

# Fruit of the Spirit

## Patience (Longsuffering)

**Gal. 5:22-24** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

**24** Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

These are the things that we should be doing instead of practicing the works of the flesh.

These are only possible if we have salvation in Christ.

### I. Definition

“Longsuffering” - KJV, NKJV, “Patience” - all others

Patience is greatly needed in a society that exists on fast food, frozen dinners and fax machines.

Our culture says, “You can have it all! Right Now!” However, this is not true.

And many have the debts to show that they were unable to obtain it all now, even with easy terms.

Patience, longsuffering is a necessary ingredient for real living.

The race does not always go to the swift; often it belongs to the patient, persistent and persevering. Let us seek to understand these blessed word and apply them to our lives!

Patience - (Strg. - 3115) *makrothumia* “long-suffering patience with people, not events and circumstances.” The character of a man who has the opportunity to avenge himself and does not. Slowness in avenging wrongs.

Note: “Perseverance” is used to describe being long-suffering in the face of hard circumstances.

In the KJV “perseverance” is used in people, and long-suffering in regard to circumstances.

Describes someone with long (enduring) temper, i.e., one who acts leniently and patiently.

Self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger and is associated with mercy, and is used of God.

Patience is the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial; it is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope.

We know of a “short-tempered” person, but unfortunately the English language does not have a corresponding term to describe a “long-tempered” person. Yet, this precisely what the patience is.

This attitude to events which never admits defeat, and which never loses its hope and its faith, however dark the situation may be, and however incomprehensible events may be, and however sore the chastening of God may be.

This word is used of God’s attitude toward men. He could have wiped us out a long time ago, but because of His patience He did not.

### II. The Patience Of God

God is self described in this way.

**Ex. 34:6** “Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth”

God offers patience instead of destruction.

**Rom. 9:22-24** “What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction?

**23** And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,

**24** even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.”

Do not think lightly of God's patience.

**Rom. 2:3,4** "And do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment upon those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?"

**4** Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?

Many, like these Jews, don't realize just how much they were dependent on the patience of God.

He gives us abundant opportunity to repent.

**2 Pet. 3:15** "and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation..."

God wants all men to repent – and is now patiently waiting for them to do it!

**2 Pet 3:9** "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."

### III. The Patience God Expects Of Us

#### A. In Waiting On Him

**Ps. 37:7** "Rest in the LORD and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes."

Patiently wait on the Lord even if things do not seem to be going right for you and the wicked seem to be getting ahead, He will rightly judge.

**Ps. 40:1** "I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, and heard my cry."

**Luke 18:1** "Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart"

We must exercise patience toward God. Sometimes we expect God to operate on our time schedule.

However, he is not bound by the constraints that limit and regulate our earthly lives.

He accomplishes His work in His own way and time. Let us therefore be patient with God! Wait on God and allow Him to answer prayer according to his wisdom and timing!

#### B. In Dealing With Men

**1 Thess. 5:14,15** "And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men.

**15** See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men."

**Rom. 12:17-19** "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

**18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

**19** Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.

In these two cases we see men who aren't doing what they should and men who are doing what they shouldn't do.

We should be patient with others even though they may at times be unreasonable.

One whose temper is set on a hair-trigger destroys peace, but the patient man will smooth over problems.

From time to time, problems will inevitably arise among brethren, but patience provides us with forbearance to endure such difficulties.

It causes us to bear with our brethren in their faults and shortcomings.

#### C. In Spreading The Gospel

We must be patient in bearing fruit for the Lord. Information can be sent around the world in a matter of seconds, but it sometimes takes years to get an idea through a quarter-inch of human skull.

Patience is required if we are to effectively share the gospel of Christ with others.

In the parable of the Sower, those described by the good ground keep the word in their hearts and bring forth fruit with patience.

**Luke 8:15** "And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance."

They needed perseverance to be saved, we need patience in continually teaching.

**2 Tim. 4:2** “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.”

Thus all evangelists are to have patience as they instruct others in the Word.

#### D. In Trials

Life inevitably has its difficulties. At times our situation may seem dark and hopeless, but patience doesn't admit defeat or throw up its hands in despair; nor does it become discouraged or bitter. Patience enables us to stand up under pressure and remain steadfast regardless of life's circumstances. It enables us to overcome the trials of life.

So you know that there will be trials – so it all depends on how you deal with them.

Attitude is a major factor in how you handle the trial.

Consider the Apostle Paul.

**2 Cor. 1:6** “But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer”

Facing difficulties and trials helps us develop a spirit of perseverance, which in turn leads to proven character.

**Rom 5:3,4** “And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance

**4** and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope”

Character leads to patience.

**Jam 1:3,4** “knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

**4** And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

Now that we know how much patience is needed and of God, let's think on how we are to get it.

Just knowing that God wants us to have it should help us to develop it. We know that He does not demand the impossible, but requires the best for us. So God also gives us concrete ways to develop this trait.

## IV. Obtaining Patience

### A. Follow The Example Of Christ

We practice patience just as He did.

**1 Tim.1:15,16** “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.

**16** And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.”

Christ demonstrated patience in the way that he treated us, and we are to follow His example.

We follow His heavenly example, and we follow His earthly example.

**1 Pet. 2:21** “For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps”

**Col 3:12,13** “And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

**13** bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”

### B. Learning From Scripture

The Old Testament Scriptures are a source of comfort and patience

**Rom 15:4** “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

Consider Abraham, to whom God made the land, nation and seed promise.

Twenty-five years elapsed before God gave him a son.

Yet, he patiently endured and afterwards inherited the promises

**Heb. 6:15** “And thus, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise.”

The Old Testament prophets and the patriarch Job are living monuments of suffering and patience

**James 5:10,11** “As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

**11** Behold, we count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.”

### C. Through Prayer

Paul prayed that all might have patience.

**Col. 1:11,12** “strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

**12** giving thanks to the Father...”

## Conclusion

We must be patient in running the Christian race.

Someone has called patience “the staying power of life.”

It gives us the tenacity to see things through to the end. Eternal life belongs to those who are persistent in doing good

We must be diligent to the end. Only those who continue in faith and patience will inherit the promises

God's patience and longsuffering is the sinner's hope

God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

However, never take the longsuffering of God for granted.

He will come again for judgment.

Heaven will be ours if we faithfully serve God until the end.

However, we will reap condemnation if we neglect the opportunities that God has provided for our repentance.

**Jas. 5:7-9** “Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.

**8** You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

**9** Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.”

Have patience with one another and in all things and serve the Lord as we wait for His return.