

Introduction: Under Pressure we all tend to play the "if only..." game

The Lie: "The grass is greener on the other side of the fence" mentality. If I could only change _____, then everything would be _____.

The False Premise: My Happiness = God's Number One Agenda

- **Major Premise** = God wants me to be happy
- **Minor Premise** = My situation, job, marriage, school, relationships are so painful/stressful that...
- **Conclusion** = This situation or relationship can't be God's will for my life.

The Truth:

Running from adversity and conflict in relationships does not solve problems, but compounds them. **Patience** and **Perseverance** are the keys to relational transformation.

⁷*Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.*

⁸*You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.*

⁹*Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!*

¹⁰*Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.*

¹¹*As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.*

¹²*Above all, my brothers, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned.*

James 5:7-12 (NIV)

- We are commanded to be patient even when circumstances are beyond our control. (v. 7-9)
- We are commanded to be patient even when our circumstances are unfair and unjust. (v. 10)
- We are commanded to persevere, even when we don't understand why God is allowing such adversity in our lives. (v. 11)
- We are commanded to demonstrate our patience and perseverance by keeping our vows and commitments. (v.12)

Discussion Questions

Some ideas on how to use these questions: Family time, small groups, fellowship time between friends or couples, or even while riding in the car.

1. Why is it so easy to fall into the "grass is greener" mentality?

2. What must we **understand** and grasp about relationships if we are to endure the "hard times" to later enjoy the "best times"?
 - a. What does the **farmer** teach us about the seasons of relationships?
 - b. What do the **prophets** teach us about adversity in relationships?
 - c. What does **Job** teach us about the value of persevering through the hard times?

3. In what relationship do you most need to develop patience or perseverance?

4. How does what comes out of your mouth encourage that perseverance or hinder it?

5. The "greener grass" mentality is a powerful lie; what or who could help you refocus your commitment to follow God's truth?