

## UNEXPECTED

"Patience"

April 17, 2016

*"The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed."*

Genesis 39:23b (NLT)

*Some time later, Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer and chief baker offended their royal master. Pharaoh became angry with these two officials, and he put them in the prison where Joseph was, in the palace of the captain of the guard. They remained in prison for quite some time, and the captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, who looked after them.*

Genesis 40:1-4 (NLT)

*While they were in prison, Pharaoh's cup-bearer and baker each had a dream one night, and each dream had its own meaning. When Joseph saw them the next morning, he noticed that they both looked upset. "Why do you look so worried today?" he asked them. And they replied, "We both had dreams last night, but no one can tell us what they mean." "Interpreting dreams is God's business," Joseph replied. "Go ahead and tell me your dreams."*

Genesis 40:5-8 (NLT)

*"So the chief cup-bearer told Joseph his dream first. "In my dream," he said, "I saw a grapevine in front of me. The vine had three branches that began to bud and blossom, and soon it produced clusters of ripe grapes. I was holding Pharaoh's wine cup in my hand, so I took a cluster of grapes and squeezed the juice into the cup. Then I placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand."*

*"This is what the dream means," Joseph said. "The three branches represent three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift you up and restore you to your position as his chief cup-bearer. And please remember me and do me a favor when things go well for you. Mention me to Pharaoh, so he might let me out of this place. For I was kidnapped from my homeland, the land of the Hebrews, and now I'm here in prison, but I did nothing to deserve it."*

*When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given the first dream such a positive interpretation, he said to Joseph, "I had a dream, too. In my dream there were three baskets of white pastries stacked on my head. The top basket contained all kinds of pastries for Pharaoh, but the birds came and ate them from the basket on my head."*

*"This is what the dream means," Joseph told him. "The three baskets also represent three days. Three days from now Pharaoh will lift you up and impale your body on a pole. Then birds will come and peck away at your flesh."*

*"Pharaoh's birthday came three days later, and he prepared a banquet for all his officials and staff. He summoned his chief cup-bearer and chief baker to join the other officials. He then restored the chief cup-bearer to his former position, so he could again hand Pharaoh his cup. But Pharaoh impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had predicted when he interpreted his dream. Pharaoh's chief cup-bearer, however, forgot all about Joseph, never giving him another thought."*

Genesis 40:9-23 (NLT)

## **1. God has the plan, we have the patience.**

It is in these dark times that we are often left with believing the lies we feel, versus the truth we know.

“Our thoughts are not always a good indicator of reality. Once we start to believe that, it opens the possibility that the thoughts we have might not be true. Once we replace Satan’s lies with truth we can be more effective.”

*“So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.”*  
Galatians 6:9 (NLT)

The only way we fight through those hard times is with patience.

*Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.*  
Romans 12:12 (NLT)

- 1) Rejoice because we have hope.**
- 2) Be patient.**
- 3) Keep praying.**

## **2. It’s God’s business, and there is only one owner.**

*“Interpreting dreams is God’s business,” Joseph replied. “Go ahead and tell me your dreams.”*  
Genesis 40:8 (NLT)

It’s up to God how He wants to use our gifts and they are His in the first place.

*“You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.”*  
Deuteronomy 8:17-18 (NIV)

## **3. Darkness is a perspective.**

What you do in the darkness makes you who you are in the light.

*“But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.”* 1 Peter 2:9 (NLT)

**Leadership Tip!**

There is a time for patience and a time for action. Knowing the difference between the two will grow you as a leader and build trust in your leadership.

## Patience

## STARTER QUESTION:

**In an age of instant everything, is the concept of patience becoming a thing of the past or at least being minimized by society? How do you think this will influence society in the long run?**

## MAIN IDEA:

Pastor Philip nailed it on Sunday with a lot of really good practical teaching about those times in our lives where patience seems like the only thing we can accomplish. We all have been there and we will all be there again at some point. And let's face it, it is a lot easier to learn about patience by learning from someone else, like Joseph, than going through it ourselves!

**Romans 12:12 (NIV)**

*“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”*

When you read Romans 12:12, most people (and some translations) want to add an “and” before faithful, making it seem like these are individual actions or steps to take. But Paul meant for these to be part of the same process of having patience. Biblical patience is a compound process on our part and goes against the idea that being “patient” is doing nothing.

**How can you tell the difference between “procrastination” and “patience”?**

In modern dictionaries the word “patience” is classified as a noun, (a thing) but that was not always the case. The Greek word that the Apostle Paul used for patient or patience in the above verse is (μακροθυμέω/ mak-roth-oo-meh'-oa) and is a verb (an action). It means: Refusing to retaliate or react (*normally with anger*), because of one's knowledge and understanding.

**How different is this meaning from what you understand patience to be? If you Google the word patience; how different is it from the above meaning?**

Notice that the word that God has Paul use, required two things in order to have patience.

The first was that you have to take a stand. We must make a conscious decision on how to act.

### **Why do you think this is so important? What happens when we don't do this?**

Pastor Philip, on Sunday, pointed out that you can see a change in Joseph's decision making process between the time he was sold into slavery and when he ended up in prison. This change made the difference in Joseph's life.

The change was only possible because of what Joseph knew about his situation, which is the second part of our meaning. Joseph now understood just how much God was with him and that his success was not his own doing.

#### **Genesis 40:5-8 (NIV)**

*"Interpreting dreams is God's business,"*

For a lot of people making the connection that God Himself is there with them in the middle of their mess is difficult, especially if the individuals blame themselves for the mess they are in.

### **What can you do to help someone make that connection or make a stronger connection?**

One effective way to strengthen this understanding of God being with us is to document in a journal when you see God working in your life. From time to time, you can review these benchmarks as reinforcement to what we already hold true. Looking back over a year's worth of benchmarks will surprise you!

### **CLOSING THOUGHT:**

Our final thought comes from a 17th century commentary written by theologian Matthew Henry. Matthew Henry said this about Joseph story;

"Our enemies may strip us of outward distinctions and ornaments; but wisdom and grace cannot be taken from us. They may separate us from friends, relatives, and country; but they cannot take from us the presence of the Lord. They may shut us from outward blessings, rob us of liberty, and confine us in dungeons; but they cannot shut us out from communion with God, from the throne of grace, or take from us the blessings of salvation. Joseph was blessed, wonderfully blessed, even in the house where he was a slave. God's presence with us, makes all we do prosperous. Good men are the blessings of the place where they live,"

## FAMILY FOCUS

Practice makes perfect. How do you practice patience? It is hard for adults, much less children. Here are a few ways to help your young ones learn and practice patience.

**1. Do a challenging jigsaw puzzle together.** Here are three ideas for your jigsaw puzzles, including one you can make yourself.

Goal: Practice patience.

As you work on these activities, use this time to discuss what patience is. For a young child, patience can be defined as keeping going, even if things get hard; staying calm when someone or something is bothering you; and waiting calmly for things.

### Mini-jigsaw

Choose a challenging puzzle to complete with your children. Even if this project takes a day or two, ensure that patient work pays off with a completed project.

### Family photo

Many photo labs make “picture puzzles” from your choice of a family photograph. While completing the puzzle, you will see the picture of each family member take shape. Ask your children what “patience” looks like and if they think others can see patience in them.

### Create your own puzzle

You can make your own puzzle using a picture of fruit. Glue a glossy magazine picture of fruit on to cardboard and cut it out randomly. Your children may be able to help with the random cutting. As you complete the puzzle, talk about how patience is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

### Relevant Scripture

Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

**2. Taste some green (unripe) fruit,** then wait until it’s ripe and try it again.

Discussion point: Many rewards are more fulfilling if we wait for them.

Buy some green fruit. Have your children taste them when they are green, then wait a few days and taste them when they have ripened. Explain that life is like waiting for fruit to ripen. Sometimes when we are impatient for things and demand them right away, the end result will be that they will not be seem as good as if we had waited.

Give examples that are applicable to your children's lives, like a birthday cake. When a pretty cake is decorated for a birthday party, it is hard to wait until the guests arrive to eat some, but it would be very disappointing to serve friends a birthday cake with a chunk taken out of it.

### **3. Choose a craft that requires careful and patient work.**

Discussion point: Talk about how being patient and persistent led to a great craft in the end.

Choose a craft that requires careful and patient work. Work at it together! Use it as an opportunity to talk to your children about patience.

The Canadian Oxford Dictionary defines patience as “calm endurance of hardship, provocation, pain, delay, etc.” and as “tolerant perseverance.” For a young child, patience can be defined as “keeping going, even if things get hard; staying calm when someone or something is bothering you; and waiting calmly for things.”

For young children, working at a challenging craft requires patience because it can be tempting to get frustrated or quit if the project does not take shape quickly or as they had envisioned it. Ideas include gluing small objects, threading beads, drawing a grid and coloring the grid squares in a pattern. Talk about how the patience you used while putting the craft together paid off in the end with how satisfying it was to complete the project. Talk about how the craft would have looked differently if you had not been so patient with it.

Regardless of the method you use to help teach your children about patience, make an effort to use some tangible lessons to drive the lesson home. Kids learn so much better when they can feel the lesson. Words do not always mean a whole lot, especially when they are younger. Good luck! And remember, be patient... wink, wink.