

The Teacher and Patience

Key Verses

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient. (II Timothy 2:24)

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. (I Thessalonians 5:14-15)

“First do no harm,” “Trust the process,” “Patience is the companion of wisdom.” St. Augustine (354-430)

Lesson Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to

- Define *patience*
- Recognize the benefits of exhibiting patience
- Identify scriptural examples of patience
- Recognize the source of patience.
- Describe the results of impatience.

Introduction

The most important quality teachers should have is to be very patient with their students and to deal with the same questions and problems over and over again. We should never give up on our students. Never. Souls are at stake!

I. Definition of Patience

A. Quotes:

- The two hardest tests on the spiritual road are the patience to wait for the right moment and the courage not to be disappointed with what we encounter. – [Paulo Coelho](#)
- Patience is not the ability to wait. Patience is to be calm no matter what happens, constantly take action to turn it to positive growth opportunities and have faith to believe that it will all work out in the end while you are waiting. – [Roy T. Bennett](#)
- Wait and watch add to hope. It is a willingness to let God do it in his time. – Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*

B. Thoughts:

- Patience is not just waiting. Most of life happens while we are waiting for employment, marriage, children, and retirement. Time often seems to be obstructing our goals. Yet it can be our friend, molding us to a more mature and improved individual. Moses was content on the backside of the desert. “And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter” (Exodus 2:21). Later he was resistant in responding to God’s call.
- Patience is not just waiting during difficulties or trials. We would not consider the children of Israel as patient with God after they were delivered. No, they were often looking back at every obstacle, stopping, and complaining. See Exodus 14:10-15. Patience for the teacher means waiting during difficult and troubling times without complaining. And trying times will come to all teachers as they endeavor to help students learn and reach their goals.
- Patience includes longsuffering, slow to anger, patient with those content to stay where are, waiting for the light to go on.
- Complaining students, content to be unchanged, test the teacher’s patience. However, patience must be applied in coping with student questions and attitudes.
 - “We have always done it this way.”
 - “Why do we need to know this?”
 - “What is the value of doing this assignment?”
- Teachers must apply patience with others, themselves, and in trusting the process.

- When students seem to lack interest or comprehension, the teacher should look for another way to get the lesson across. The teacher must apply patience, recalling that learning is a process. The process involves time and attention.

II. God's Word gives insight about patience applicable to the learning process

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:3-5)

This verse reveals a process that results in hope:

1. Tribulation worketh patience
2. Patience yields experience
3. Experience gives hope
4. Hope makes one not ashamed (produces confidence)

This admonition emphasizes that a teacher must *trust the process* and gives insight on how the process works.

A. Trust the process! Never give up.

Other translations of Romans 5:3-5 mention endurance or perseverance; the ability to continue on, move forward.

A teacher must repeatedly exercise patience in order to produce positive learning results.

B. The Patience of Abraham

The Book of Hebrews makes reference to the patience of Abraham in waiting for the promise of a son. (See Genesis 17:15-19; 18:1-15; 21:1-7.) "And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise" (Hebrews 6:15).

III. Scripture shows that patience is an attribute of God

And he [Moses] hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. (Exodus 34:4)

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. (Exodus 34:6)

And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. (Joel 2:13)

Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. (I Peter 3:20)

As teachers we might ask, “Couldn’t God have just started over in less than 120 years and have more than eight to save?” However, His ways and thoughts aren’t ours.

From the story of Noah, we note that God truly exercises patience over long periods of time. As teachers, we must remind ourselves of the value and importance of being patient with our students in the process of learning.

IV. The gift of repentance ... Salvation is born out of God’s patience

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (II Peter 3:9)

A teacher’s patience waits for a change of mind and heart . . . and hopes for a transformation!

V. Impatience can result in casualties

- How many people with whom we have quit working have become casualties of our impatience?
- When students exhibit common human behavior in the early stages of mental and spiritual growth, do we tend to classify them as unreachable and unteachable?
- When they are slow to learn and respond, do we lose interest in their development.

A. Teaching and discipling are companions.

- When we teach, we are preparing students to be disciples and disciple makers.
- Fishing is what the Lord called it . . . a process of patience.
- Fishermen don't use guns to force response.
- Fishermen use lines, hooks, and bait to attract interest and response.
- Fishermen make changes as needed to gain the response of the fish.

Note the story in Luke 5:1-7: The disciples fished all night and caught nothing. Jesus instructed them to "launch out into the deep" and try a different way by casting on the other side of the boat. The change resulted in a large catch of fish.

The lesson in patience for the teacher: Try again! Another way! Perhaps with a change of attitude to which the students will favorably respond.

VI. It is significant to recognize individual differences and needs

A. Example of Dr. Joe Cassady

- Dr. Joe Cassady homeschooled their six children (6 sons and 1 daughter).
- One significant advantage of homeschooling is the ability to provide individualized training. Public schools teach all students the same way at the same age.

This does not need to be the case in our teaching in Bible colleges. Adaptations in teaching styles and assignments need to be considered in helping students to develop and reach their full potential.

- All students are not the same at the same age (even Bible college students).
- Bible college students need to be understood and recognized for their learning differences.
- Thomas Edison (described as one of the greatest inventors – 1847–1931) didn't survive in public school. His teacher belittled him as “addled.” As a result, he ran out of the school as a seven-year-old. His mother tried to reason with his teacher, but he remained rigid in the way he taught. Thus, his mother withdrew him from school and taught him at home for most of his years. Edison learned differently, and his teacher did not recognize his genius.
- A Bible college teacher must be patient with students and attempt to employ teaching methods that will enhance the learning of all his students.
- Other GATS lessons address the learning styles of students that provide guidance for teachers in understanding and employing varied methods of teaching/learning: Auditory, visual, tactile
- The guiding principle: BE PATIENT!
Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. (Ecclesiastes 7:8)
- Consider this: If there is a problem, maybe it is me (the teacher), or perhaps I need to try another way. Jesus taught many ways:
 - Parables
 - Stories
 - Examples, visible
 - Talked
 - Observation: birds, lilies, weather

B. Examples

- **John 4:1–25:** “But He needed to go through Samaria” (4:4 NKJV).
 - Woman at the well
 - Prejudice prevailed
 - Woman and Samaritan
 - She was slow to get the metaphors.
 - She had some issues.
 - In time Jesus got to what interested her.
 - The coming one (4:25)
 - He was revealed to her (4:26).
 - She got it!

- Jesus could not get away from the burden that He must go through Samaria. He did want to lose one who needed teaching about the Messiah.
- As Bible college teachers, we must not through impatience lose even one!
- What does patient teaching look like?
 - Perhaps like leaving the 99 to find one! Give individual attention as needed (Luke 15:4).
 - Lighting a candle and getting down and searching till I find what works to teach the disconnected student (Luke 15:8).
 - The prodigal came home because he remembered his father and his character. He knew he could return after failure. Patient teachers respond to struggling students with patient concern. The prodigal's father responded with kind forgivingness and longsuffering taught by his life and reinforced when his son was a long way off (Luke 15:11-32).
- Luke 8:41-56—Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue came to ask Jesus for help for his sick twelve-year-old daughter, his only daughter (v. 41).
 - Then a woman with an issue of blood interrupted (v. 43- 48).
 - Word came that the daughter had died (v. 49).
 - Jesus proceeded to the ruler's house and healed the girl (vss. 50-56).
 - Jesus patiently and kindly ministered to both needs not regarding the ruler's need more important than the lowly woman's need for healing.
 - Patient teachers give help to all students, regardless of their rank or popularity.

C. Important factors of patient teaching

- Teaching is *not one size fits all!*
- A patient teacher tries new things.
- A patient teacher goes the extra mile.
- A patient teacher makes himself available to his students for help and advice.
 - Note: *Dr. Cassady, who developed this lesson and taught it to teachers at Apostolic Bible College in Uganda, stated that all his patients have his personal phone number.*

D. More Thoughts about Patience

- Patience is received through the Spirit and not a natural trait of the flesh.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22–23).

- God loved us while we were yet sinners (amazing patience).
- Patience is pictured in the words of St. Augustine:
Love, and do what you will:
 - whether you hold your peace, through love hold your peace;
 - whether you cry out, through love cry out;
 - whether you correct, through love correct;
 - whether you spare, through love do you spare:
 - let the root of love be within,
 - of this root can nothing spring but what is good.
- The path to patience described in Luke 10:25–37
 - “Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself” (v. 27)
 - Loving God will foster love for others and produce patience.
 - Consideration of others above self nurtures patience.
- Patience
 - Can be inconvenient at times.
 - Costs more than time.
 - Diverts you from your plans.
 - Saves a life from the thief who comes to steal, steal and destroy (John 10:10).
 - Is exactly what God expects.
 - Calls you to offer help to a student when you are on the way to other business (Luke 10:30–37).
 - Calls you to love students regardless of their learning ability.
 - Ensures good relationships.
- He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. (Proverbs 16:32)

Regrets of impatience

- He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated. (Proverbs 14:17)
- He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly. (Proverbs 14:29)
 - Moses murdered a man in his impatience (Exodus 2:12).

- David almost killed a man due to a quick temper. Fortunately, the man's wife intervened (I Samuel 25).
- Saul did not wait for the prophet and lost his position (I Samuel 13).
- People stop listening when a person is angry . . . showing lack of patience.

The Positive Power of Patience

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. (James 5:11)

- Patience is your faith in the process.
- Patience sees into the future by faith, seeing the evidence of things not yet seen.
- Patience accepts that God is in control and has a divine purpose.
- Patience understands the importance of how a teacher's actions affect students.

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. (Colossians 3:12-13)

- Patience protects from conflict, regrets, going back, stopping.
- Patience is a fruit of the Spirit.
- Patience is born of Love.
- Patience is long- suffering.
- Patience dispels anger.
- Patience is born out of tribulation

Gardening compared with teaching

See the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1-9).

- Gardening in good soil is pleasant and produces an abundant crop (v. 8).
- Gardening on the "wayside" where the birds steal the seed produces no crop (v. 4).
- Gardening on "stony ground" hinders growth and results in a withered crop (vss. 5-6).
- Gardening in thorny ground chokes growth and yields no crop (v. 7).

FOR THE TEACHER . . .

- Some students (“good ground”) can be easily taught.
- Other students (“wayside”) still have a chance with a teacher directing the seed.
- Students with “thorny” (weedy) ground still have promise.
- Unfortunately, some students allow Satan to steal the Word and seem unresponsive even to good seed.
- The teacher’s task and challenge: to patiently teach in such a way as to produce a crop in every student’s life.
- When the teacher teaches with patience and careful preparation, the students will . . . hear, comprehend, and with a good heart bring forth fruit.

VII. Joseph’s life provides a pattern of patience for teachers

- Joseph was despised, placed in a pit, sold as slave, falsely accused of rape, imprisoned, forgotten, and yet remained patient and faithful in every area.
- As a result of his patient lifestyle, he was promoted to prominence and prepared to be a savior for the people of the land and his own family.
- Joseph lived with an attitude of patience, waiting in difficult times for God’s purpose without complaining.

And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them. (Genesis 50:19–21)

Conclusion

And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. (II Thessalonians 3:5)

Teachers must regard their work as patiently waiting for God to produce His work in each student:

Trust the Process!

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Lesson in Review

Name: _____

Nation: _____ Date: _____

1. Are the final results of life's situations in God's hands?

2. How do circumstances teach you to wait on God?

3. Do you suffer and endure hard times without complaining?

4. Do you patiently instruct those for whom you are responsible?

5. Can you think of more biblical examples of patience?

APPENDIX: A Song with a Message for Teachers

It Is Well

When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
 When sorrow like sea billows roll;
 Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say
 It is well, it is well, with my soul

Refrain:

It is well, (it is well),
 With my soul (with my soul)
 It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
 Let his blest assurance control,
 That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
 And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
 My sin, not in part but the whole,
 Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live:
 If Jordan above me shall roll,
 No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life
 Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.

But Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait,
 The sky, not the grave, is our goal;
 Oh, trump of the angel" oh, voice of the Lord!
 Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul.

And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
 The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
 The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
 Even so, it is well with my soul.

"It Is Well with My Soul" is a hymn penned by hymnist Horatio Spafford and composed by Philip Bliss. First published in Gospel Songs No. 2 by Sankey and Bliss (1876)

Background

This hymn was written after traumatic events in Spafford's life. The first was the death of his son at the age of 2 and the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which ruined him financially (he had been a successful lawyer and had invested significantly in property in the area of Chicago that was extensively damaged by the great fire). His business interests were further hit by the economic downturn of 1873, at which time he had planned to travel to Europe with his family on the SS Ville du Havre. In a late change of plan, he sent the family ahead while he was delayed on business concerning zoning problems following the Great Chicago Fire. While crossing the Atlantic, the ship sank rapidly after a collision with a sea vessel, the Loch Earn, and all four of Spafford's daughters died. His wife Anna survived and sent him the now famous telegram, "Saved alone ...". Shortly afterwards, as Spafford traveled to meet his grieving wife, he was inspired to write these words as his ship passed near where his daughters had died. Bliss called his tune Ville du Havre, from the name of the stricken vessel.

The Spaffords later had three more children. On February 11, 1880, their son, Horatio Goertner Spafford, died at the age of four, of scarlet fever. Their daughters were Bertha Hedges Spafford (born March 24, 1878) and Grace Spafford (born January 18, 1881). Their Presbyterian church regarded their tragedy as divine punishment. In response, the Spaffords formed their own Messianic sect, dubbed "the Overcomers" by American press. In 1881, the Spaffords, including baby Bertha and newborn Grace, set sail for Ottoman-Turkish Palestine. The Spaffords settled in Jerusalem and helped found a group called the American Colony. Colony members, later joined by Swedish Christians, engaged in philanthropic work among the people of Jerusalem regardless of their religious affiliation and without proselytizing motives—thereby gaining the trust of the local Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities. During and immediately after World War I, the American Colony played a critical role in supporting these communities through the great suffering and deprivations by running soup kitchens, hospitals, orphanages and other charitable ventures. The colony later became the subject of Jerusalem by the Nobel prize-winning author, Swedish novelist Selma Lagerlöf.