

Home group / Study notes: Fruit of the Spirit – Patience

Sunday Lessons – Psalm 37:1-9; James 5:7-11

Psalm 37 - explore the whole psalm and consider how you feel:

- when other people are getting away with what we think is wrong
- when oppressed by others (vs12, 14, 32) in what ways do we experience this?
- when we take responsibility, but others don't (v21)

How easy is it to *'be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him'*? What are we waiting for?

Remind yourselves of Job's plight (lost wealth, family and health Job 1:13-19 & 2:7-10) and then read **Job 6:1-13**. What do you understand by *'the patience of Job'*?

What is the benefit of patience? See **Prov**: 14 v 29; 15:18; 16:32; 19:11; 25:15; Are these helpful?

Read **Luke 8:4-15** – Parable of the sower.

Note v15 (in different version if possible) – RSV says *'bring forth fruit with patience'*.

In your experience why do some people hear the word but don't hold fast to it? Is it a lack of patience?

Do you have patience for gardening? – preparing ground; sowing seed; feeding; watering; weeding. What makes it worthwhile? OR why do you not have patience for it?

Do you give up gardening if you have a bad year? (flood, drought, pests, diseases)

Patience is not just about waiting, but - persevering, forbearance, tolerance, slow to get mad, self restraint. What other words or phrases would you use?

Is there a different implication to each of these words/phrases in terms of self and others? Think of practical examples. Where does hope fit in?

God is patient with us. Consider examples of God's patience in the Old Testament

- Noah – particularly **Genesis 8:21**
- **Nehemiah 9:16-21** (potted history of the exodus)
- **Jonah 3:10 – 4:3**

What about God's plan of salvation and the patience this demonstrates?

Discuss the following in terms of a timeline and with respect to eternity:

- revelation of God's nature in the Old Testament
- manifestation in Jesus and the meaning of the cross/resurrection
- salvation for us today
- The Lord's coming in glory (see **2 Peter 3:8-9**)

Jesus' teaching about patience includes Matt 18:23-35.

Is this about the Kingdom of God in the present or future?

Return to James 5: 7-11. Compare with Eph 4:1-2; 1 Thess 5:12-14; Col 3:12-14;

- God is patient with us (compassion, forgiveness)
- We are to be patient with others (kind, gentle, understanding)
- We are to patient with God (enduring hardship, waiting for understanding)
- We must be patient with ourselves to allow the Spirit to bear fruit

Pray about situations where you find it hard to be patient. Thank God for being patient with you and ask that you become more aware of the all the flavours of the fruit of the Spirit through patience.