

Christian Families Practice Patience

Introduction

You may have said and probably have heard someone say, “They don’t make things like they used to.” Things aren’t designed and built to last as long as they were in the past, which feeds right into our cultural fondness for the new and improved, the latest and greatest. Has this affected our relationships too? Have we also grown more impatient with each other? Are we too willing to throw away the old and “buy” something new, even in our relationships? How disastrous it is when we stop practicing patience with one another.

Scripture

Job 1:20-22

²⁰ At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship ²¹ and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.” ²² In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails.

Study

1. Webster defines *patience* as “the will or ability to wait or endure without complaint.” Briefly review what Job endured (Job 1:13-19). How do the hardest times in your life compare to Job’s?
2. Scripture commends Job for not finding fault with God for making him endure hard times. In what kinds of painful experiences have you been tempted to blame God for your hard times?
3. What makes it easy or difficult for a Christian family to follow Job’s example?
4. Read the following passages, and describe what makes God’s patience so remarkable and such an amazing blessing to us.

- Nehemiah 9:7-31

- 2 Peter 3:9,15 – The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance... Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

- 1 Timothy 1:15-16 – Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

5. Reread Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians chapter 13. Why is patience such an important characteristic for Christians seeking to show love to one another, especially within a family?

Closing Prayer

O Holy Spirit, come to us through your inspired Word and develop within our homes your gracious gift of patience. As we grow in patience, grant us also a sincere willingness to overlook each other's faults, a greater joy in Christ's forgiveness, a strong endurance in the hardships of life, and an eager anticipation of the Lamb's endless marriage feast to come. Amen.