

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

WHAT COMES OUT WHEN YOU GET SQUEEZED?



Scripture References

2 Peter 3:3-15
 Genesis 37, 39-47
 Genesis 49:29-50:21
 Matthew 7:15-23

Lesson Goals

Understand that patience, as mentioned in the fruit of the Spirit, means patience with people.
 Understand that patience means not getting back at someone, even though you can.

Memory Verse

My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.
 James 1:19 (NIV)

(Begin by singing the Fruit of the Spirit song. Make up new motions to go with fruits you haven't yet sung about!)

What have you learned so far about the fruit of the Spirit? (Allow your students to share what they remember. Make sure to review love, joy, and peace.) What follows in the list of the fruit? Patience comes next.

What do you think about when you think of patience? Long lines, anticipated holidays . . . Just like with many of the other words we have talked about this summer, there is more than one word for patience used in the Bible. There is a patience that has to do with things like waiting for Christmas, waiting in line at the store, or waiting until the next new video game comes out, but that is not the kind of patience talked about in the fruit of the Spirit.

The patience talked about as fruit of the Spirit living in you doesn't have to do with things at all. This patience is for when we are dealing with other people. It means to tolerate or go through something for a while before you react. It is the idea of being even-tempered, or "slow to get angry." The Bible says that, "It's smart to be patient, but it's stupid to lose your temper" (Proverbs 14:29 CEV).

This patience is self-restraint. It is not getting back at someone, even though you can. There is an amazing story in the Bible that shows us about this kind of patience. It is the story of a man named Joseph. Joseph was a good boy, his father's favorite son. The problem was that Joseph's father had 11 other sons! Ten of them were older than Joseph. Joseph's brothers didn't like that he was the favorite. And then Joseph had a couple of dreams! Joseph dreamed that his family would bow down to him and that made his brothers even more angry!

One day when the brothers were off taking care of their sheep, Joseph's father sent him to check up on them. Do you think they liked being spied on by their little brother, the favorite? They didn't like it one bit! They could see Joseph coming a long way off. As they watched him walk closer, they made plans to kill him! Can you believe it? They were so angry at their brother that they were ready to kill him. Rueben, the oldest, wanted to rescue Joseph so he talked his brothers into throwing Joseph into an empty well. While Rueben was away, the other brothers decided it would be better to sell Joseph to some traders and make a little money than to kill him; he was their brother, after all!

So Joseph was taken far away from his home to the country of Egypt. There he was sold as a slave to a man named Potiphar who was captain of the palace guard. "Joseph's master saw that the Lord was with him. He saw that the Lord gave Joseph success in everything he did. So Potiphar was pleased with Joseph. He made him his attendant. He put Joseph in charge of his house. He told Joseph to take good care of everything he owned" (Genesis 39:3, 4 NIV). Joseph did a good job at Potiphar's house and God blessed them, but then Joseph was blamed

Application

for something he didn't do. Joseph was thrown into jail.

What do you do when you are squeezed? Did you know that people can tell who you are by what you do? Matthew explains it like a tree with fruit. "Every good tree bears good fruit. But a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree can't bear bad fruit. And a bad tree can't bear good fruit. . . You can tell each tree by its fruit." (Matthew 7: 17, 18, 20 NIV)

"While Joseph was there in the prison, the Lord was with him. He was kind to him. So the man who was running the prison was pleased with Joseph. He put Joseph in charge of all of the prisoners. He made him accountable for everything that was done there" (Genesis 39:19b-22 NIV). Joseph was in jail quite a while. The Bible doesn't say that Joseph planned revenge or did bad things. The Bible tells us that God was with Joseph and gave him success in everything he did (Genesis 39:23b). And when Joseph was finally freed from prison, he went straight to the second highest position in all of Egypt! God used Joseph to help the country prepare for a famine that was coming. Joseph was wise and would help the people know how to store what they planted so that there would be food to eat even when the ground produced nothing.

It's the same with us. Not everyone who speaks God's name is automatically going to heaven. Those who belong to God and will spend eternity with Him are those who do what God wants them to do. They are the ones who believe in God and allow the Holy Spirit to control their lives so that the fruit of their lives is good and not bad.

Then came the time most people would have planned for. Joseph's brothers came to Egypt during the famine. They needed food for their families and it was Joseph who was in charge of all the food that was given. Did Joseph get back at his brothers for the bad things they had done? No. He did test his brothers to see if their attitudes had changed, and then he welcomed them to Egypt! Joseph made a place for them and his father in Egypt.

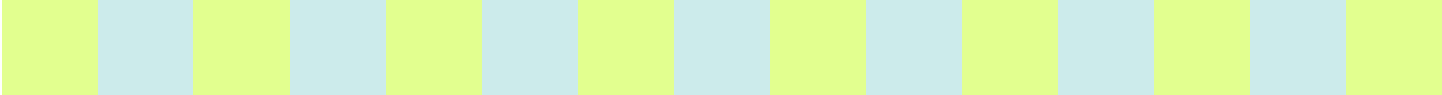
So how's your fruit? Is it good, healthy fruit because you walk with God or is it smelly, rotten fruit of a selfish, revenge-seeking life? Won't you let God be in control?

Years later, when their father died, Joseph's brothers feared that he would retaliate, or get back at them, even after all those years. "They said, 'Remember all of the bad things we did to Joseph? What if he decides to hold those things against us? What if he pays us back for them?'" (Genesis 50:15 NIV) Their fear made Joseph sad. Joseph had trusted God with all of the bad things that had happened to him. Joseph told his brothers, "Don't be afraid. Do you think I'm God? You planned to harm me. But God planned it for good. He planned to do what is now being done. He wanted to save many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I'll provide for you and your children.' He set them free from their fears. And he spoke in a kind way to them." (Genesis 50:19-21 NIV)

Had Joseph been patient with his brothers? Yes, he had. He could have gotten back at them many times and he chose not to. How about you? Are you patient with the people around you, even if, especially if, they mistreat you?



Activities

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- **Memory Verse Activity:** Make clocks from paper plates and brad fasteners. Print the memory verse on the clocks.
 - **Sing:** “Be Patient,” and “Trust and Obey.”
 - Make a collage of pictures that show patience, either with things (like waiting in line) or people.
 - Model patience. Be very intentional as you direct your students to be patient with each other, choosing not to retaliate even if they can.
 - Work on your “Fruit of the Spirit Mobile.” Add a clock to your mobile. Set the mobiles aside until next week.
 - Bring something for snack today that takes a long time to prepare, open, or eat! Talk about patience.
 - **For Further Study:** (If you meet several days a week, use these lessons to reinforce what your students have already learned about Patience. Be sure to review the main lesson everyday, too.)
 - 1) David - 1 Samuel 24 and 1 Samuel 26
Focus on the revenge David could have taken over King Saul. Talk about David’s reasons for not taking revenge.
 - 2) The Sermon on the Mount (Turn the Other Cheek) - Matthew 5:38-42
Focus on the response we are to have to adversity. It’s not our natural inclination.



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slow to speak and
slow to become angry.
James 1:19

Word Search



D I Q A T H E H S T D I S T S
 L F U N O I P C I S N R L P D
 G O I A Y I S D N S L U O P E
 V L C S R S A D G R H O W V K
 N Y K J G E T O N E K A T Y C
 E D T R N O Y E V H C L O I I
 J A O I A M R E D T R U S T W
 N M L P E O R E P O T S P I E
 R E I I M Y O R R R N A E L H
 D O S O O G W B A B I O A O T
 R E T N C C T E Y R K S K O T
 K G E N E S O E J A M E S T O
 P N N T B O N F U E I O N E N
 B T A Y H O E D S D W D G F T
 S I P C E B T Z E H X S S A Q

Complete the memory verse below and then find the underlined words in the puzzle below.

My _____, _____ of this:
 _____ should be
 _____ and slow to _____
 _____ 1:19

Word Search

D	I	Q	A	T	H	E	H	S	T	D	I	S	T	S
L	F	U	N	O	I	P	C	I	S	N	R	L	P	D
G	O	I	A	Y	I	S	D	N	S	L	U	O	P	E
V	L	C	S	R	S	A	D	G	R	H	O	W	V	K
N	Y	K	J	G	E	T	O	N	E	K	A	T	Y	C
E	D	T	R	N	O	Y	E	V	H	C	L	O	I	I
J	A	O	I	A	M	R	E	D	T	R	U	S	T	W
N	M	L	P	E	O	R	E	P	O	T	S	P	I	E
R	E	I	I	M	Y	O	R	R	R	N	A	E	L	H
D	O	S	O	O	G	W	B	A	B	I	O	A	O	T
R	E	T	N	C	C	T	E	Y	R	K	S	K	O	T
K	G	E	N	E	S	O	E	J	A	M	E	S	T	O
P	N	N	T	B	O	N	F	U	E	I	O	N	E	N
B	T	A	Y	H	O	E	D	S	D	W	D	G	F	T
S	I	P	C	E	B	T	Z	E	H	X	S	S	A	Q

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D	E	V	C	P	E	P	E	A	C	E	D
K	I	L	Q	U	I	C	K	E	W	I	N
O	J	S	O	P	A	E	I	C	N	T	E
D	E	G	O	O	L	I	S	T	E	N	D
S	K	I	S	I	N	G	T	R	O	L	E
S	L	O	W	W	O	R	R	Y	P	H	E
L	L	G	E	N	O	B	E	Y	E	S	S
E	S	P	J	S	P	E	A	K	U	S	P
J	E	S	U	I	H	I	E	D	X	P	A
J	B	E	C	O	M	E	F	O	U	N	D
S	R	E	E	P	U	D	D	V	Z	T	A
F	A	I	T	G	N	A	N	G	R	Y	S

QUICK

LISTEN

SLOW

SPEAK

BECOME

ANGRY

Word Search

D E V C P E P E A C E D
K I L Q U I C K E W I N
O J S O P A E I C N T E
D E G O O L I S T E N D
S K I S I N G T R O L E
S L O W W O R R Y P H E
L L G E N O B E Y E S S
E S P J S P E A K U S P
J E S U I H I E D X P A
J B E C O M E F O U N D
S R E E P U D D V Z T A
F A I T G N A N G R Y S

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