

Patient Trust in Ourselves and the Slow Work of God

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are quite naturally impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.
We would like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way
to something unknown, something new.
And yet, it is the law of all progress
that it is made by passing through stages of instability –
and that it may take a very long time.

And so I think it is with us;
ideas mature gradually – let them grow,
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don't try to force them on, as though we could be today what time
(that is to say, grace and circumstances acting on our own good will)
will make of us tomorrow.

Only God can say what this new spirit
gradually forming in us will be.
We are given the benefit of believing that God is leading us,
and accept the anticipation of feeling ourselves
in suspense and incomplete.

Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.
(slightly adapted)

Scriptures For Week Two of Acts

Acts 6:1

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food.

Acts 6:2-4

And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said: "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men (and we would gratefully say seven people!) of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, do our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word."

Acts 6:10

But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

Acts 7:59-60

59: While they were stoning him. Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit."

60: Then he fell on his knees and cried out, Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Power Surge

From the book:

Members to Disciples

Leadership Lessons from The Book of Acts

By Michael W. Foss

The 6 consonants of Power Surge represent one of the Six Marks of Discipleship:

P reminds us of the practice to Pray Daily;

W calls us to Worship weekly;

R invites us into God's word by Reading the Bible daily;

S stands for Serving in and beyond the congregation;

The second R calls us to Relate to others for spiritual growth;

G is our call to Give a tithe and beyond.

Questions for Week 2 of Acts

Thoughts and reflections about last week?

How do you feel about telling others about Jesus?

If you had to spent next Saturday morning leading a Bible study, praying with other Christians or serving breakfast to a group of widows which activity would you choose?

What kind of person do you think Stephen was? What qualities does Stephen have to lead and serve others?

What qualities of Stephen would you like to see in your own life?

Why did the Twelve Apostles choose prayer and teaching over caring for the poor?