

TODAY’S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader / Opening Prayer by: Craig Girard
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

- #704 Bind Us Together
- #705 A Common Love
- #731 Take Time to Be Holy

Scripture Reading by: Parker Balch
#382 Why Did My Savior Come to Earth?

Communion Devotional by:
Lord’s Supper and Contribution

#719 Love One Another
Sermon: “Faith Speaks”
James 3:1-12

#736 To Christ Be True
#711 Blest Be the Tie That Binds
Closing Prayer by: James Scott

Small Groups

Our Small Groups will meet today.
Don Taylor’s group will meet at the building at 5:00 p.m.. If you have signed up and not been contacted, get with Bryant or one of the Elders.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

Apr. 16, 2023

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

Galatians 5:1

Practicing Patience

In our sermon this week, we will see James turn to the theme of speaking wisely. He mentions it earlier in the letter with these well-known words: *Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (James 1:19)*. It reminds us that much of the problem with controlling our tongues is speaking rashly, often out of frustration. In short, we struggle with impatience. How many of us can sympathize with that old line, “Lord, give me patience, and give it to me now!” It is an everyday problem we all face, so it seemed good to discuss it here.

Scripture repeatedly impresses the importance of patience on us. It is one of those Christian graces we are instructed to add to our lives in **2 Peter 1:5-11**. We are to *pursue patience (1 Tim 6:11)*, to be *sound in patience (Tit 2:2)*, and to *run the race with patience (Heb 12:1-2)*. But what do we mean by that? The dictionary defines patience as “bearing trials calmly or without complaint.” That certainly is the way we normally think of it. But I am not sure that does justice to the Biblical virtue.

There are 2 words commonly rendered patience in the NT. The first, *hupomone*, is literally a compound word that means “remain under.” The key idea is remaining under trials or difficulties—that is, endurance, perseverance, steadfastness. It is not primarily about a lack of complaint, although it might ideally include that; rather, it mainly concerns being unswerving from your purpose, trusting in God despite whatever troubles may come. The second word is *makrothumia*, which literally means “longsuffering.” It’s usually rendered that way in older translations, in fact, though more often now you will find “patience” used.

The distinction we are making stands out clearly in **James 5:11**, where he writes that, *you have heard of the patience of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful*. Think about that modern, English connotation of patience—is Job really an example of bearing trials without complaint? He is impatient with those around him (**Job 3:2, 11; 16:1-4**) He lashes out at God (**7:11-16; 10:19; 30:20-3**). He suffers greatly and he laments. The word here is that first one, *hupomone*. Job perseveres; he triumphs over his difficulties. He continues to trust in God, though it is difficult. He does not understand, he cries out in agony, but he never loses faith.

We can see it at work in Christ, too. *May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the patience of Christ. (2 Thess 3:5)* Now, Jesus was certainly longsuffering with his slow to learn disciples, but I wouldn’t say he was always calm. Sometimes he rebuked them sharply (**Jn 14:8-9**). He did not give up on them, he waited on them—he was patient in the true Biblical sense. But when warranted, he spoke to them sharply.

In short, we see the main idea in Scripture: perseverance, steadfastness, endurance. That is what we are to pursue. We might need to control our tempers, yes—though that is another lesson (one we have already had here, if you go back a few weeks to anger. But we need to learn to be steadfast in the midst of trial: THAT is patience.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Jerry Mast is at home after being in the hospital.

Cheryl Mast is recovering from covid.

Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Virginia Cole, Ka'Leisha Jones, Linda Frank, Ken Coleman, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Donna Wilson, Bryan Senegal, Cynthia Deblanc, Patricia Prater, Richard Prater, Edna Semien, Wilson Semien, Gloria Moore, Betty Spencer, Willie Spencer, James Wilson

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meet Monday, Apr. 17th at 5:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, April 20th at 8:00 a.m.

We will have a meal this Wednesday night at 5:30 p.m. in the family life center.

<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>	<u>Minister</u>
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

Where might we need to learn that practically? For starters, we need to be patient in our homes and families. Husbands and wives should be patient with one another. I know I am not always good at that—remember that the preacher is often talking to himself as much or more as he is to you! Parents should be patient when dealing with their children (which is easy for the guy with no kids to say, right?). And we should exercise patience with those of different ages. Younger people must exercise patience with the elderly, whether in the home or not. They will move a bit slower, they will sometimes live in the past, they will sometimes repeat themselves. And older folks need to practice patience with those young whippersnappers; they bring a different perspective on the world that might be valuable. There is wisdom—and patience—to be learned in this on all sides.

We need to be patient in the church. One difficulty that many congregations go through is stagnating attendance. We need to practice patience regarding church growth. There are a number of tricks to make a church grow, and you can find all sorts of materials on how to go about it. But they do not lead to REAL spiritual growth; they do not really make disciples. Following Jesus requires patience: the best disciples are made in the long, slow way, just as the best fruit is what ripens slowly on the vine rather than the artificially produced stuff you find in the grocery store that looks pleasing, but has no taste. Similarly, we must be patient in soul-winning. Remember that our job is to plant and water, but God gives the increase. And we must be patient with our brothers and sisters. I think of Aquilla and Priscilla, taking Apollos aside to instruct him more fully rather than writing him off as a false teacher (**Acts 18**). Or of Paul telling us to restore brothers gently (**Gal 6**).

We need to be patient in trials. The story is told of a young Christian who went to an older Christian for help. "Will you please pray for me that I may be more patient?" he asked. So they knelt together and the old man began to pray. "Lord, send this young man tribulation in the morning; send him tribulation in the afternoon; send this young man..." At that point the young Christian blurted out, "No, no, I didn't ask you to pray for tribulation. I wanted you to pray for patience." "Ah," responded the wise old Christian, "it is through tribulation that we learn patience."

We need to be patient in prayer. Of course, we want the answer to our prayer NOW, and it better be the answer we want! But sometimes God says wait awhile: our faith might need trying, as we said; or we might not be ready to receive what we requested; or it might just not be in God's will. We are instructed to *wait upon the Lord* (**Ps 40:1**)

And we need to be patient with ourselves. In our sickness, in our reverses in life, in our failures—all of these can be teachable moments. And we need to be patient in developing spiritual maturity. As indicated by talking about discipleship above, the Christian life is one of growth and development! There is a reason those metaphors of growing up are used. We did not learn to walk or talk in a day; the same thing is true of our walk with Christ. *And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.* (**Gal 6:9**) It pays to be patient!

Bryant Perkins

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

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