



Family MATTERS

A Christ-center resource for families and teachers

Patience

Simeon was an old man.

We are told that he was righteous and devout, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. He was waiting for the promise of the Savior—how long he was waiting, we are not sure. But, the promise was given to him that he would not die until he saw the Messiah.

One day, led by the Holy Spirit, he went into the temple courts and saw the Baby Jesus, who was just eight days old. Simeon took the child in his arms and gave a bold statement of faith that we continue to sing to this day. In Luke 2:29-32 he said:

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

Simeon is an example of purposeful patience. Simeon was able to wait patiently because he was able to focus on the promise given to him by God. The ability to focus can help us grow in patience in our every day lives. Let’s use the word FOCUS as an outline to review what Simeon did and see how we may grow in patience. Simeon . . .

FIRMLY took hold of Jesus. Simeon held him lovingly in his arms. He saw what was important: his Savior. We too can grow in patience by firmly recognizing the role of Jesus in our lives as Lord. Let us always wait for Him and trust God’s timing in everything as Simeon did.

OUTWARDLY acknowledged God’s promise in his life. Simeon’s life was now fulfilled. The promise of God had been kept. We can also express our witness of faith—how God has kept His promises in our lives. In so doing we can find fulfillment and contentment as Simeon did as God’s Name is praised.

CLAIMED his readiness for what was ahead. He was now willing to be “dismissed” in peace. He was ready for his life to conclude and trusted in God to guide his final days. We too can patiently trust God to guide our life—all our days. When our final hour arrives, we can trust Him to take us home to heaven.

UNDERSTOOD the wider possibilities. He saw the purpose of Jesus as the means of salvation for all people. We too, can use the gift of faith to see beyond our needs and self-interests, to be instruments of the Holy Spirit so that others may hear the good news of salvation.

SAVORED the moment. Simeon appears content. Contentment is the result of long term patience. He waited his entire life for God’s promise to come true—and it did! Simeon expresses thanksgiving for God’s promise delivered into his very arms. We too, can experience contentment in the promises of God, as we give thanks to the one who brings fulfillment of His promises to our lives.

Simeon presents for us a model of focused patience. He helps us understand that the most important thing in our life is the gift of salvation in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Family Links

Activities for families to reinforce Bible story truths in the home.

Create a Family Patience Garden

A good way to help children learn patience is to grow a garden. Listed below are some seed suggestions using various lengths of germination so children can experience the process of planting, watering and waiting. Search your garage or basement for various containers in which to plant your seeds, use fresh potting soil and make sure they are in a warm and sunny place. You can obtain the seeds in the gardening section of your local hardware or home services stores.

Before you start planting, look up Romans 8:25 in your Bibles, and have each family member write it out on a card. Talk about what this verse means, and then place them in front of the various containers so that as you watch the seeds grow, you are reminded of the value of waiting patiently.

■ Sweet Potato

This is quick and fast-growing. Buy a sweet potato at a grocery store. Find a jar wide enough for it to fit into. Fill the jar with water, very near to the top. Poke toothpicks around the middle of the potato and place it in the jar (stem side down) so that about half of the potato is in the water and half of it above the jar. Wait, and in just a few days it will start to sprout and send vines in many directions!

■ Contender Beans

Plant one or two seeds in holes one to 1½ inches deep. Make the holes in rows about three inches apart from one another. Germination will take place in seven to 10 days. As the beans start to grow, you may want to add sticks or rods to help hold up the plants.

■ Little Finger Carrots

In a well-draining pot, at least 12-15 inches in depth, sprinkle seeds evenly, only about ¼ inch deep and about ½ to one inch apart. Germination time is 14 to 21 days, so be patient! It will take about 60 days for the carrots to be ready to eat.

■ Early Scarlet Globe Radishes

These classic red tasty gems need a planting depth of only ½ inch and will germinate in four to six days. They grow to a height of four to six inches and will mature in just 23 days.

■ Border Sweet Peas

These early blooming flowers present a beautiful range of color. Planting depth is one inch, two to three inches apart, and will germinate in 10 to 14 days.



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