



CULTIVATE

LIFE TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT

MAY
GROUP GUIDE

This month, we turn our attention to the fruit of the Spirit called patience. Not as passive waiting or quiet endurance, but as the steady, faithful presence that grows in us as we learn to trust God over time.

Patience in Scripture is not simply about tolerating delays (or Atlanta traffic). It is about remaining steadfast: steadfast in your pursuit of God, steadfast in togetherness with others, and steadfast in hope when the outcome is not yet visible. It's living in the tension of the already but not yet.

Throughout the Bible, patience is often connected to longing, to the space between promise and fulfillment. Patience is cultivated in the tension of living in a world where not everything is as it should be, and yet trusting that God is still at work.

Perhaps in your life, you experience deep longing for love, family, a new job, or an answered prayer of healing.

The Apostle Paul reminds us:

“Love is patient...” (1 Corinthians 13:4)

And again in Romans:

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” (Romans 12:12)

Patience is not something we produce through effort alone. It is deeply formed within us as we learn to trust God's timing, stay present in difficulty, and remain open to the Spirit's work even when we cannot yet see what is being formed.

Your group is one of the places where patience can take root. A place where we can be honest about what we are waiting for. A place where we can practice staying present with one another. A place where God meets us not just in resolution, but in the waiting itself.

Patience is perhaps most difficult to cultivate as it requires our whole selves to invest: our mind, body, soul, and heart.





Personal Reflection and Practice

Look up the passages below on your own and read them slowly. As you read, notice what each passage reveals about patience—its posture, its purpose, or the kind of life it shapes.

Then, note what is most challenging in your life about developing this type of patience.

Patience That Longs

Psalm 130:5–6

Romans 8:22–25

Lamentations 3:25–26

Patience often begins with longing and learning to wait with hope.

Patience That Laughs

Genesis 18:9–15

Psalm 126:1–3

Ecclesiastes 3:1–4

Patience does not eliminate joy; instead, it makes room for it. It does, however, challenge us to accept the promises of God and wait in anticipation instead of disbelief.

Patience That Perseveres

James 5:7–11

Hebrews 10:35–36

Galatians 6:9

Patience stays when it would be easier to leave.

Patience That Renews

Isaiah 40:28-31

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Psalm 27:13-14

Patience is sustained by trusting in God's renewing work.

Patience That Waits Together

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Hebrews 10:23-25

Romans 15:5-6

Patience is not meant to be practiced alone.

GROUP TIME

MAY

Patience

Goal and Purpose: Reflect on patience as a fruit of the Spirit, explore how it is formed through waiting and trust, and notice where God may be inviting us to remain, endure, or hope.

Themes for the Month:

Week 1: Patience That Longs

Week 2: Patience That Laughs

Week 3: Patience That Perseveres

Week 4: Patience That Renews

Week 5: Patience That Waits Together

1. **Welcome + Opening** (10 minutes)

Leader Says:

“Today, we turn our attention to patience. This month isn’t about trying harder to be more tolerant or composed. It’s about noticing how God is forming patience in us ... especially in the places where we are waiting or unsure.”

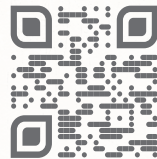
Share:

Invite participants to reflect:

- Where in your life are you currently waiting for something?
- What does that waiting feel like right now?

Allow space for quiet reflection before sharing.

2. Watch the Teaching Video with Pastor Rich (10–20 minutes)



Leader Says:

“As you watch, listen for how patience is described—not just as waiting, but as a way of remaining with God in the middle of what is unfinished.”

Video Summary (for leader reference):

- Our culture trains us for instant gratification, not waiting
- Impatience shows up in everyday moments (lines, traffic, delays)
- Waiting can be spiritually forming, not just frustrating
- Biblical waiting often means waiting perpetually in hard places (Psalm 40)
- God’s work in us is often slow, not immediate
- Some transformation only happens over time, not instantly
- We are called to trust God’s timing, not control outcomes
- Hold both: patience (endurance, trust) and vigilance (active expectation)
 - *Example: Simeon waited faithfully and eventually encountered Jesus (Luke 2:25-35)*

- Waiting is where God is shaping us and renewing us
- Encourage your group: God is at work even in the waiting

After the Video

Invite participants to share:

- What stood out to you in the teaching?
 - How do you typically respond when you have to wait?
 - Where might God be inviting you to remain instead of rush ahead?
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3. Hear the Word (5 minutes)

Scripture Focus: James 5:7–8

If time allows, consider also reading Romans 12:12.

Invite one person to read the passage slowly. After a pause, invite a second person to read it again.

Leader Says:

“As you listen, don’t try to analyze or fix anything. Simply notice what draws your attention.”

Allow silent reflection.

4. Personal Reflection (5 minutes)

Before you begin sharing, it is always good practice to allow individual and personal reflection first. Consider using the prompts below to allow participants to reflect in silence.

- Which word or phrase stood out to you?
- Does this passage feel comforting, challenging, or both?
- Where do you feel invited to practice patience right now?
- What makes patience difficult in that place?

Push for further exploration. For example, instead of simply knowing that being patient with your children is difficult, consider why it is difficult. What context is most challenging in your example? Least challenging? Push beyond your comfort zone and typical responses.

5. Shared Reflection (8-10 minutes)

Reflecting on James 5:7-8, consider how your small group community shapes the understanding of waiting and practicing patience together.

- What stayed with you from the passage?
- What does this Scripture reveal about the nature of patience?
- What might it look like to remain instead of rush?

Leader Note: Holding the Space

Resist the urge to turn this into problem-solving (nearly impossible for most of us, especially in a group setting). Patience is formed over time, not resolved in a moment. Allow space for tension, honesty, and silence.

7. Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Leader Encouragement

Patience is often formed in the places where we feel unfinished. It is not about having everything resolved, but about learning to remain present with God in the middle of what is still unfolding. As we trust him, even in the waiting, he is shaping something deeper within us.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

You are never hurried, never late,
and always present with us.

In the places where we feel stretched,
uncertain, or weary, help us to trust that you are still
at work.

Teach us to remain with you even when we cannot see
what is being formed.

Give us patience in our waiting, faith in your timing,
and grace for one another along the way.

We place ourselves in your care and trust your steady
work in us.

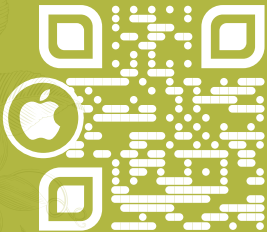
Amen.



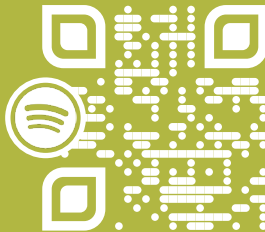
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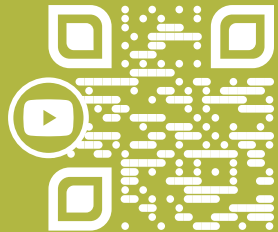
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you to journey with us
through Cultivate.

Each month, a guide is
offered to support reflection,
conversation and growth
as we walk together.



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