

Australian Explorers

God is Patient and Kind

Spiritual Overview: God is patient and persevering

This unit focuses on the history of Australia, although the same principles can be applied to the study of history in other countries. The explorers and pioneers found that patience was a prerequisite to success. Like many of the characters recorded in the Bible, patience and perseverance were an important dimension in their biographies. Patience is a fruit of the Spirit, and necessary for the bearing of fruit.

Col Stringer, in *Discovering Australia's Christian Heritage*, outlines the amazing perseverance of early explorers, most of whom had a strong faith in God. It was only by God's grace, provision and protection that these explorers completed their expeditions across an unknown, drought-stricken land. He writes:

"Many people feel that Australia is a land with a curse over its head. Numbers of Australians believe the foundation of our nation is based upon convicts - the dregs of British society...and that we are still yoked to a spiritual rejection, bondage and poverty. But there is another side to the coin that remained largely untold....Many of our founding fathers, explorers and pioneers were godly men and women of strong Christian faith. In fact the 'Providential' hand of God rested on almost all of our explorers and founding fathers!"

We owe the very name of our country to a Christian explorer, Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, who named our country 'the Great Southland of the Holy Spirit'.

The biographies, and writings from the journals of Australia's explorers and founders reveals the amazing faith of such men. *Discovering Australia's Christian Heritage* is an absolute must for finding out the truth about Australia's past.

Our response to 'God is Patient and Kind'

Because God is patient and kind, I will...

- try to be patient with others
- try to be patient with myself
- remember that God will answer my prayers in His time
- finish jobs properly and not take short-cuts
- persevere and not give up when things get difficult
- show self-control
- show kindness and gentleness to others
- learn to listen
- learn to wait
- learn to let others go first
- help people when they are hurting
- be friendly
- be forgiving

- be faithful

Supporting devotional resource

Themes for Christian Studies 6, (Patient): patience and perseverance

Themes for Christian Studies 5, (Love): God wants us to love others

Key Questions

What is the meaning of perseverance?

What is the meaning of patience?

Why do patience and perseverance go together?

When would we need to have perseverance?

Who do you know who shows, (or showed) perseverance?

What were some of the difficulties the early explorers faced?

How did the early explorers show perseverance?

How can we show patience and perseverance in the things we do?

Biblical references

John 5:1-8 - The crippled man at the pool. He didn't give up.

Luke 11:5-13 - Ask and keep on asking. Be patient and don't give up.

Luke 18:1-8 - The parable of the widow and the judge.

Ezra 4-6; Nehemiah 1-6 - Perseverance in rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple.

1 Corinthians 9:24-25 - Run the race to win. Don't give up.

Philippians 3:14 - Running towards the goal

Matthew 25:14-30 - Perseverance in using one's talents.

Exodus 2-6 - The Israelites patience and persistence in prayer for release from Egypt.

Objectives

Students will

- provide a model of patience and perseverance at work through a study of Australian explorers and pioneers.
- give some historical background of white Australia, and to see how the nation has developed from a wide spectrum of peoples, cultures and happenings.
- uncover the strong Christian faith of Australia's founders.
- become familiar with the geography of Australia through following the paths of early explorers.
- realize that God has a plan for nations and that He can use people and nations despite their shortcomings.

Activities

- Using *Discovering Australia's Christian Heritage* by Col Stringer, study the biographies and journal writings of the following explorers: Abel Tasman, William Dampier, James Cook, Joseph Banks, Matthew Flinders, William Lawson, Charles Sturt, Edward John Eyes, Fredrick Leichardt, John McDouall Stuart
- Research the impact of Christian women: Caroline Chisholm and Mary McConnel. (See *Australia's Christian Heritage* or *Themes for Christian Studies 5, God is Love*).

- Map the routes of Australia's major explorers.
- Discuss the hardships they endured and the reasons for their perseverance.
- Research the history of Colonization, including the First Fleet, the Penal System and Convicts.
- Pretend you have been caught for a petty crime and you are transported to Australia. Write a series of letters to your relatives back in England.
- Explain the roles of convicts and large landowners.
- Explain the effects upon Aboriginal life.
- List the various nations and peoples which contributed to early Australian society.
- Compare this with the various nations and peoples which contribute to Australian society today.
- Discuss hardships and problems of early pioneers.
- Research their way of life, including homes, food and occupations.
- Make a model of a pioneer settlement.
- Discuss the financial hope of some pioneers through the Gold Rush.
- Dramatize events of Colonial times, dressing up in early costumes.
- Draw a timeline showing events in Australian history.
- Research the history of the Australian flag.
- Suggest ways in which God could use Australia to achieve His purposes, e.g. evangelism, provision of food and resources to the needy.
- Discuss ways in which people can misuse the knowledge God has given to nations.