



Leader's Guide

October 2 & 3: Enduring Patience

Series Overview

We are in this world to make an impact and love others. If we are going to truly impact our world, we must display the life of Christ in our own lives. *Galatians 5:22-23* says, ²²*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.* This kind of life will make a difference in our world and in the lives of the people around us.



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Sermon Highlights

Patience doesn't come naturally to most of us. The Greek word for patience means, "Taking a long time to boil." Someone said, "Patience is the ability to count down before blasting off."

Luke 10:38-42

Mary and Martha were sisters with different temperaments. But don't think one is good and the other is bad. We need Marys and Marthas, and we all need to work on our personal weaknesses.

Jesus notices Martha's impatience and that she has lost sight of the priority of that moment. You might say, "But she can't just change her temperament." No, but the Lord can change her.

How does a person move from impatience to patience?

1. **Submit to Christ.** *2 Corinthians 5:17*
2. **Spend time with God.**
3. **Slow down.** *Psalms 37:7*
4. **Seek help.** *Colossians 1:10-11*
5. **Schedule time to serve others.** *Galatians 5:13-14*

The Lord hasn't asked you to do something that He hasn't done.

2 Peter 3:9, The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

On patience...

- One of the great disadvantages of hurry is that it takes such a long time. –G. K. Chesterton
- *Be still and know that I am God.* –*Psalms 46:10*
- Endeavor to be always patient of the faults and imperfections of others, for you have many faults and imperfections of your own that require a reciprocation of forbearance. –Thomas a Kempis



Take it home ... Practical Applications

Is there a person that you easily lose patience with? Is there a situation that quickly gets you down and you have trouble waiting for a positive outcome? Take that person or situation to God, and ask Him to help you to learn to wait and trust His timing, as He continues to work in your life and circumstances and in the lives and situations of others.



Take it to the source ... Bible Study

Introductory question: Where do you lose patience the fastest? Why?

Opening Thought

Patience is definitely a virtue that many of us are lacking. American society is geared around speed and using every second of every day. We don't like to wait on things or people. Use this question to get your Small Group thinking about the things that cause them to lose patience the fastest. Help prepare them to look for answers to this problem that most of us face.

Read *Luke 10:38-42*.

1. Who do you personally relate to more—Mary or Martha? Why?
2. How do you think you would have responded if you were in Martha's place?
3. Why do you think Jesus reprimanded Martha for her misplaced priorities? When you feel like your priorities are getting out of order, what do you do to get yourself back in line with God's perspective?
4. Jesus is not saying that Mary is completely right and Martha is completely wrong. There must be a balance in our lives on the basis of correct priorities. What practical things can you do to keep a right balance between serving others while still taking time to hear God's words and plans for your life?

Key Point

When we hear the story of Mary and Martha, there is a tendency to say that one is right and the other is wrong. That is not the case. We can't all sit around and read the Bible all day every day. But if we all get caught up with the work of the church and neglect our relationship with God, then that is a wrong emphasis, too. We need to learn to hear God speak so that we can know what He wants us to do and when we should do it. Help your group consider practical solutions to achieving this balance.

Read *Psalms 37:7, 46:10* and *Isaiah 40:31*.

1. Would you say it is easy or difficult for you to slow down in the course of a normal week? Why?
2. What is the biggest thing that keeps you from setting aside time to be quiet with God?
3. Our society does not really encourage us to wait for anything. How can learning to be still and wait become a way to show others what it means to trust in God and His plan for your life?
4. When was the last time you took even ten minutes just to be still with God? What are some practical things you could do, or decide not to do, to ensure that you are taking time to be still and hear God's voice in the middle of your fast-paced and sometimes stressful life?
5. How can waiting develop a greater trust in God and a deeper character in your life?

Key Point

Being still, so that we can hear from God, is not something that we are used to doing. It can be a very hard habit to develop. Part of developing a spiritually disciplined life is learning to shut everything off, quiet our hearts and listen to hear what God has to say to us. God does not work according to our timetable, we must learn to work according to His time and plans. It may be a good idea to consider how regular Bible reading and prayerful quiet times can help the people in your group gain a greater understanding of what it means to have God's eternal perspective in the middle of a fast-paced and stressful life.

Read *Philippians 1:6, Colossians 1:10-11* and *2 Peter 3:9*.

1. Are you patient with God and the work He is doing in your own life? What causes you to get frustrated with yourself or with God?
2. As you read these three passages, how are you encouraged in your own spiritual pursuit? In your desire to see others come into a relationship with Jesus Christ?
3. Have you ever considered patience to be a primary part of your spiritual life? How do these verses change your perspective?
4. As you continue to trust in God and His work in your life and the lives of others, what practical things can you be doing to see His promises for you and others come to pass?

Key Point

God's timing is not our timing. That is probably one of the hardest lessons to learn, but it is crucial to spiritual growth and development. The hope we have is that God never quits working in our lives. He never stops changing and transforming us if we continue to submit to His work and ways in our lives. Part of our spiritual growth is learning to cooperate with God as He works in our lives and in the lives of others. In order to cooperate with Him, we have to learn to hear His voice and to recognize His presence in the day-to-day events of our lives. This is the primary step in learning to live a life of patience.

Notes...



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