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# A THEOLOGY OF IMPATIENCE

*Selected Scriptures | Respectable Sins by Jerry Bridges*

# SESSION SUMMARY

## A THEOLOGY OF IMPATIENCE

I want to consider from Scripture the sin of impatience (and other related sins) to help us mortify it in our pursuit of Christ and the glory of God.

# A THEOLOGY OF IMPATIENCE

## SELECTED SCRIPTURES

### I. The Sin of Impatience

#### A. Its Definition

“Impatience [is] a strong sense of annoyance at the (usually) unintentional faults and failures of others.”

**JERRY BRIDGES, RESPECTABLE SINS**

“Impatience is a form of unbelief. It’s what we begin to feel when we start to doubt the wisdom of God’s timing or the goodness of his guidance. It springs up in our hearts when the road to success gets muddy, or strewn with boulders, or blocked by some fallen tree.”

**JOHN PIPER, BATTLING THE UNBELIEF OF IMPATIENCE**

“A state of restlessness or eagerness that often leads to frustration and a lack of self-control.”

TOPICAL BIBLE (BIBLEHUB)

“The battle with impatience can be a little skirmish over a long wait in a checkout lane. Or, it can be a major combat over a handicap, or disease, or circumstance that knocks out half your dreams.”

**JOHN PIPER, BATTLING THE UNBELIEF OF IMPATIENCE**

# A THEOLOGY OF IMPATIENCE

## SELECTED SCRIPTURES

### I. The Sin of Impatience

#### A. Its Definition

#### B. Its Expression

- i. Lack of trust in God's character (e.g. Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar)
- ii. Lack of confidence in God's providence / time (e.g. Moses, Aaron, and the Golden Calf)

# A THEOLOGY OF IMPATIENCE

## SELECTED SCRIPTURES

I. The Sin of Impatience

II. The Virtue of Patience

A. Its Terminology

- “Patience” – *makrothymia* – *makro* (macro) and *thymia* (mind, passion; state of mind; seat of emotions)
- “Endurance” – *hypomonē* – *hypo* (under) *mone* (remain, endure)

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I. The Sin of Impatience

II. The Virtue of Patience

A. Its Terminology

B. Its Definition

- state of remaining tranquil while awaiting an outcome; patience; steadfastness; endurance
- state of being able to bear up under provocation; forbearance; patience toward others

“Patience refers to that quality of mind that disposes us ‘to take everything in good part and not to be easily offended.’ It is the ability to put up with other people even when that is not an easy thing to do.”

**TIMOTHY GEORGE, COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS**

“The word *μακροθυμία* means “patience,” the attitude of tranquility while waiting, but also “forbearance,” the ability to bear with difficult circumstances and duress.”

**MICHAEL BURER, COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS**

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## SELECTED SCRIPTURES

I. The Sin of Impatience

II. The Virtue of Patience

III. A Pauline Theology of Patience

A. Cultivate the Virtue in Yourself (Col. 1:11 2 Tim. 3:10)

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### III. A Pauline Theology of Patience

#### A. Cultivate the Virtue in Yourself (Col. 1:11 2 Tim. 3:10)

- i. Be honest with yourself about your sin (2 Cor. 13:5).
- ii. Be intentional about asking others who know you best (Gal. 2; 1–2 Tim.)
- iii. Be quick to confess to the Lord your sin of impatience (1 John 1:9)
- iv. Be resolved to deal with your sin (Ps. 51:10; Rom. 6:12–13)

“This is not a common understanding of spiritual power: endurance in impossible situations; patience with impossible people. But it is the power you will know when you are filled with the knowledge of God’s will.”

JOHN WOODHOUSE, COMMENTARY ON COLOSSIANS

“This is the most important point. It is a rich and effective consolation in adversity, to know that God requires patience that is combined with joy. Human reason cannot find this out; it does not ‘enter into the heart of people,’ to borrow the prophet’s words, but God teaches it.”

PHILIP MELANCHTHON, 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REFORMER

“For our reason is perturbed when adversity arises. It supposes us to be afflicted because God either hates us, or has no thought for us, or does not want to help us. God drives these false ideas out of us, and teaches that we are afflicted, not because he hates us, but because he wishes us either to be corrected, or when corrected, to persevere.”

PHILIP MELANCHTHON, 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REFORMER

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### III. A Pauline Theology of Patience

- A. Cultivate the Virtue in Yourself (Col. 1:11 2 Tim. 3:10)
- B. Exercise the Virtue Towards Others (2 Cor. 6:6; Gal. 5:22;  
Col. 3:12; 2 Tim. 4:2; Eph. 4:2)
- C. Model the Virtue after God (Rom. 2:4; 9:22 1 Tim. 1:16)

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I. The Sin of Impatience

II. The Virtue of Patience

III. A Pauline Theology of Patience

IV. The Believers' Practice of Patience

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### IV. The Believers' Practice of Patience

#### A. Pursue God from the Psalms

- i. Ask to be conformed to His character (86:15, 102:8)
- ii. Ask to be comforted in His providence (33:20, 37:7, 62:1)

#### B. Remember Christ and the Gospel (Rom. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:15– 17)

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### IV. The Believers' Practice of Patience

A. Pursue God from the Psalms

B. Remember Christ and the Gospel (1 Tim. 1:15–17)

i. Christ's Mission—to save sinners (v. 15)

ii. Christ's Example—to exercise patience (v. 16)

iii. Paul's (our) Response—to truly worship (v. 17)

“In other circumstances as well the patience [that] love manifests would keep us from responding rashly or irritably toward those who cause us trouble or inconvenience, remembering the infinite patience with which the Lord has treated each one of us.”

ROY E. CIAMPA AND BRIAN S. ROSNER, 1 CORINTHIANS

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1. Why does it seem that the sin of impatience is often overlooked—even considered at times a respectable sin?
2. On Sunday mornings, we've considered the deadly sins of anger and lust. Is impatience just as deadly? Is it a lesser or greater sin than anger and lust? Discuss.
3. What are practical steps to take to identify and kill impatience and then pursuing biblical patience?

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