

How to Live with Patience

Study Guide for Small Group Discussion and Personal Application
Lynn Haven UMC – September 13, 2020 – Pastor Craig Carter

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This is our second week in our sermon series titled “**How to Live**” based on the New Testament Letter of James. As a congregation we are following a reading plan through James and studying selected passages. Check out mylhumc.net/grow for more information.

Discussion Starters:

⇒ On a scale of 1 to 10, how patient of a person are you? Would your spouse or best friend agree with the score you just gave yourself? Are there some things you are very patient about, and other things that just make you crazy? Share some examples of both with your group.

James writes that we will have troubles and that facing challenges is a part of life. We are to choose to face them with perseverance and joy, knowing they serve a higher purpose in our lives. That purpose is to make us more Christ-like in character, including making us more patient.

*My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you **patience**. (James 1:2-3 NCV)*

Patience is not just being lazy or passive and waiting for things to get better. Patience is an active endeavor, a Holy Spirit-enabled effort to be steadfast and to persevere. Patience is defined as “the state of endurance in times of difficulty, the ability or will to bear trials or troubles calmly or without complaint”.

1) How to Live with Patience in Difficult Circumstances

My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience. Let your patience grow, so that it is fully developed. Then you will be perfect and complete and will have everything you need. (James 1:2-4 NCV)

We live in uncertain times. Many challenges we face are simply a part of living in a fallen, imperfect world. When times get tough and we face situations that are bigger than our

own ability to control, we realize we need help from God. During these times of testing, we must patiently wait upon the Lord in quiet trust.

“What doesn’t kill you will make a stronger” is not just a slogan, it’s the truth.

2) How to Live with Patience with Difficult People

We normally choose to avoid difficult people. If that does not work, then we often try to change them, and sometimes we end up speaking harshly to them. How does James say we should act toward difficult people?

Brothers and sisters, be patient until the Lord comes. See how the farmer waits for the land to produce its rich crop. See how patient he is for the fall and spring rains. You too must be patient. You must stand firm. The Lord will soon come back. Brothers and sisters, don’t find fault with one another. If you do, you will be judged. And the Judge is standing at the door! Brothers and sisters, think about the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. They are an example of how to be patient when you suffer. As you know, people who don’t give up are blessed. You have heard that Job was patient. And you have seen what the Lord finally did for him. The Lord is full of tender mercy and loving concern. (James 5:7-11 NIRV)

“The key to everything is patience. You get the chicken by hatching the egg, not by smashing it.” (Arnold Glasow)

Be still in the presence of the Lord and wait patiently for Him to act. (Psalm 37:7a NLT)

For Discussion:

⇒ Describe a time when your faith was tested and you persevered. How has that experience changed you as a person? How has someone being patient with you or you being patient with someone else proved to be a blessing?

⇒ Make a list of the things this last week that have challenged your patience. Are more difficult circumstances or difficult people involved? What can you do to practice patience in these and similar situations this next week?

Join us on the Journey through James:

⇒ Do you have a copy of the James reading plan? Download it here: mylhumc.net/grow
Do you have a time each day where you read the Bible and pray? Now is a good time to start this practice.

Don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. (James 1:22a NLT)