



**KNOWING GOD** | Connection Group Discussion Guide | Week 1

**Connect (5 to 10 minutes)**

***Come together to build relationships through fellowship and sharing about this week's worship.***

- Take a few minutes to share your thoughts about worship this week.
  - What aspects of worship did or did not connect with you?
  - What story or illustration made an impact on you?
- What is your guilty pleasure TV show or movie? The one you love, but you're embarrassed to admit you love it...

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**Context (30 to 40 minutes)**

***Dig deeper into the videos and scripture for this week through questions and discussion.***

- Before diving into the scriptures or the videos, how would you define patience in your spiritual life? What about your personal life?

***Read Exodus 5:1-23. This is a bit of a longer passage but has a great story and narrative to it. Pay attention to the characters' reactions.***

- What are your initial thoughts on this passage? Can you empathize with Moses or do you think he is out of line with his reaction?

***Watch Part 1 of the Connection Group video.***

- What do you make of this idea that God is patient?
  - Does this make it harder or easier to follow God? Why?
  - Moses eventually freed the Israelites through God's work. However, it took time to accomplish. Are there times that you have been able to see God's hand at work in the world when you look back on something in retrospect? How can this kind of reflection help in developing our own patience?
- Do you ever feel like God is just ignoring you and the problems you are facing? Or the problems of this world? Why does it feel like that?
  - What can you do or what can you tell yourself to remain hopeful in God's patient response to us and the world around us?
  - Have you ever wanted to call God evil in the same way that Moses did here?
- Jesus spent years doing ministry before heading to the cross for us. What can we learn from the time that Jesus spent doing ministry before his act of redemption?
  - What does this say about the way God acts in our lives?

- Why is it important for us to have a God who is patient?
  - How would things look differently if God were more rash?
  - Would there be any benefits? Would there be any disadvantages?

**Watch Part 2 of the Connection Group video for this session.**

Paul experienced quite the difficult and crazy life after becoming a disciple of Christ. In 2 Cor 11:24-28, he outlines the various setbacks he has endured in his ministry, which doesn't include his time in prison. Paul is a helpful person to think about because of what he gave up following Christ (he had power and authority). He also believed that Jesus' second coming would be seen in his lifetime. Up to his death, he never gave up hope of what would be, and this is what allowed him to persevere. In this way, we see how innately intertwined patience and faith (our topic for next week) truly are. How can one truly have patience if one doesn't have faith?

- Read Genesis 1:26-31. In this passage it explains that we are made in the image of God. This can help us understand that the same attributes of God that we'll be discussing, such as God's patience which we see in Paul, are attributes that we can possess as well. What do you think it means to be made in the image of God?
  - Humanity was given dominion over the rest of the Earth after having been made in God's image. What does this mean for us today?
  - Humanity was seen to be very good. How ought we live differently knowing that God holds us in such high regard?
- What do you make of Paul as a patient person? Do you agree that he is?
  - Could you be patient like him amid setbacks? Would you ever give up or threaten to give up when talking to God if you encountered what he did?
- Patience is often referenced in the same text as perseverance (See Psalm 37:7-9, Galatians 6:9, etc.)
  - What is the difference between patience and perseverance? How are they similar?
  - In your faith life, how can being patient offer you perseverance? What about in your personal/professional life?
- Is there someone in your life who you think is incredibly patient? What examples do you have of this?
  - What would it look like to live more like them? Who might you impact more if you were to live like them or live like Paul?

## Call (10 minutes)

**We believe that God not only shows us who God is but invites us to participate in God's ministry by answering unique calls in our own lives. Join together in discovering how we can actively respond to scripture and God's presence.**

- What are some ways in which you can be patient this week? (Think about your faith, your work, your family, and all other aspects of your life). Make a commitment to be patient in at least one area, and name specifically how you can do that.
- Consider the connection between patience and faithfulness. Ponder this throughout the week as you prepare for next week's discussion.

## Closing (5 minutes)

**God calls us into community by sharing our joys and concerns together in prayer and supporting one another in our walks with Christ. As we share testimony and stories of our lives, let us listen to where God is working within our community and how we can build each other up in Christian love.**

- Share joys and concerns with one another.
- Close in prayer, either by inviting a group member to pray or by using the prayer provided below.

### Closing Prayer

Loving God, we ask that you give us patience. Like you do, help us to realize that sometimes things can take time to achieve, but that this doesn't mean we aren't making progress towards the end goal. As we are made in your image, let us know that this is a trait you blessed us with. Let us know that we have the ability to live into this trait and become more of your creation in doing so. Let us not be rash but let us be calm. Let us not be hasty but let us be measured in our response. Let us do this in the way your son Jesus did before us.

Amen.