

Day 3

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 *“But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”* 2 Peter 3:8-9

Discussion Peter says that he has written to remind people of what the prophets said and of Jesus' commands through the apostles, and he warns the readers that scoffers will come who don't believe in Jesus's return. Peter then writes the above verse that God is not slow in Jesus' return, but patient. He wants everyone to repent, not to perish. God wants everyone to know Him; His heart is patient. Listen to Jesus simultaneously acknowledge both the sins of the Jews as well as His tender and patient desire that they come to Him: *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing”* (Mt. 23:37). Is this how Jesus thinks of the scoffers Peter referred to? In His parable of the Lost Coin Jesus says, *“Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents”* (Luke 15:8-10). And the father in Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son, *“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him...But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. So they began to celebrate”* (Luke 15:22-24). God is so exuberant, excited, and eager to celebrate when we respond to Jesus' calling and repent. So God is not slow in Jesus' return. His character, His heart, is deeply patient because He wants everyone to return and belong to Him.

Application 2 Peter shows us just how God's patience is a grace to all of us as we await Christ's return. God is patient so that as many will turn to Him and experience His salvation will do so. Consider why God gives us patience as a Fruit of the Spirit: to be more like Him as He seeks to save the lost! Being patient is a way in which we demonstrate to the world God's love, by being slow to anger and long-suffering in our character. Ask yourself: where in your life will your demonstration of patience show other's God's love and patience?

Prayer Father, I praise You for who and how You are. You are loving, sacrificial, and patient. You are a holy God, there is no sin in You. And yet You yearn for us, as sinful and separated as we are from You, to allow ourselves to be found by You. You rejoice and celebrate when we return to You. You get excited and the angels rejoice. Do You laugh and cheer out loud? Do You throw confetti and have balloons? Is there a band playing music and dancing? Thank You, and I praise You that You are a living God who celebrates us coming to You. I praise You that You are very, very patient. 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