

simply relevant

Relational Bible Series for Women

Patience



Savor the Moments | PATIENCE

simply relevant

{ SAVOR THE MOMENTS }

Relational Bible Series for Women



Loveland, Colorado

Group resources actually work!

This Group resource incorporates our R.E.A.L. approach to ministry. It reinforces a growing friendship with Jesus, encourages long-term learning, and results in life transformation, because it's



Relational

Learner-to-learner interaction enhances learning and builds Christian friendships.

Experiential

What learners experience through discussion and action sticks with them up to 9 times longer than what they simply hear or read.

Applicable

The aim of Christian education is to equip learners to be both hearers and doers of God's Word.

Learner-based

Learners understand and retain more when the learning process takes into consideration how they learn best.

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Welcome to Simply Relevant: Savor the Moments! This is your totally relevant six-week Bible series that will help you develop relationships with other women as you grow in your relationship with God.

Most of us will admit that we could use a little help with patience. This series will help you and your friends learn more about God's patience for you, and how he can transform us to flourish in this fruit of the Spirit.

Each week you'll find what the Bible has to say about patience and how it applies to your life. You'll learn about how God is patient; about how you can gain God's patience through the Holy Spirit; and about patience in the grocery store, in the traffic jams, in your relationships, and in God's timing... which often doesn't seem to be ours!

You can do this Bible series with five to 50 women—or even more! And you want women to really grow in relationships with one another, so always form small groups of four or five for discussion if you have a larger group. Women at any place in their faith journeys can feel right at home with this Bible series. The discussion questions can be understood and applied by women who don't know Jesus yet or women who are long-time friends with him. All the Bible passages are printed out for you, so those who aren't familiar with the Bible have the verses right in front of them.

So what will you be doing each week? Here's the structure of the sessions:

- *Note to the Hostess*

Your hostess will be the woman facilitating your Bible series. She'll read the session through before the meeting, prepare for the activities, gather any supplies needed, and get the snacks ready. This box contains special tips just for the hostess, such as supplies to gather for the Experience, the atmosphere for the week, and ideas for snacks.

- *Mingling*

Each week, you're going to start with snacks, mingling, and a short prayer. And this is key: Take time to share how you did with your previous week's commitment.

- *Experience*

Together each week you'll engage in an experience that will bring a new depth of meaning to the topic you'll explore. The experiences will get every woman involved and having fun. There might be a little bit of preparation or supplies needed, which the hostess will supply.

- *The Word*

Each week you'll read Scripture passages together and then discuss what they mean with questions from this guide. The questions are surprising, personal, and relevant to women today.

• *A Closer Look*

This is a quick look at the Bible passages you'll be digging into each week. They'll help you develop a deeper understanding of the verses at hand while discussing their meaning in your lives. You can read them together during your session or on your own at home.

• *Take Action*

This is where women put faith into action. You'll all commit to apply what you've learned in a practical way in the coming week. You can write your own commitment or choose from the suggested commitments. Then next week you'll check in with one another to see how you did.

• *Prayer*

At the end of each session, you'll spend time in prayer together. You can ask for prayer requests and also pray about the commitments you've made for the upcoming week. We've also given you a verse to read together to focus your minds for prayer.

• *Girlfriend Time*

If you want some more hangout time together after your session is over, we've given you fun suggestions for easy activities to do together to reinforce the session's topic or to just relax. This is an optional bonus that will help you grow deeper in your friendships.

• Still Thirsty?

If you want to explore the week's topic more, we've given you additional verses and reflection questions to read and consider in the coming week.

We pray that in the next six weeks, this experience will help you grow as friends together, learn more about the patience God has for you, and most of all, grow closer in your relationship with Jesus.

—Group's Women's Ministry Team

Music is a great tool in creating ambience for your meeting area. Play music before and after your gathering. We recommend the *Music of Sweet Life Café*, which features songs related to many of the themes you'll explore in this Bible study. You can find it at group.com or at your local Christian bookstore.



Slow to Anger

Learning About God's Patience

Note to the Hostess:

Since this is the first meeting where your friends will be learning more about patience, go the extra mile to create an atmosphere that will be relaxing for women. They may be coming from screaming babies, demanding bosses, or road-ragers...things that don't exactly induce patience and rest.

Create a haven of tranquility with low lighting, a few flickering candles, and soft music. Serve comforting, relaxing snacks, such as chamomile tea—to soothe the nerves after a busy day—and sugar cookies.

You'll be guiding women through the Experience, so read through this section before your session.



Get It...Got It?...Good.

- comforting, relaxing snacks, like chamomile tea and sugar cookies
- flickering candles
- piece of newsprint taped to the wall, with a line drawn down the middle, and a marker for the Experience

Mingling

Enjoy the snacks the hostess has set out, and make sure you all know one another's names. Need a little help? Here's a conversation starter:

Hi, my name's [*your name*],
and the thing that tests my patience the most is [_____].

Before starting, make sure to pray something like this:

God, thank you for bringing each individual woman here tonight. Help us to put aside everything that's crowding our minds so that we can learn about your patience for us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Experience

(*Note: The hostess will prepare this experience.*) Often when people think of the God of the Old Testament, they don't think of patience; they think of a curmudgeonly old man with a big beard. Do this experience to find out what women's gut thoughts about God are.

Have a piece of newsprint hanging on the wall and a marker handy. Say: *Think about the God of the Old Testament, of the flood and Noah, and of the Ten Commandments. What words or images come immediately to your mind? Be honest!"*

Have women call out their responses, and write them on the left-hand side of the paper.

Then have different women read the following verses aloud to the group.



Exodus 34:6

“The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, ‘Yahweh! The Lord! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.’”

Psalm 86:15

“But you, O Lord, are a God of compassion and mercy, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.”

Psalm 145:8

“The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.”

Have women call out the key words that describe God in these verses, and write these on the right-hand side of the paper. Then discuss:

Q: What impressions do you have of God that led you to say what you did on the left?

Q: When you think of God, is *patient* a word that would come to your mind? Why or why not?

Q: How do you balance your understanding of both God’s anger and his patience?

the Word

Read Nehemiah 9:17-19, 26-31, and 2 Peter 3:9 together.

Nehemiah 9:17-19, 26-31

But you are a God of forgiveness, gracious and merciful, slow to become angry, and rich in unfailing love. You did not abandon them, even when they made an idol shaped like a calf and said, ‘This is your god who brought you out of Egypt!’ They committed terrible blasphemies.

But in your great mercy you did not abandon them to die in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud still led them forward by day, and the pillar of fire showed them the way through the night.

But despite all this, they were disobedient and rebelled against you. They turned their backs on your Law, they killed your prophets who warned them to return to you, and they committed terrible blasphemies. So you handed them over to their enemies, who made them suffer. But in their time of trouble they cried to you, and you heard them from heaven. In your great mercy, you sent them liberators who rescued them from their enemies.

But as soon as they were at peace, your people again committed evil in your sight, and once more you let their enemies conquer them. Yet whenever your people turned and cried to you again for help, you listened once more from heaven. In your wonderful mercy, you rescued them many times.

They stubbornly turned their backs on you and refused to listen. In your love, you were patient with them for many years. You sent your Spirit, who warned them through the prophets. But still they wouldn’t listen! So once again you allowed the peoples of the land to conquer them. But in your great mercy, you did not destroy them completely or abandon them forever. What a gracious and merciful God you are!

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

a closer look

Read this box anytime to take a deeper look at the verses for this session.

What does patience mean? Many of the passages in the Bible that speak about God's patience with his people also describe God as compassionate, forgiving, slow to anger, kind, gracious, and rich in love. (Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9; Psalms 86:15, 103:8, and 145:8)

Patience is more than just not getting testy while waiting for something. Patience is something much grander. Patience is the manifestation of God's compassion, his forgiveness, his grace, and his rich, abounding love.

scripture discussion questions

In groups of four or five, discuss these questions:

Q: Nehemiah 9 tells about God's reaction to the Israelites' disobedience—both his punishment of them and his patience. What is the overall impression you are left with of God's character?

Q: Why do you think God was so patient with the Israelites, forgiving them over and over?

Q: Read 2 Peter 3:9 again. What is the difference between God's patience in the Old Testament and in the New Testament?

Q: Why is God patient with you? Really unpack this. Think of all the reasons you can.

Q: Do you think God has been patient with you in your own life? If so, give examples.

Q: How does thinking about God's patience change your view of God?

Q: In light of God's patience, does it change the way you think about being patient yourself? How?



THIS IS A SAMPLE

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