



Living in the Goodness of God

Recognizing How God's Goodness is Running After You

The Goodness of God Part 3, Patience and Mercy

This month we are thinking about the goodness of God. And this week, let's consider the mercy and the patience exhibited by our Creator, the Great I AM, the ONLY God. The Bible uses the word "longsuffering" to describe this Divine character trait.

Do you appreciate people being patient with you? Have you ever trained for a new job? Most of us have, and probably several times. During those training times, were you blessed with an instructor who was kind and patient as you tried to learn the ropes? And when you messed up on that new job, made a big mistake, and maybe cost the company money, wasn't it great to have a supervisor who was merciful, who understood our human frailty, who smiled and said, "Yep, I understand! I've done the same thing... or worse!", a supervisor who encouraged us, and helped us repair our mess, and learn and live through it? Yes, those kinds of folks are wonderful. We like patience when we have messed up, and lots of mercy when we fail.

And we appreciate this behavior so much because we all have probably experienced the other side of the coin! We've probably had supervisors who were not so patient and not so merciful, but were (to use a Bible term) "froward", meaning perverse, angry, and harsh. An impatient, unmerciful, unforgiving, harsh, and angry supervisor makes life miserable.

Yes, we love patient and merciful people, because we all very much need patience and mercy. But a human supervisor is just that, a human being. And if we lose a job because of an impatient and merciless boss, chances are we can find another job. But stop and consider life, eternity, and God? Every human being is responsible to a holy, perfect, and righteous God! Yes, some "free thinkers" choose to deny this fact but their choice to put their heads in the sand does not change reality. The bottom line is that every human being ever born has been born an enemy of God (Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21) because of our sin nature. And God through the ancient prophet Isaiah testifies that our sin has separated us from Him.

- Isaiah 59:2 reads, *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

And here is the dilemma: There was and is nothing, in and of ourselves, that we can do about it! Wouldn't it be horrible to live under the auspices of a God who had no love, patience, or mercy? Where would we all end up? We would all be undone, lost, and eternally separated from our Creator!

Yes, if it were not for Jesus' Passover week resurrection, we'd be in an eternal Fix! Christ's precious blood won't just atone (i.e., cover) our sin, but it can wash it away permanently. That bloody cross served as a bridge between God's Justness and God's Graciousness. It spans the chasm between sinful, lost human beings, and a just and holy God. The blood of Christ enables the patience and mercy (i.e., the longsuffering nature) of our God!

And for those who have called out to Jesus in repentance and faith, and thereby have applied that sanguine solvent to their sinful soul, washing it as white as snow, God is now eternally merciful and patient.

- Psalm 136 records, *O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

I hope you have taken advantage of His patience and mercy!

God bless and consider!