

Fruit of the Spirit - Longsuffering

Waiting Without Worrying

I. Slide1,2 Intro: *Waiting Without Worrying*

A. Harvey Mackay author of, *Swim with the Sharks, Without being eaten alive* writes about about world-famous businessmen and their secrets to success. One of the stories he tells is about a trip to Japan to listen to that country's top business men...

1. When I was in Japan in 1983...we heard from the top officers of Honda, Sony, Mitsubishi, and the head of the biggest enterprise of all, the 88 yr-old president of Matsushita Electric/Panasonic - **Masaharu Matsushita**...When the 88 yr-old Matsushita addressed us, he spoke eloquently and profoundly. Then came the questions: Question: Mr. Pres, does your company have long-range goals? Answer: Yes. Question: How long are your long-range goals? Answer: 250 yrs. Question: What do you need to carry them out? Answer: Patience :)

B. Longsuffering/patience is the 1st of *our next triad* of the 9 spiritual fruit.

1. This group of 3 (*longsuffering, kindness, goodness*) reaches out to **others**.
2. Slide3 It is **fortified by love, joy, and peace**. Longsuffering/Patience (*makrothymia*) is the quality of **forbearance** under provocation. It entertains no thoughts of **retaliation even when wrongfully treated**.
3. It is a HS given fruit that when exercised in your life is testimony to a Spirit-filled life. Our society needs to witness believers, who exhibit a **steadfast patience**, in the midst of an impatient world. *Poem...* Slide4
 - a) *Patience is a virtue, Possess it if you can. Found seldom in a woman, Never in a man. No!*

C. This longsuffering is *an emotional calm even under provocation*. It is a composure that entertains no thoughts of retaliation even when wrongfully treated. The **best example** we have in the NT is **Jesus's behavior** in each of the **3 trials** He endured the night before His crucifixion.

1. Mt.27:11-14 Meanwhile Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. 12 When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave

no answer. 13 Then Pilate asked him, “Don’t you hear the testimony they are bringing against you?” 14 But Jesus made **no reply, not even to a single charge** - to the great amazement of the governor. NIV

a) In remaining mute, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 53:7.

D. God’s greatest evidence of His longsuffering nature is in His *forgiveness of sin*.

1. Slide5a In the OT, the **Psalmist** tells us that our God is *compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. 9 He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; 10 he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.* Psalm 103:8-10, NIV.
2. Slide5b In the NT, **Paul** refers to his own sinful life and the patience Jesus showed him as an example to others. *But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.* 1Tim.1:16 NIV.

E. Slide6 It’s possible that...

1. God’s Goodness/kindness may refer to how He overlooks our **Past** sins.
2. God’s Forbearance/tolerance our **Present** sins.
3. God’s Longsuffering/patience our **Future** sins.¹

F. As believers, we too, are to exhibit the kind of longsuffering, *that can only be explained by the presence of God in our lives and the filling of His Holy Spirit.*

G. The Bible teaches that there are many areas where the believer needs to have patience. **But** there are **4 areas** that are particularly stressed.

II. Slide7 LONGSUFFERING IN WAITING UPON THE LORD

A. *Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.* Psalm 37:7 NKJV

B. Slide8 God has always acted in **His time** and in **His ways**.

1. He does not conform Himself to our timetables or our agendas.

¹ Spurgeon Quote

2. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.* Isaiah 55:8 KJV

a) For those reasons, it takes patience and perseverance to wait on God.

C. Illus: It seems Peter's most glaring faults was his *lack of patience*. In John's gospel, the last chapter, we see what happens when Peter gets tired of *waiting on God*.

1. After his resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples and instructed them to go to Galilee and **wait**. Well, they do what Jesus told them to do - kinda.
2. They went back to Galilee and they **waited**, and they **waited** and they **waited**.
3. Finally, Peter gets **tired of waiting** and he tells the rest, "I don't know about you guys, but I'm going back to fishing." What Peter really needed to do was **wait** until he had *heard* from the Lord. Waiting on God can be tough.

D. **Slide9a Sometimes we must Patiently Wait for a Word from the Lord.**

E. i.e. Seeking God's will for the decisions about life that are critical to us.

F. **Slide9b Much of God's will for our lives is found right in the Scriptures.**

1. We don't have to look very far to know the Lord's will concerning morality and ethics and decent God-fearing living.
2. But there are certain decisions in life where only prayer and the HS can give us the direction we need.

G. **Slide9c Peter and the other disciples needed directions for life.**

1. The instructions were to wait for Jesus and listen to what he had to say because He would give them the direction they needed.

H. **Slide9d Sometimes Christians need directions for life.**

1. Directions about job or career choice. Directions about educational pursuits. Directions about marriage partners. Directions on how to fix broken relationships. Directions on how to handle a difficult circumstance.
2. These are just a few of the many areas where you may need a word from the Lord.
3. You may have to patiently wait for God to reveal His directions to you.

- I. Slide10 **Sometimes we must Patiently Wait for the Timing of the Lord.**
- J. There are some situations in life where ***timing*** is everything.
 - 1. *Whoever obeys his command will come to no harm, and the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure. For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter,* Eccl.8:5-6 NIV
- K. Waiting on God sometimes means patiently remaining where you are until God grants you permission to proceed.
 - 1. There are times in life when **we know** that it's God's will to make a certain decision or go to a certain place or to do a certain thing - **but** proceeding at **God's timing** can be critical in determining the success or failure of what you do.
 - a) Blessings from God may be **lost** by missing God's timing.
 - 2. When faced with those situations where God's timing is important, ask yourself the following **question** ...
 - a) With all the information I have and all of the praying that I've done, do I sense that God clearly is directing me to proceed at this time?

III. Slide11 **LONGSUFFERING IN WAITING UPON EACH OTHER**

- A. All Christians are being transformed into the image of Christ.
 - 1. For some that process takes a little longer - there are a few more rough edges to file off.
- B. Longsuffering is needed in the Body of Christ as we **cope with each other** and **the burden of fellowship**. *Burden*?
 - 1. *Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.* Gal.6:1-3 NIV
 - a) Slide12 **Burden** means *a weight, to heaviness, to bulk, which may be oppressive.*
 - b) Fellowship in the church means being **concerned** about the lives of those in the pews next to us.
 - (1) When they hurt, we should hurt. When they rejoice, we should rejoice.

2. In these verses in Galatians, Paul reminds us of the kinds of burdens that may come with fellowship.
- C. Slide13a *Life is not antiseptic* (scrupulously clean/pure) *even for the faithful believer*...just ask Job
 1. **Life** has a way of laying **burdens** upon our shoulders from *time-to-time*.
- D. Slide13b Longsuffering shows Tolerance
 1. *Tolerance relates to putting up with another person's obvious humanness & bearing with his or her imperfections.* [which demands 2 things:]
 - a) Slide13c This demands the setting aside of your **self-centered focus**.
 - b) This demands adopting instead a **God-centered perspective**.
 2. **How?**
 - a) Its learning how to *suffer long with* their...lateness, procrastination, moodiness, control, speaking before thinking, self-reliance.
 - b) Its learning how to *put up with* his/her *humanness*.
 - c) Its learning how to patiently endure your their differences in *preference & habits*.
 3. But I believe you are allowed to **give up on them** at a certain time...*when God gives up on you!* :)
 4. 1 Cor.13:4-8 MSG, Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end.

IV. Slide14 LONGSUFFERING IN PERSECUTION AND OPPOSITION

- A. *Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.* James 5:10-11 NIV

- B. More Christians have were martyred for the faith in the 20th century **than** in all of the 19 centuries that proceeded.
1. This year alone it is estimated that, worldwide, 160,000 Christians were martyred for their faith.
 2. Approx 438 believers have been killed because of their faith in JC **today**.

V. Slide15 **LONGSUFFERING WAITING FOR THE LORD'S RETURN**

- A. In his 1st letter to the believers in Thessalonica, the Apostle Paul commended the believers for their patient endurance in the face of severe trials as they awaited the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
1. **Slide16a** *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father.*
1Thes.1:2-3 NKJV
 - a) The word translated **patience** in this passage denotes *the idea of one remaining in place - hold your ground. Regardless of what comes. Regardless of what transpires in our lives.* Our hope in Christ and His 2nd Coming is secure and unmovable.
 - b) It does not mean **passive resignation** to our troubles, implied by the phrase *grin and bear it.*
 - c) **Slide16b** It means, an *aggressive constancy* and a *dogged determination* to retain our hope even in the face of our difficulties as we wait for *the trumpet call of God, the shout of the archangel and the appearance of our Lord, Jesus Christ with the Hosts of Heaven.* In the meantime, our waiting for **that great event** may take some patient endurance on our part.
- B. *Dear brothers and sisters, be patient as you wait for the Lord's return. Consider the farmers who patiently wait for the rains in the fall and in the spring. They eagerly look for the valuable harvest to ripen. 8 You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Don't grumble about each other, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. For look - the Judge is standing at the door! 10 For examples of patience in suffering, dear brothers and sisters, look at the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We give great honor to those who endure under suffering. For instance, you*

know about Job, a man of great endurance. You can see how the Lord was kind to him at the end, for the Lord is full of tenderness and mercy. James 5:7-11 nlt

C. According to a traditional Hebrew story, Abraham was sitting outside his tent one evening when he saw an old man, weary from age and journey, coming toward him. Abraham rushed out, greeted him, and then invited him into his tent. There he washed the old man's feet and gave him food and drink. The old man immediately began eating without saying any prayer or blessing. So Abraham asked him, "*Don't you worship God?*" The old traveler replied, "*I worship fire only and reverence no other god.*" When he heard this, Abraham became incensed, grabbed the old man by the shoulders, and threw him out his tent into the cold night air. When the old man had departed, God called to his friend Abraham and asked where the stranger was. Abraham replied, "*I forced him out because he did not worship you.*" God answered, "*I have suffered him these eighty years although he dishonors me. Could you not endure him one night?*" Thomas Lindberg

D. *****

- E. lkgnt - patient endurance under injuries inflicted by others.
- F. Longsuffering is a practical expression of patience & keeping patience until the provocation is past.
- G. Longsuffering - a long holding out of the mind, before it gives room to action or passion.
 - 1. Those who are humble in mind will naturally be slow to resent wrongs & won't contemplate revenge.
- H. Defined by Trench as, *a long holding out of the mind' before it gives room to anger.*
- I. George Mueller, *the stops of a good man are ordered by the Lord as well as his steps.*
- J. True patients means waiting without worrying.