." (John 14:27) He knew that over and above everything else the most important thing that He could promise His disciples – and also promises each one of us – was His peace in their spirits. God does not always take us out of difficult situations, but His peace is always available to help to carry us through such times.

In Galatians 5:22, there is a list of things that should be the results of being a Christian and it mentions, '.....peace, patience.....'. I would say that it is more than a co-incidence that 'peace' precedes 'patience'. It is the peace that helps us to rise to new levels of patience. Temporary traffic lights, parcel delivery, waiting for appointments, etc., are all events that may try our patience. What is the solution?

ALTER YOUR FOCUS

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

PRAY FOR HIS PEACE