

Living for Life

January's Theme: Patience

Package Contents

- Wondering Cards:** This package has six wondering cards. These are informal conversation starters to use either in a one-on-one situation, such as driving in the car, or as a group, such as at family meals. You can use them more than once. There is no particular order to them. Choose one that you think is right for the moment.
- Scriptures:** *(enter the color)* This package contains four scriptures all having to do with patience. They are a short Bible study. Try to discuss at least two of the scriptures during the month. The questions are suggestions. You can rephrase them, too. Feel free to use your own, especially as you may have your own questions as you read these passages. You can also revisit the scripture at another time during the month if you want to ask other questions. Bear in mind that the answers are not clear cut, black and white. You can answer them too.
- Prayers:** *(enter the color)* These are prayers for different situations. You might think of other situations where patience is necessary. A good activity is to have them write their own prayer for the situation.
- Activity Sheet:** *(enter the color)* The activity ties together this month's theme. Two are designed to encourage patience through reward, such as baking a loaf of yeast bread. The third is experiential, teaching about waiting. Try to do at least one of them. At the end of an activity have a discussion about the lessons they learned from it. Each activity has a set of suggested questions.

See the obverse side for Bible information.

Basic Bible User's Instructions

The Bible contains writings which are thousands of years old. It is a sacred book containing wisdom, although written long ago, it remains fresh as scriptures still can teach us how to live today. Some people call the Bible an operating manual for life.

The Bible contains "books." Each book has one or more chapters, and each chapter has verses.

When we reference a scripture, we cite the book, the chapter, and the verse or verses. Thus, if we see a reference to Luke's account of Jesus' birth, the citation would be Luke 2:8-20. It means:

- The Gospel According to Luke
- Chapter two
- Verses 8-20

Note that a colon separates the chapter and the verse(s).

Furthermore, the Bible we use as Protestants has two major sections: Old Testament and New Testament. The Old Testament has the same books as in the Jewish Bible (although in a different order). The section often called the New Testament is scriptures used by Christians to understand Jesus and our faith.

Books of the Bible

Old Testament or Hebrew Scriptures		New Testament	
Genesis	Ecclesiastes	Matthew	Titus
Exodus	Song of Solomon	Mark	Philemon
Leviticus	Isaiah	Luke	Hebrews
Numbers	Jeremiah	John	James
Deuteronomy	Lamentations	Acts of the Apostles	1 Peter
Joshua	Ezekiel	Romans	2 Peter
Judges	Daniel	1 Corinthians	1 John
Ruth	Hosea	2 Corinthians	2 John
1 Samuel	Amos	Galatians	3 John
2 Samuel	Obadiah	Ephesians	Jude
1 Kings	Jonah	Philippians	Revelation
2 Kings	Micah	Colossians	
1 Chronicles	Nahum	1 Thessalonians	
2 Chronicles	Habakkuk	2 Thessalonians	
Ezra	Zephaniah	1 Timothy	
Nehemiah	Haggai	2 Timothy	
Esther	Zechariah		
Job	Malachi		
Psalms			
Proverbs			

Which do you value more, something you get easily or something that comes after a lot of hard work?

After Thanksgiving, how hard was it to wait until Christmas?

When we have a hard decision to make, why should we take our time?

What is something worth waiting for?

What do you think it means when someone says, “Stop and smell the flowers?”

Think of a time when you got a time out. What did you learn from it?

Activities

Activity 1:

Make a loaf of yeast bread from scratch. Use any recipe you wish. The recipe below is a simple bread recipe if you need one.

Basic White Bread (from **Amy's Bread** by Amy Scherber and Toy Kim Dupree)

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ Tsp. of Active dry yeast
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm water (105-115° F)
4 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (or 20 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz) unbleached all-purpose flour
2 $\frac{1}{4}$ Tsp. kosher salt
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups plus 2 Tbs (11 oz) cool water (75° F)

1. Combine the yeast and the warm water in a small bowl and stir with a fork to dissolve the yeast. Let stand for 3 minutes.
2. Mix the flour and salt together in a large mixing bowl. Add the yeast mixture and the cool water. Using your fingers, mix the dough into a sticky mess.
3. When all the flour is incorporated, move the dough to a lightly floured work surface and knead for 4 minutes. The dough should be sticky and not look smooth. If the dough feels stiff or dry, knead in additional cool water a tablespoon at a time.
4. Put the dough in a lightly floured bowl, cover, and let it rest for 20 minutes.
5. Return the dough to the lightly floured surface and knead it for 7 to 8 minutes. The dough will go from sticky to smooth and will become supple but not too firm.
6. Place the dough in a clean bowl dusted with flour. Cover the bowl with a towel and let the dough rise at room temperature (70 – 75° F) for 2 to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours, until it doubles in volume. (An indentation made by poking your finger deep into the dough should not spring back.)
7. Place the dough on a very lightly floured surface. Gently deflate the dough and pat it into a rectangle with the short side facing you. Fold the top edge down and the bottom edge up, overlapping them slightly, then turn the dough a quarter turn and fold the top down and the bottom up again to form an envelope. Shape the dough into a log shape.
8. Place the loaf, seam side down in a lightly oiled 9 x 5 inch loaf pan. Gently press down the loaf to spread it to fill the corners of the pan, and cover it with an oiled plastic wrap.
9. Let the loaf rise for 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours, or until it has doubled in size.
10. Preheat the oven to 425° F and position a rack in the middle of the oven.
11. Place the loaf on the center oven rack. Using a plant sprayer, quickly mist the loaf 6 to 8 times and then shut the oven door. After 3 minutes, mist the loaf again.
12. Bake for 10 minutes and then reduce the heat to 400° F and bake for 30 minutes longer or until the top is a deep golden brown. Remove the loaf from the pan. It should sound hollow when tapped on the bottom. The sides of the loaf should be brown. Let it cool slightly on a wire rack before cutting it. Try to eat it while it is still warm.

Some sample questions:

- Are you proud of this loaf?
- After making this bread, do you appreciate bread more?
- Was it worth the time?
- Notice that we could not speed the process as yeast works on its own time. What do you think would have happened if we sped up the process?

Activity 2:

Do a large jigsaw puzzle (note: you may want to take some breaks)

Some sample questions:

- Was it fun?
- Did it sometimes seem frustrating to put this together?
- How does it feel now that you're done?
- What other fun activities take a lot of time?

Activity 3:

Learning to sit quiet and still

Over the course of seven days, increase the amount of sitting time. Just sit without anything to read or anything to do with your hands according to the following schedule: (Note: you can use a clock or a kitchen timer)

- Day 1: 5 minutes
- Day 2: 7 minutes
- Day 3: 10 minutes
- Day 4: 12 minutes
- Day 5: 15 minutes
- Day 6: 18 minutes
- Day 7: 20 minutes

Some sample questions:

- What were you thinking while you waited?
- If you had to wait for something you wanted, would it have made your wait easier?
- (If you used some sort of timer) Would waiting have been easier if you didn't have a timer/clock?
- What are situations when you might have to wait quietly?

Prayers

Serenity Prayer (Reinhold Niebuhr):

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
the courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Prayer after a long, hard day

O God, today was hard. Today was tough. I couldn't have made it without you. Thank you for giving me the strength. Thank you for giving me the patience. Thank you for being by my side to help me through. Amen.

Prayer in the face of a challenge

You are my rock, O God, my sure foundation. Keep me steady and do not let me hurry. Help me pay attention to the task at hand and do not let my mind wander. Be patient with me. Grant that I will be patient with myself. Amen.

Prayer before going to school

Thank you, God, for sleep and rest. I pause in this moment to remember and give thanks for my family and friends. I give thanks for my teachers and promise to help make their day a little bit easier. I give thanks for our custodian, who keeps my school clean, and the people who work in the cafeteria who make sure we're fed. Grant me patience if something upsets me. Give me patience to listen before I speak. I pray that you will be with everyone of us and that we will live today with the kindness and compassion of Jesus. Amen.

Prayer when things seem to be going too fast

Whoa. Slow me down, O God. Let me catch my breath. This is going way too fast. I need to smell the flowers. I need to think. I need to breathe. Help me go at my own pace. Let me be comfortable. This doesn't have to be a race. Amen.

Galatians 5:22-26

Questions:

- When you hear words like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, what do those words make you think?
- What makes these descriptions good?
- Do these characteristics make you feel rushed?
- When the author, Paul, wrote about the Spirit, he referred to the Holy Spirit. How do we listen to the Holy Spirit? Can we hear the Holy Spirit if we rush around?

Ephesians 4:1-6

Questions:

- This reading tells us how we should live with each other. How does patience help us live together? What happens when we're not patient with each other?
- What are things we can do to show humility and gentleness and patience?
- What do we learn about each other when we are humble, gentle, and patient?

Colossians 3:12-17

Questions:

- How does patience help us love someone better?
- How does patience help us to be thankful?
- Does patience help us to learn about ourselves?
- What are you thankful for? Did you have to stop and think about it? When we slow down, can we think of more things for which we're grateful?

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Questions:

- What did the author, Paul, mean when he wrote, "Love is patient?"
- If you're struggling with something, how does patience help you? Do you need patience from me? Do you need patience with yourself?
- Is patience more about the amount of time spent waiting or an attitude of being open to the Holy Spirit?