

## LONGSUFFERING IS FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

**Galatians 5:22-23**

**(Not entirely original with me)**

**Introduction:** A lot of people are "short tempered" and some are not. There are, thankfully, some who are patient, longsuffering, willing to wait things out and put up with a lot of being mistreated, ignored, etc. A Christian is supposed to be one who is patient, longsuffering as it is part of the fruit of the Spirit which every Christian is to be working to produce. To be "longsuffering" is to be long-tempered, patient, a quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation, the opposite of anger and connected to mercy. If God is longsuffering, then every Christian must work at being longsuffering too.

### I. EXAMPLES OF LONGSUFFERING MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE

#### 1. The longsuffering of God:

- God has been longsuffering, patient toward mankind:
  - God was longsuffering in the days of Noah - 1 Peter 3:20
  - God was longsuffering with His people, Israel - Nehemiah 9:16-21
  - God is longsuffering with everyone today - 2 Peter 3:7-9; 1 Timothy 1:15-16
- The purpose of God's longsuffering:
  - So that people might have salvation - 2 Peter 3:15
  - So that people might be led to repentance - Romans 2:4
  - So that those who fear Him and keep His commandments might delight in His lovingkindness even though they have sinned - Psalm 103:8-18

#### 2. The longsuffering of David:

- He was longsuffering with King Saul
  - Saul had tried to kill David several times.
  - David had several opportunities to kill Saul, but he didn't.
    - In a cave - 1 Samuel 24:1-22
    - In the camp - 1 Samuel 26:1-25
- Respecting God's anointed/appointed King (Saul), David in turn was longsuffering with Saul.

### II. WHY LONGSUFFERING IS NECESSARY FOR THE CHRISTIAN

#### 1. It is necessary if one wishes God to be longsuffering to him/her:

- Jesus told a parable about the "Unmerciful Servant" - Matthew 18:32-35
- Colossians 3:12-13, a reminder of what Jesus has done for those who believe in Him:
  - Jesus has forgiven the believer
  - Since the believer has been forgiven for so much, therefore he/she must be willing to forgive others.

#### 2. It is necessary to keep/maintain the unity of the Spirit:

- It is something every Christian must work at in keeping with a walk/life that is worthy of being a Christian - Ephesians 4:1-3
- Without longsuffering, the sins one commits against others quickly destroys the unity for which Jesus died.

#### 3. It is necessary for preachers and teachers of the Gospel:

- Paul charged Timothy to be longsuffering/patient - 2 Timothy 4:2

- Paul demonstrated longsuffering - 2 Timothy 3:10
- No servant of the Lord (Christian) can faithfully be a witness to those he/she disagrees with without longsuffering/patience - 2 Timothy 2:24-26

### III. HOW TO DEVELOP LONGSUFFERING/PATIENCE

#### 1. Through love:

- It is love that "sufferes long" - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a
  - Unless one loves those who have wronged him/her, there will not be enough reason to "put up with them."
  - Love (good will) is basic/fundamental to being slow to avenge being wronged.
- When one learns how to grow in love, he/she will grow in longsuffering/patience - 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 3:16

#### 2. Through prayer:

- Paul stressed that prayer would help others to have "all patience and longsuffering with joy" - Colossians 1:9-11
- God will certainly help those who desire to be like Him be longsuffering/patient.

### CONCLUSION:

1. God has very clearly revealed Himself as to be longsuffering/patient - Psalm 86:15
2. The Christian who truly wants to be like God and led by the Holy Spirit will want to become as much like God as he/she can : *"...Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth..."* Psalm 86:11a
3. Christian, how is YOUR longsuffering/patience? Do you need to work on it? How much do you want to be like Jesus? How have you reacted to God's patience/longsuffering with YOU?