

THE PERSON AND LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Character Lesson One

PATIENT

Definition:

A patient person is able to wait without losing hope or being anxious, and also able to work diligently without becoming discouraged.

Examples and/or Questions to Ask the Children:

1. A farmer has to wait patiently for the seeds that he has planted to grow up and bear fruit.
2. When we are patient, we can wait for our drink a long time. When you are waiting in line for your turn, instead of complaining that the line is too long, you may sing while you wait patiently.
3. When the Lord Jesus came to be a man He stayed in the womb of a human virgin for nine months before He was born, even though He was the God of the universe. The Lord Jesus waited patiently to become a man.

Verses:

"... Behold the farmer awaits the precious fruit of the earth..." James 5:7b
"... God waited in the days of Noah ..." 1 Peter 3:20b (100 years - Gen. 5:32; 7:6)

Story:

There was a farmer who planted some wheat seeds in the early spring time. He had to wait patiently through the season until the late summer when the precious grain would be ready for harvest.

He did not force the sprouts to grow by pulling them up to make them look taller, or flood the wheat sprouts with a lot of water. Neither did he put flood-lights in the field over the sprouts to make them to grow faster. Instead he let the sun do its job. He watered the wheat sprouts with just the right amount of water. He patiently waited for the little sprouts to grow.

Day by day, month by month, the farmer patiently waited, watered, and watched for the sprouts to grow. Throughout the season, the farmer watched the little seeds grow from a little sprout into tender plants and into bigger plants. Finally when it was harvest time, he saw that the little wheat sprouts had grown up to be big wheat plants bearing many grains.

This made the farmer very happy. He worked very hard to take care of the plants and he waited patiently for the little plants to grow. Patience is very precious.

Craft Ideas:

1. Have the children decorate a Styrofoam cup.
2. Put damp cotton or dirt in the cup and place or plant the seeds in it.
3. Explain that they need to water the seed every two days at least.
4. The seeds will begin to sprout and grow. Later when the seedlings are bigger, they can replant them in dirt or a larger container.

[Materials needed - Styrofoam cup, cotton or dirt, seeds (Lima beans grow well), water, paper (optional), crayons, larger container]

CHARACTER

PATIENT--BEING ABLE TO WAIT AND NOT BEING ANXIOUS

Burden to Impart:

Patience is necessary to gain the benefit of our endeavors. Patience is the ability to wait without anxiety for something you want now, or expect but do not as yet see or possess. The unseen factor of *time* is necessary for many things to be accomplished. A patient person is not anxious while waiting for what he desires. Neither is he idle or lazy. A patient person is diligently doing today what can be done today, and is calmly waiting for what will come later. Those whom God has been able to use to cooperate with Him to fulfill His purpose on earth have all been people of faith (believing His Word and promises) and patience (waiting for Him to fulfill what He has spoken).

Memory Verse: "That you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience are inheriting the promises" (Hebrews 6:12).

Facts to Teach:

1. In order to cultivate and develop the eight items of character that we have studied (being genuine, exact, strict, diligent, broad, fine, stable, and deep) we must have patience. Patience is the ability to calmly wait for something we want now or expect to come, but do not yet see or possess.

2. Patience takes into account the importance of one great factor--*time*. For a person to be patient does not imply that he is passive, lazy, or slow. A patient person, on the contrary, is a person who has a goal before him and is working steadfastly toward his goal. However, he realizes that anxiety, worry, haste, or excessive pressure will not help him reach his goal, for the *time* factor must be taken into account. Everything is not merely a matter of work and effort. In many cases *time* is an important factor to achieve the desired outcome.

3. An excellent example of patience is seen in the farmer. A farmer plows the soil, plants and waters the seed, and then waits. He patiently waits while time does its work. However, he does not wait in an idle way. He works diligently; weeding, fertilizing, spraying for insects, etc. He has much to do to nurture and protect his crop. But for the growth and maturity of the crop a certain amount of time is needed. For the farmer, waiting is normal.

4. One of the hardest "lessons" for a young person to learn is patience. A baby is the most impatient person. The moment the baby feels hunger he screams. To the baby who has only lived a few days, to wait five minutes seems like a long time. To a hundred-year-old man, however, even five hours is not very long, because he has lived through hundreds of thousands of hours.

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CHARACTER

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5. Those whom God has been able to use to fulfill His purpose have all been people who through faith and patience have cooperated with Him to inherit His promises (Heb. 6:12).

- a. Noah, being warned of a coming flood, labored diligently 120 years to build the ark. This required much patience, but finally the flood came.
- b. Abraham and Sarah waited patiently 25 years for God to fulfill the promise He had given them to have a son (Heb. 6:15).
- c. In order for the children of Israel to enter the promised land, Moses needed to patiently endure for 40 years while they wandered in the desert.

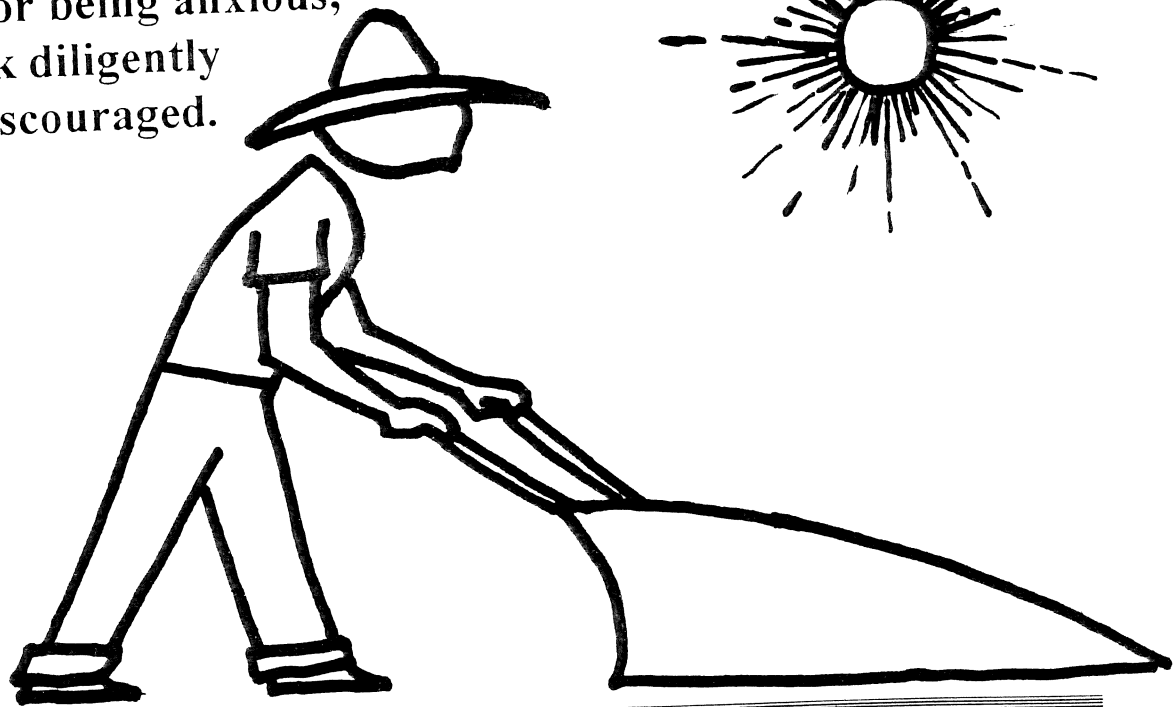
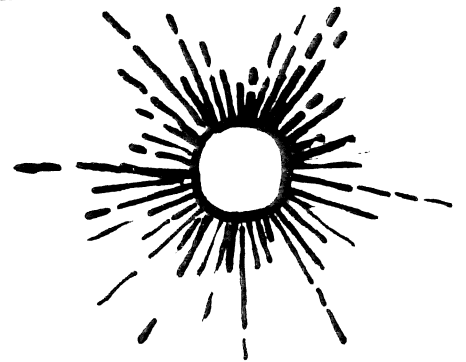
6. We learn patience when we must wait for something that we want to have right now but cannot have until later. In the meantime, we should learn to occupy ourselves with the things we should be doing now, instead of anxiously wasting the time we have to wait. Some examples are:

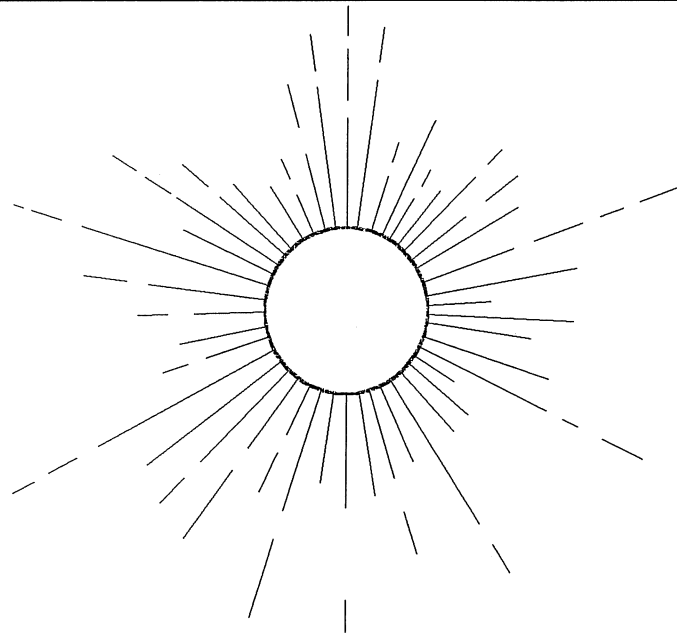
- a. If ice cream is served at 8:00 p.m., rather than anxiously watching the clock, it is better to do something to occupy oneself.
- b. If you cannot drive a car until 16 years of age, study the driver's manual and learn the rules and laws beforehand.
- c. If you want to have a new bicycle, start saving for it as you wait.

- If you are hungry and the food is not ready, ask your money if you can have a drink or a small snack.
- If you go on a long trip, occupy yourself instead of asking 30 times under are you going to get there.
- If you are waiting on line in school, think about the things you are going to do later.

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**"... Behold, the farmer awaits
the precious fruit of the earth ..."**

James 5:7b

