

**WITNESS – Reaching out to others**  
*(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)*

**Giving Thanks to God**

Thank God for His patience with us and His forgiveness when we mess up.

**Praying for one another**

Share with one other person, either someone or a situation where you find it hard to be patient and pray for each other. *(Don't forget that it is important to keep this confidential.)*

**Praying for our community**

How would Hungerford be different if the whole community was full of patience and forgiveness? Pray for our community.

# FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

4

## ***Matthew 18:21–35***

### **4 Patience**

*Purpose:* To understand why we should be patient and forgiving toward others.

*Patience* refers to the prolonged restraint of anger. In English we speak of certain people as being “short-tempered.” A patient person is “long-tempered.”

### **WELCOME – Breaking the ice**

***(Aim for 10 minutes)***

What kinds of things make you impatient?

### **WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord**

***(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)***

**Pause:-**

- \* Make yourself comfortable,
- \* seek to relax any parts of your body that are carrying stress,
- \* breathe in and out slowly, breathing in God's love and breathing out anything that is not of God,
- \* repeat a prayer phrase like, “Thank you, Jesus” or “My God, my all” or “Jesus, Son of God have mercy on me a sinner”.

**Rejoice:-** Listen to a song or read a psalm

**Ask:-** Ask God to speak to you as you study his word

**Yield:-** Surrender to God acknowledging that He is God and you are not and pray that you will put into practice what you believe He is saying to you as you study His word.

## **WORD – Applying the truth**

### ***(Aim for 40 – 45 minutes)***

Let's face it. Some people drive us up the wall. We try to pour out love to them, but they are totally insensitive to us. We try to be genuine, but they misunderstand us and subtly knife us in the back. How should we treat such people? Jesus tells us in the parable of the unmerciful servant.

1. Why is it hard to keep forgiving people who do the same thing wrong over and over?
  
2. Read Matthew 18:21–35. Jesus had just been talking about forgiveness when Peter approached him (v. 21). What had Peter been wondering as he listened to Jesus?
  
3. The rabbis taught that a repeated sin should be forgiven three times. (Peter's offer seems generous!) What was shocking about Jesus' reply (v. 22)?
  
4. Jesus' reply to Peter is enlarged by the parable in verses 23–35. What is the first servant's problem in this parable?
  
5. How was his problem solved far beyond anything he could have hoped for?

6. How does the master illustrate God's patience and forgiveness toward us?

7. How does the way the first servant was treated contrast with the way he treats his fellow servant (vv. 28–30)?

8. Why do you think he failed to be patient or forgiving after having been forgiven so much?

9. If we fail to treat others with patience and forgiveness, how will God treat us (vv. 34–35)? Why is his judgment so harsh?

10. How can a deep appreciation for God's patience and forgiveness help you with the kind of person mentioned in question 1?

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