

ESSENTIALS FOR A NEW YEAR

Definition of Essential: Absolutely Necessary; extremely important

- **You** are essential to God.

...love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'... Mark 12:30-31 (NLT)

This is essential:

- Love **God** completely and love **others** intentionally.
- Jesus points out that **love** is essential.

Why love is essential:

- Love is the **character** of our lives.

But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* a sincere faith. 1 Timothy 1:5 (NASB)

- Love is the **cause** we live for.

Let love be your highest goal!... 1 Corinthians 14:1 (NLT)

- Love is the **concern** we live with.

Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NLT)

- Love is the **conduct** we live out.

Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples. John 13:35 (NLT)

But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 1 John 4:8 (NLT)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)

The definition of patience is this:

- The ability to wait for something or someone.
- The ability to continue doing something despite difficulties – even when things seem to be going wrong – we just don't give up.
- The ability to endure suffering (physical or emotional) without complaining
- The ability to control our emotions even when being criticized or attacked.

Patience is the **inner strength** that is required for our journey with people.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

- We learn to **surrender** to what God is producing in us.

Making patience an expression of our love:

- Accept that God's **love** for you **requires** patience with you.

We learn to be patient with others as we **identify** with others.

But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life. 1 Timothy 1:16 (NLT)

- Live with **grace** towards others.

Grace is receiving what we **don't** deserve.

Mercy is not receiving what we **do** deserve.

I beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. Ephesians 4:1-3 (NLT)

- Put the **needs** of people ahead of our desires from people.

Dear friends, don't forget that for the Lord one day is the same as a thousand years, and a thousand years is the same as one day. The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost. 2 Peter 3:8-9 (CEV)

People that **try** our patience **need** our patience.

My friends, we beg you to warn anyone who isn't living right. Encourage anyone who feels left out, help all who are weak, and be patient with everyone. 1 Thessalonians 5:14(CEV)

- Don't expect in others what you have **excused** in yourself.

Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony. Colossians 3:12-13 (ESV)

Action steps:

- Choose patience **before** it's required.
- Choose to live with **grace**.
- Add **prayer** and repeat.

Be glad for all God is planning for you. Be patient in trouble, and prayerful always. Romans 12:12 (TLB)



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions for Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- How are you doing with your fast?
- Why is love essential in our lives?
- Do you find that patience is an essential expression of love in our lives? Why?
- Do you find the provided definitions of patience to be accurate?
- How is living with patience discovered in surrendering to what God is producing in us? What does that mean to you?
- How does God's love for us require patience with us?
- How does identifying with others help us to be patient with others?
- How does grace enable us to have patience with others?
- How does putting the needs of people first help us to have patience with them?
- What does it mean to not expect in others what we have excused in ourselves?
- How do we choose patience before it's required?

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