

Sunday School Lesson

Introduction: A five-year old planted some radish seeds early one spring. Each day he wanted to go out to the garden to see how they were growing. The boy was impatient because he couldn't see immediate results, but in a few days the seeds germinated and were poking through the ground. One day, the boy could wait no longer. He went to the garden and pulled each one up. Of course they withered. The boy thought he was helping. "They were growing so slow, I thought if I stretched them a little bit, they'd grow out of the ground faster."

We may smile at this childish impatience but haven't we all been guilty of similar actions on occasion? All of which points to the fact that we are not born with the attribute of patience but must acquire it by experience.

(James 5:7-11) Christians were suffering many things from rich oppressors. In these verses James attempts then to encourage them to bear up under these burdens without complaining.

"Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

James urges his brethren to be patient in the face of mistreatment at the hands of the rich. He is saying that men ought to hold out a long time before they give in to strong passions or violent actions.

To demonstrate an example of patience, James points to the farmer. He has learned patience by long experience. He knows that he cannot plant his grain until the early rains, coming in late October or early November have softened the soil so that it can be plowed to receive the seed. He also knows that there is little he can do except wait for the rains of winter and early spring to bring the crop of fruition.

This reference to the common practice of Palestinian farmers suggests several important lessons.

1. There is a certain order of events in the course of nature, and worrying and fretting will not hasten nor change this order.
2. Man has certain responsibilities. Though he must wait on God to sent the rain, when the rains do come he must be prepared to plow and plant.
3. We should learn from this reference that there is only so much we can do. We have to depend upon God for rain, the soil, and the sunshine needed to produce the crop.

Modern civilization, making insistent demands on us, does little to encourage the development of the virtue of patience. We have become so caught up in this hectic rush of life that we accept it as normal. We need spend only a few days in a less advanced culture to realize how enslaved we have become to the clock or, in some cases, even the stop watch. Living among a people who have little regard for the clock, and even in some cases a calendar, we Westerners at first feel utter frustration. Life proceeds at a leisurely pace, appointments are not always kept, nor schedules met. Yet, after a while we may learn that people who are not always forging ahead at full speed may understand the real issues of life better than we do. James' admonitions to patience were directed to those who were facing persecutions and afflictions, but they apply with equal force to those of us who are afflicted by the time clock syndrome. How, then, are we to develop patience in the face of these pressures? We begin by reaffirming our faith in a caring, concerned God, not just in some remote deity. We believe in a God who is active in human affairs and who is in control of our destinies regardless of how things may presently appear.

So many of the things we become impatient about won't matter a whit a hundred years from now, or even next week, for that matter. We must learn to allow God's word to give us direction in separating the important things from the less important and the trivial things.

One of our problems is that we have an obsession about time. In doing the Lord's work we often insist that the activity must be carried out within the framework of our schedule. We often fail to recognize that God's schedule may not coincide with ours. Patience will help us to relax and realize that His scheduling is best.

We also sometimes suffer from the feeling that we are indispensable, and if we don't accomplish a certain goal our way on our schedule, then the whole kingdom will collapse. Is it any wonder that we feel impatient when our plans don't materialize the way we hoped? Self-centered persons, even those whose egos are committed to the Lord's work, are rarely patient people.



The Queen of Ladies—Mrs. Lillie Carter proudly displays her trophy and crown as the reigning Queen of the annual Berean Seventh Day Adventists' Lady's Day Event. The contest is held to raise money for the church's programs. (Photo By Peeler's Portrait Studio)

Greater Mt. Sinai Family To Celebrate

Dr. Pastor Norman Kerry and the Greater Mt. Sinai Baptist Church (1243 W. Blvd) family will celebrate the 51st church anniversary May 27.

At 3 p.m. Dr. Clifford Jones, pastor of Friendship Baptist Church, will speak. His choir will provide the music.

The dynamic pastor, Rev. Jones, is a graduate of Shaw University, Southeastern Theological Seminary and holds a doctorate from Boston University.

John Terry is chairman of the anniversary program. N. E. Kerry is pastor. The entire Greater Mt. Sinai Baptist Church family invites you to come out and share in this celebration.

ST. MARK
Rev. A. G. Coley, pastor of St. Mark Baptist Church, will be honored Sunday, May 27, by members and friends. The Annual Pastor Appreciation will begin at 3 p.m. at the church located at 615 Grandin Rd. The guest speaker will be Rev. M.E. Walker of Mooresville. All churches and friends are invited.

LITTLE ROCK
Little Rock AME Zion Church will observe its Centennial Sunday, May 27, at 6 p.m. at the church, 401 N. McDowell St. Myrtle Hall will be presented in concert along with the Little Rock Choir.



Rev. Norman E. KerryMt. Sinai pastor

Catherine M. Wilson is program chairperson.

AMAY JAMES
Amay James Presbyterian Church will observe its Annual Woman's Day Sunday, May 27, during the 11 a.m. worship service.

Guest speaker will be Lucille B. Cato, an elementary teacher at Barringer School.

She is Barringer's "Teacher of the Year" for 1984-85.

"A Christian Woman's Challenge In Today's World" will be the theme of Mrs. Cato's speech.

Patricia Hykes is president of the women's organization. A cordial invitation is extended to the public. Amay James is located at 2400 W. Blvd.

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