



Introduction

Many schools follow a programme of key values throughout the school year. These values can be an important framework for helping to define and validate the work of the school 'beyond the curriculum'. Each value can be used as the theme for collective worship, the focus for classroom reflection and the subject matter for main hall or quiet corner displays.

The Bible has so much to offer in this area of positive personal, relational and community values, and its timeless wisdom can help all schools pass on to the next generation the qualities of life that are most valuable and which, as Christians, we believe are not only God-given but also can be God-energised in our lives.

Preparation

What follows is a series of ideas linked to the value of '**Patience**'.

It includes: key themes to explore' a key Bible verse to use' key concepts to unpack' ideas for displays and reflective corners' as well as Bible story links with further connections to material on the Barnabas websites.

Development

1. Key themes to explore

Patience with ourselves - not giving up, coping with temper, recognising our strengths and weaknesses, not being too hard on ourselves because we all make mistakes.

Patience with others - recognising everyone is different, learning to make allowances for others, giving time to people, walking at another's pace and not rushing them.

Patience with circumstances - 'Rome wasn't built in a day', doing something worthwhile can take time, taking the long view, 'instant everything' isn't the answer to every problem

Patience with nature/the world - learning to wait for things to grow (harvest); working for change is one step at a time (for example, climate change); the more complex the problem is, the more time and attention it needs before a solution can be found

2. Key Bible verses

Proverbs 15:18

'Losing your temper causes a lot of trouble; but patient people bring peace' (my paraphrase).

Practical advice from the book of James



'Be patient until the Lord returns. Think of farmers who wait patiently for the spring and summer rains to make their valuable crops grow. Be patient... and don't give up. ... Remember how patient Job was and how the Lord finally helped him...' James 5:7-11 (CEV, abridged).

See also Romans 5:4-5: 'Endurance builds character, which gives us the hope that will never disappoint us.'

3. **Key concepts to unpack:**

Patience is extolled as one of the 7 virtues, but no one finds it easy.

Patience is being prepared to wait for something good to happen.

When we learn to wait for something, we usually appreciate it much more.

Patience involves a long-term commitment to a task and therefore not giving up.

Patience is linked via its Latin root to the word 'to suffer' - it can often be a hard and painful experience.

Children learn about patience when:

- they have to wait their turn to have a go
- they take their turn in speaking in circle time - learning how to be quiet and listen to others especially those who are slow and can't express themselves easily
- there are part of a large family or interest group in which they can't always come first
- they look forward to a birthday or Christmas in order to open presents
- they count the days down to a special holiday
- they learn to control their temper- perhaps by counting to ten or whatever!

4. **Display or reflective corner ideas**

Use pictures of people queuing, opening times for a special event, a calendar for the month with a day at the end ringed as 'my party', a clock, a large egg timer that can be turned and watched, pictures of road rage and angry people.

Use some seeds with a picture of the vegetables or flowers that will one day come from them.

Include a piece of knotted string. This could be used in an assembly presentation too,. i.e. only slow, patient untying will work; if you rush, it just gets more and more knotted.

As a theme for this display, have a series of thought-bubbles containing the numbers 1 to 10 in different fonts as a possible symbol of the slow counting-down of someone waiting for something or biding their time.

A stopwatch by which to time two minutes - link this to the two- minute silence on Remembrance



Day.

Key questions to include in the display:

How good are you at waiting for something? What makes you become impatient? What helps you become more patient? How long can you sit still? What do you do to stop yourself losing your temper?

Have a Bible story open at Galatians 5:22, underlining the word 'patience'.

5. Bible story links

- Abraham was promised that he and Sarah would have a child, but they had to wait 20 years – see Genesis 15:2-5 (especially v. 4) for the promise and Genesis 21:1-8 for the moment Isaac is born.
- Job's name is often linked to the word 'patience'. Even though many things went wrong for him, he still waited patiently for God to help him – see Job 2:6-10.
- David learned how to pray and wait for God to answer him – see Psalm 40:1-3.
- Jesus tells people that the kingdom will start very small and grow slowly – see Mark 4:30-32.
- Jesus advised his listeners that they should not give up when praying for big things – see Luke 18:1-8 for the story of the widow and the judge. God uses people's prayers and therefore does not want us to give up.
- Jeremiah patiently copies out his prophecy again after the King has burned it all – see Jeremiah 36.

Ideas for Collective Worship and the classroom – [Classroom session on what prayer means to Christians](#)