

## Small Group Guide: Love Never Fails - Week 2

### Love is Patient, Love is Kind (1 Corinthians 13:4)

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### Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Icebreaker Question: Share a time when someone showed you unexpected patience or kindness. How did it make you feel?

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### Key Scripture

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a (Read aloud together)

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

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### Main Takeaways from the Sermon

1. Love is a verb, not just an emotion or description - We cannot "run out" of patience or kindness because they are actions we choose, not feelings we have.
2. Biblical patience (*makrothymeo*) means:
  - Enduring at your own expense what someone else is doing
  - Delaying your own action or reaction
3. Biblical kindness (*chresteuomai*) means:
  - Being considerate and warm-hearted
  - Showing humane, selfless concern for others beyond our own well-being
  - Kindness is NOT the same as niceness (kindness can include correction and confrontation)
4. Our culture works against patience and kindness:
  - Instant gratification culture undermines patience
  - We often confuse kindness with niceness
5. We cannot love well in our own strength - We need to look to Jesus, who perfectly demonstrated patience and kindness, especially on the cross.

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## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text (15 minutes)

1. Graeme mentioned that Paul chose "patient" and "kind" specifically because the Corinthians were struggling in these areas. What does this tell us about how Scripture addresses real-life struggles in community?
2. How does understanding patience and kindness as verbs (actions) rather than adjectives (descriptions) change the way you think about love?
3. Read Psalm 141:5 - *"Let a righteous man strike me—that is a kindness."* How does this verse challenge our typical understanding of what it means to be kind?

### Personal Reflection (20 minutes)

4. Graeme asked: "When you come home after a long day at work or school, what's your patience and kindness like?" Be honest—when are you most likely to struggle with patience and kindness?
5. Think about the difference between kindness and niceness:
  - Niceness shies away from confrontation
  - Kindness is willing to be real and endure conflict for someone's sake
6. Can you share an example of when someone showed you kindness (not just niceness) by being honest with you? How did it impact you?
7. Graeme mentioned we live in a culture designed to bypass patience (Amazon Prime, ad-free streaming, short-form content). How has our "instant gratification" culture affected your ability to be patient with:
  - Yourself?
  - Others?
  - God's timing?

### Applying to Community (15 minutes)

7. If someone from outside Redwood observed our church community, would they describe us as patient and kind? What evidence would they see?
8. Graeme shared a story about accidentally cutting someone off in traffic despite trying to love his neighbor. Share a time when you genuinely tried to show love, but it didn't come across that way. What did you learn?
9. In what specific relationships or situations is God calling you to show more:
  - Patience (enduring and delaying your reaction)?
  - Kindness (selfless concern beyond your own well-being)?

## Looking to Jesus (15 minutes)

10. The sermon emphasized that God IS patience and kindness, not just that He has a lot of it. How does viewing the cross as the ultimate display of patience and kindness change your perspective on:
    - What God thinks of you?
    - What love really costs?
    - What you're capable of through the Holy Spirit?
  11. Read Hebrews 12:1-3 together. How does "considering Jesus" and His endurance help us not grow weary in loving others?
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## Practical Application

### This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Practice Patience

- Identify one situation where you regularly struggle with patience (commute, family member, work situation, waiting on God)
- Before reacting this week, pause and pray: "Holy Spirit, help me endure and delay my reaction"
- Journal about what happens

Option 2: Practice Kindness (Not Just Niceness)

- Ask God to show you someone who needs truth spoken in love (even if it's uncomfortable)
- Prayerfully approach them with selfless concern for their good
- Remember: kindness can include correction when done for someone's benefit

Option 3: Receive God's Patience and Kindness

- Spend time each day this week meditating on how Jesus has been patient and kind with YOU
- Confess areas where you've been impatient or unkind
- Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you fresh each morning

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## Accountability & Prayer (15 minutes)

Sharing & Accountability:

- Share which challenge you're committing to this week
- Exchange contact information with one other person to check in mid-week

Prayer Time:

Take time to pray for one another:

1. Confession: Where have we been impatient and unkind?
2. Experience: Ask God to help each person experience His patience and kindness personally
3. Empowerment: Pray for the Holy Spirit to fill and empower each person to love with patience and kindness

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## Closing Reflection

*"Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted."* - Hebrews 12:3

When you're tempted to give up on loving well, look to Jesus.

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## Additional Resources

- For Further Study:
  - Romans 2:4 - God's kindness leads to repentance
  - 2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is patient, not wanting anyone to perish
  - Galatians 5:22-23 - Patience and kindness as fruit of the Spirit