

Day 9

Patience

Silence (2 minutes) Take some time to be quiet, to calm down, and to listen. What has God been teaching you? What are the next steps He wants you to take? How is your spirit doing?

Scripture *“Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction.”* 2 Timothy 4:2

Discussion Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, whom Paul had instructed to care for the church at Ephesus. *“...stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God’s work – which is by faith”* (1 Timothy 1:3-4). Timothy was also responsible for appointing overseers and deacons. Paul had previously described Timothy to the Philippians, *“I have no one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare...But Timothy’s worth you know, how like a son with a father he has served with me in the work of the gospel”* (Philippians 2:20,22). So, this passage includes instructions about leading. Leaders are to carry out their duties, preparing themselves responsibly. They are to care for the Church with correction, discipline and encouragement so that the Church continues to follow Christ. Leaders are to live these out, not with some patience and instruction, but “with great patience and careful instruction.” Of course, the leaders are examples to the rest of the Church. Am I well-prepared for my tasks and responsibly using the gifts God gave me with the purpose of building up Jesus’ Church? Am I careful so that all my interactions with brothers and sisters in Christ are for their welfare, not for the satisfaction of my mood or to express every thought that enters my mind? Am I speaking “with great patience and careful instruction?” In addition, am I careful to read, study, and apply the Bible itself to my life, not merely reading what others say about the Bible, so that I am less vulnerable to *“false doctrines...myths...controversies”* (1 Timothy 1:3-4)? Am I gracious, kind, and a good listener so that when leaders speak to me they don’t need to *“correct, rebuke...with great patience and careful instruction”* (2 Timothy 4:2)? *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity”* (Colossians 3:12-14).

Application Before the end of the day today, thank God for all the ways He has been patient with you today.

Prayer Father, thank You that You have blessed me with Your forgiveness and belonging to You. Thank You also that You have blessed me with belonging to Your Church. Father, You know that I, all of us, have weaknesses and sins. You are working in all of us to make us more like Jesus. Father, I commit myself to work on being patient. When I am irritated, frustrated, when I disagree, when others are not respectful or behaving as I think they should, I commit myself to be patient. Thank You that You are patient with me; You forgive me over and over, *“seventy-seven times.”* (Matthew 18:22) Thank You that You are merciful to me. May I be merciful like You. Amen.

Silence (2 minutes) Talk to God about what you are learning. What are your fears? Where are your hangups? Pray for direction.

Scripture memory for the week: *“My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.”* James 1:19-20