

**Icebreaker:**

As we move into the middle of May, what is something you look forward to in late spring or early summer?

**Read Ephesians 4:1-6 and discuss:**

1. Paul starts this passage off in Ephesians 4 by saying “as a prisoner in the Lord.” Why do you think he does that? What does that phrase mean to you?
2. In what area of your life has God been patient with you?
3. Of the five virtues we have studied so far (humility, hope, faithfulness, self-control, and gentleness), which have taken you the longest to learn (the ones that have taken the most patience to learn)?
4. What does impatience reflect about our character? What does patience reflect about our character?
5. Dallas Willard said, “Hurry is the great enemy of the spiritual life in our day. You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry... The most important thing in your life is not what you would do; it’s who you become.” What do you think of hurry being a great enemy? How can patience combat hurry?
6. What are the places in your life where you need God’s help to slow down, wait, or respond differently? What step can you take this week to grow in patience?
7. Paul uses seven “ones” in this short passage including one Lord, one faith, one hope. What point is he trying to get across with saying one so many times?

**Prayer**

As you close in prayer, remember requests from our church family:

> Prayers of healing for Fred Nay.

**Reminders for your group:**

> Please consider gathering your group to do some work at Str8up Camp. They need groups of 5 or so to do light construction and maintenance. Greg Strand [ [greg.strand@gmail.com](mailto:greg.strand@gmail.com)].

**Leader’s Notes:**

Patience is a virtue. We are studying virtues like patience, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control so that we can use them in our daily lives to become more like Jesus. We will be growing in our walks with God all our lives – never fully arriving until we meet with God face to face. This process is sanctification – becoming holy like Jesus over time. So we study God’s Word, listen to sermons, studying it again, share with others in our groups, so that we are becoming more like Christ – and by doing so, bringing God’s kingdom to earth in small ways and sometimes in big ways.

**[Question 1]** Paul is literally in prison (in Rome about A.D. 60) as he writes this letter to the church in Ephesus. His statement of being a prisoner gives credibility to what he is writing. He is serious about these faith issues. He is so serious that he was willing to go to prison for Christ, and willing eventually to die for his faith. He is begging the Ephesians, and us, to live out our callings for Christ.

**[Question 2]** Help your group think of specific areas. Some examples might be in relationships – such as parenting children, or teens, or being an adult caregiver to elderly parents. When we see God is patient with us, it inspires us to grow in patience, and be patient with others.

**[Question 3]** This question reminds us that to grow in these virtues takes time. We do not normally change in an instant, but over time. All things are possible with God. Often, change (even with God’s help) takes time.

**[Question 4]** Impatience with others (at home or work or church) may show selfishness. When people don’t do what we want, it may be that we need patience to wait on them to change, or to patiently walk alongside them as they change. Patience with others may show maturity, love, or perseverance in us.

**[Question 5]** Are you always in a hurry? Why is hurry an enemy – perhaps it keeps us from hearing God, or listening carefully to others – or just going to fast to spend quality time on a project or quality time with others. Perhaps Satan uses hurry to get us to miss out on what God is doing. We might combat hurry by literally scheduling in down time to our weeks, practicing the Sabbath on Sundays (or another day if you must work on Sunday), and learning to say no to “ok” things so that you can say yes to great things.

**[Question 6]** Name a specific place you need to slow down or wait this week. One suggestion to slow down is to cut back on noise. Turn off the radio in the car, turn off the TV at home, and put your phone down far away just to be quiet – or to be with others. Quiet can make everything feel as if it is slowing down – and your brain actually can slow down, so that you can be patient in decisions and in relationships.

**[Question 7]** Paul is stressing unity. Unity is a common theme for the early churches Paul writes to. So unity in church families must be important, or something they struggled with, or both. May God grant us unity so that we can be One – one faith, one Lord, one body. You might check out Jesus’ prayer for unity for future believers in John 17:20-26.