



Stylin'

Week 3 - Patience Discussion Guide

Today's culture is constantly pushing us to go, go, go. Everything is quick paced: fast food, overnight delivery, instant coffee, tv on demand. This style of living can cause us to be "short-fuse" people. God has a better style of life for us. When we live a little more patiently, we see new opportunities, we give God space to work, and we are better equipped to practice forgiveness.

Jump Start

1. Would you say your personality is naturally patient, driven, task-oriented, or easy-going? Does patience come somewhat naturally for you or is it completely foreign to you?
2. **Read Colossians 3:12-13.** One of the attributes or "styles" God asks us to put on is patience, bearing with one another. What have you learned this week about what "bearing with" really means?
3. **Read Isaiah 64:8 and Jeremiah 18:4.** Both of these prophets saw God as the Potter; we are the clay that He molds and shapes. What does this mean about how God views us? About how we view others? And about how we develop patience?
4. **Read Ephesians 4:2 in multiple versions.** Definitely try the NKJV and the NLT versions. God tells us to be patient, make allowances, be longsuffering. That tells us this is not an easy process! In what areas of your life do you need to increase your gentleness and allow others' faults not to upset or worry you?
5. **Read Ephesians 4:31-32 and Hebrews 12:15.** Are you living with anger or bitterness? What are the results of harboring anger / bitterness? What can you do to forgive and how can your Life Group support you in healing?
6. Final Thought: It's easy to think that impatience, being task-oriented, or super efficient is just "part of my personality" and not a big deal. Those of us who are more driven can excuse our brisk manner instead of seeing the need to change. The more gentle personalities can be great at taking time for people. Yet they sometimes avoid the "bearing with" part of the commandment because they avoid all conflict. Pair up in your Life Group; ask your partner if he/she thinks of you as patient or impatient. Ask if you come across as gentle or abrupt.

Then ask the Potter to help you in whatever areas you need to change. Give Him permission to mold you as He wills!

Deeper

7. Read Romans 12:18-20:

18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." (ESV)

- a. What are we personally called to do in verse 18?

- b. Look up "leave it" or "leave room" in the Greek. What does it really mean?

- c. What practical steps do we take to change our hearts and serve our enemy?