

TUESDAY, JUNE 9

Isaiah 58

A Serving of Humility

**THOUGHT FOR TODAY:** Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Isaiah 58:6

A little boy sitting across the diner from me throws a handful of French fries to the floor and refuses to clean his plate. Remarkably, this unruly child transforms into the politest person in the restaurant when he's told defiance means no dessert.

The Bible makes it clear that God delights in blessing obedience, but, too often, I try exploiting the system. Like a selfish child, I throw fits when I don't get my way, then humble myself with the sole intention of earning a reward.

Isaiah 58 exposes humanity's tendency to treat God like a short order cook dishing out blessings in accordance with good behavior. However, humility is not about being obedient in order to receive blessings, but being obedient because that *is* the blessing. Christ-like humility opens up thrilling opportunities to champion the downtrodden; free the oppressed; satisfy needs of the hungry, naked, and homeless; and bring hope to despairing souls. While we may lead with the body, true humility issues from the heart.

**PRAYER:** Holy God, help us find delight in obeying you each day. Amen.

Megan L. Anderson—Kokomo, Indiana

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

Galatians 5:16-26

Patiently Waiting

**THOUGHT FOR TODAY:** . . . the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23a

A lesser-yellowlegs sandpiper stood completely still at the Clark's Fork River's edge. Occasionally, he moved his head as he looked for a fish. Ducks swam in the water close by, but the sandpiper was not sidetracked by what they were doing. Twenty minutes later when I returned from my walk along the river, the sandpiper was still standing within a few feet of where he had been when I first saw him. I was amazed at his patience.

Twenty minutes is longer than most of us want to wait for anything. We don't like to wait in a checkout line, to put gas in our car, at a stop sign, or for someone else to arrive for a meeting. Neither do we like to wait on God for answers to prayer. In America, we expect and want everything immediately. Patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit that we would do well to cultivate.

**PRAYER:** Forgive me, God, for wanting things to happen immediately. Instead, I choose to trust you to work circumstances out for me. Amen.

Helen L. Hoover—Rogers, Arkansas