

THE FRUIT OF PATIENCE (LONGSUFFERING)

Contributed by amadi

MEMORY VERSE: Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Col 3:12) NIV

TEXT: Eph 4: 1-7; 2 TIM 3: 10; 4: 2; 2 Pet. 3: 15

INTRODUCTION:

1. Grk., makrothumia ('patience' in the NASB)

- a. Literally, it means being "long-tempered" (the opposite of short-tempered)
- b. "patience, forbearance, longsuffering, slowness in avenging wrongs" - Thayer

2. "Longsuffering is that quality of 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." - Vine

3. The purpose of God's longsuffering - . 2Pe 3:7-9

- a. That we might have salvation! - 2Pe 3:15
- b. That we might be led to repentance! - Ro 2:4
- c. That those who fear Him and keep His commandments might delight in His lovingkindness, even though they have sinned. Ps 103:8-18

LONGSUFFERING IN THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN:

1. Necessary if we desire God to be longsuffering toward us - cf. Mt 18:32-35
2. Necessary to maintain the unity of the Spirit - Ep 4:1-3
3. Necessary for preachers and teachers of the gospel - 2Ti 2: 24-26; 3:10; 4:2
4. Developed through love and prayer - cf. 1Co 13:4-8a; Col 1:9-11

Note: When one possesses the quality of longsuffering, kindness naturally

Follows.

Longsuffering is synonymous to patient and enduring. Longsuffering is one of the virtues possessed by God so by Christ also. God was longsuffering to Israel, as Jesus Christ was longsuffering to his disciples. The disciples during their early life with Jesus were still carnal. Jesus has been very longsuffering in dealing with them. As Christians, longsuffering must be one of our virtues. We must be longsuffering with the weaknesses of our brothers and sisters in the faith. We must be longsuffering with the people we are leading to Christ. Patience is another sorely needed quality in the fast paced world in which we live in today. Just watch people standing in line at the grocery store or at your local fast food restaurant and watch how short some people's fuse (MINGLE) are today. Road rage is still a problem on some of our highways. Look at someone the wrong way and they will want to try and take your head off. Many people have been killed or seriously injured because someone lost his temper over something that was very trivial. Patience - (Greek: makrothumia) makro - long in distance or duration; thumia - heat, passion, suffering, anger. makro + thumia - long suffering, slow to anger, slow to lose one's temper or passion. To have a long fuse. How long is your fuse? In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he challenged them to live according to what they had received. He told them to put off the old self and to "put on the new self." One of the marks of the new self that he told them to bear was the mark of patience. As Christ followers and as those who have received the gift of the Holy Spirit we can yield our lives to the Spirit's calling and exhibit the mark of patience.

DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS FOR THE WORD LONGSUFFERING (patience): Forbearance, patience

Patient endurance and steadfastness under provocation

Forbearance under ill-will, with no thought of retaliation

Patience, endurance, steadfastness and forbearance

Forbearance under suffering and endurance in the face of adversity

Ability to endure persecution and ill-treatment

WHAT DO YOU THINK

see us develop patience. EPH 4:1-3 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Four ways we come across to test us:

First is disturbances that come our way. These come when it appears we are busy with life and do not need them. Like

when you sit down for a meal and the telephone rings or there is knock at the door. You are busy in your house and a needy person knocks at your door or a family member wants your attention. You are very tired and sit down to rest but some one needs you now. Have you had disturbances and how are you doing with them?

The second test is trouble (Luke 10: 38-42): How many of us like to have things now? It seems we get upset if things do not happen when we want them. How many of you wanted church to start/close on time? How many of us will go to a fast food place to eat because we want the food now rather than waiting for the meal to be cooked at a nice restaurant?

Many of us get impatient when we miss an elevator and have to wait. The bible gives us a story about two sisters that Jesus often visited and on one occasion the one sister got real upset because the other one just sat at Jesus's feet while she had to get a meal ready. Does it trouble you when there are people taking time to pray and read their Bibles when there is work to be done? What are your troubles? Are they keeping you from Jesus? COL 3:12-15

impatience. What bugs you? Num 20:9-10; Pr. 16:32 "Although one who practices patience and self-control receives far less attention and acclaim than a warrior who takes a city, he accomplishes better things."

The fourth test would be boredom. How many times have you heard that expression, "I am bored." How can one be bored when you serve a God who moves mountains? It is said that one will spend six months of their lives waiting for a red light to turn green. Then when it does turn green do you get frustrated because the person in front of you does not take off. Do you also notice people keep pushing the elevator button as though it will make it faster? Pr. 19:2 "Zeal without knowledge is not good; a person who moves too quickly may go the wrong way." Did you know that there is a sickness now called hurry sickness? It is stated that 90% of people who experience heart attacks have a hurried life style. Pr. 15:18 "A hot-tempered man stirs..."

Four ways to develop patience

1. Develop a new awareness. Find a new way of looking at your problems. When we have a problem it comes from the fact that we think only about ourselves. The root of being impatient is our selfishness. So we need to get our eyes off ourselves and see what is in other people's lives. Learn from another's point of view. Pro 19:11 ; Pro 20:24

2. FIND A WAY TO LAUGH. Have you found a way to laugh at your circumstances? A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life. Pr. 14:30 it is a fact that people who laugh live longer. Laughter dissolves tension. It cures our being worried. It is life's shock absorber. We need to learn to laugh. If you learn to laugh at your troubles you will never run out of things to laugh at. God laughs. Pr. 17:22. What have you laughed at today?

3. Let your love be real. The Bible tells that love is patient. So if you are impatient you are not being lovable. When you show love you are showing you care about another's person needs, requests, wounds and wants. Love helps you not be impatient and therefore you will not be filled with anger at others. EPH 4:2 "Love"; Pr. 19:11 "A man's wisdom gives him patience";

4. We must have confidence in the Lord. "Patience is not an act of our will. You cannot pretend to be patient. Patience comes from an inner peace that only comes from God. Patience only comes because our confidence is in the Lord. Patience comes from faith.. PS 37:7 "God is patient"; PS 37:3. PR 14:29 "God is patient"; GOD IS PATIENT: One of the ways of our God is that He is a very patient and long-suffering God. His ways are not our ways. And one of the things you will find out very early on about His ways is that He works on a much slower time frame than we do. And unless you learn to adjust to His slower way of working things out - you will find yourself easily losing your patience with Him and how He wants to work things out in your life. The reason for this is that your own impatience will start to act up and try to override the patience and long-suffering that the Holy Spirit will try and transmit to you. At times, it may become a battle of wills - your will against His will. But once the Holy Spirit starts to try and manifest this quality up into your personality, then you have to try and move with it and allow it to get worked into your mind and emotions. If you do, then His patience will start to override your impatience, and before you know it, your fuses will start to lengthen and you won't lose your patience like you used to do.

CONCLUSION: Learn to ride and flow with the patience of the Holy Spirit in your daily life and walk with the Lord - and you will then be able to enter into a much more restful and peaceful state within your mind and emotions.