

Subject: *Bearing Spiritual Fruit – PATIENCE*

Scripture: *Galatians 5:22-23*

In our English translations the word “patience” comes from two different Greek words in the New Testament:

makrothumia – “longsuffering” or literally, “long-temper” – It has been defined as the quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; tolerance that endures injuries inflicted by other; the calm willingness to accept situations that are irritating or painful.

hupomone – “remaining under” – it means endurance, perseverance, persistence during trials, Christian service, chastisement, or undeserved affliction. It also involves perseverance in well doing, fruit-bearing, and running the race of life.

It is related to another biblical word, “forbearance” which means putting up with people. It has been defined as gracious tolerance with someone’s faults. If we look at a couple other passages we find these words together, and we understand how important they are.

Colossians 1:3-11

Colossians 3:12-13

1. God is the source and supreme example of patience

He is extremely patient with sinners who rebel against His authority and disobey His will.

Exodus 34:6 *And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.*

Psalms 86:15 *But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.*

God is patient with us before we are saved.

Romans 2:4 *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

God is patient with us after we are saved. There is a children’s song that says it well:

“He’s still working on me, to make me what I ought to be; it took Him six days to make the moon and stars, the sun and earth, and Jupiter and Mars; how loving and how patient he must be, ‘cause He’s still working on me.”

2. We face many situations that require patience

A. Patience to endure mistreatment

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 ⁴ *Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up,* ⁵ *Does not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil.*

Patience is a quality of Christian love. Longsuffering is the ability to suffer a long time under the mistreatment of others without growing resentful or bitter.

Ephesians 4:1-2 ¹ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, ² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.

B. Patience to control anger and avoid retaliation

We can't control what others do or say, but we can control ourselves.

James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

C. Patience to tolerate the faults and failures of others

This is probably the area in which we need the most patience. People constantly behave in ways that irritate or disappoint us. Someone commented, and it's true: "Hardly a day passes but one hears sneering remarks about the stupidity, the awkwardness, the ineptitude of others." The Bible word "forbearance" means "to put up with." Patience is the gracious tolerance of people's faults.

D. Patience to endure trials and troubles

Longsuffering and forbearance involve patience with other people. Endurance and perseverance involve patience with our circumstances. Romans 5:3 says that "tribulation works patience."

James 1:2-4 ² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations (trials); ³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. ⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

E. Patience to wait on God

God's timetable and plans are often different from ours. We have some examples in the Bible of people who teach us the importance of waiting on God. Joseph had great patience. King David had much patience.

Psalms 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

Psalms 40:1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

3. We should understand how God develops patience

A. Knowing and trusting God develops patience – The better we know Him, the more we will trust Him. The good song says, "Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him, how I've proved Him o'er and o'er."

We should remember that God is omnipotent, all-wise, faithful, forgiving, and unchangeable. Joseph knew God and trusted Him. *Genesis 50:20* But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

Job knew God and trusted Him.

Job 13:15 Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.

B. Remembering God's patience develops our patience with others

Jesus told a parable about a servant who owed a great debt and asked the king to be patient with him and he would pay the debt. The king had compassion and wrote off the debt. That same man was unwilling to forgive a much smaller debt that someone owed (Mt.18:21-35).

Paul understood God's patience toward him and that caused him to be patient with others and teach others to be patient as well.

1 Timothy 1:16 ...for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 ²⁴ And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, ²⁵ In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; ²⁶ And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

C. Following godly examples develops patience

Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Hebrews 6:11-12 ¹¹ And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: ¹² That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

James 5:10-11 ¹⁰ Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. ¹¹ Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Christ is our supreme example of patience.

Hebrews 12:1-2 ¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ² Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

1 Peter 2:20-21 ²⁰ For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. ²¹ For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.

D. Believing God's promises develops patience

Hebrews 10:36-37 ³⁶ For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. ³⁷ For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

James 5:7-8 ⁷ Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. ⁸ Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.