

The word “longsuffering” does not simply mean to ‘grin and bear it’, but rather a *patient continuance in well doing* (Rom 2:7). When trials come in our lives we are not to buckle under them. We are to patiently continue in the love, joy and peace of the Lord, knowing that *all things work together for good to them that love God*. (Rom 8:28)

📖 Romans 5:3 And not only so, but we \_\_\_\_\_ in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation \_\_\_\_\_;

The Christian can be assured that God is always in control. Even when we don’t understand the trouble in our life, we must remember that God understands and, even in the midst of trials, has a place for us in his will.

Proverbs 20:24 Man's goings are of the LORD; **how can a man then understand his own way?**

The Christian without trouble is one who has the tendency to rely on himself or the things of this world for safety and security. For this reason, God sometimes uses hard situations which we cannot understand to strengthen our faith.

📖 James 1:3 Knowing this, that the \_\_\_\_\_ worketh patience.

God’s grand desire for our lives is that we be conformed to the image of His son. Our salvation is not simply about going to heaven when we die, but about becoming a spiritually mature Christian right here in this life.

📖 James 1:4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be \_\_\_\_\_ and entire, wanting nothing.

The word *perfect* in this verse means “mature”. The Christian faces situations that try his faith so that he can become a mature child of God. Every trial that we face is an opportunity for us to respond with the fruit of the Spirit.

📖 1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have \_\_\_\_\_, make you \_\_\_\_\_, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

The Christian *will* suffer in this life. Christianity is not the absence of problems, but the addition of power to overcome these problems. As we yield to the Holy Spirit we avail ourselves to this power. The fruit bearing Christian will, through the spirit, bear the fruit of longsuffering in the midst of trials.

📖 Gal 5:22 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

If we look closely at Galatians 5:22,23 we see a three-fold division of the Fruit of the Spirit. The first division of three: Love, Joy, Peace are ***Spiritual***. That is, they are the direct result of an abiding life in Christ. In John 14 and 15 Jesus calls these “my love” (John 15:9,10), “my joy” (John 15:11) and “my peace” (John 14:27).

The second set of fruit, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, could be said to be ***Relational***. Each of these three are an outworking of Love, Joy and Peace in our relationships with others. If we are yielded to Christ and have his love, joy and peace, it will be evidenced by the Longsuffering, Gentleness and Goodness that we show in dealing with others.

The final set of spiritual fruit, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, are all ***Personal*** character qualities. The Relational fruit is that which we bear *toward* others, while this Personal fruit is that which we bear *before* others. These are qualities which make up our personal testimony. A lifestyle of consistent faithfulness, meekness and self-control validates our message, while a lack of these qualities, undermines it.

**What is Longsuffering?**

For the most part the word Longsuffering is in reference to our interaction with others. To be longsuffering means that we are not quick to become frustrated, irritated or short tempered by the faults of others. Longsuffering is inseparably linked to Love.

📖 1 Cor 13:4 \_\_\_\_\_[love] *suffereth long*, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

The man or woman who is quick to correct, criticize, or confront others (the opposite of longsuffering) is an unloving person. The nature of love is one that *suffereth long*.

As we will see later in this study, the Greek word for Longsuffering is also translated Patience. This is a quality that is sorely lacking in today's fast-paced society. Our self-centeredness and hectic schedules can fuel our irritations with others and with situations which we cannot control. Try to “catch yourself” today when you begin to become irritated or frustrated by someone or something. Remember that the fruit of the Spirit is longsuffering and that *love suffereth long!*

## Longsuffering in Relationships

Friday

Psalms 86:15 But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

This quality of longsuffering, like the other fruit we have studied, begins as an attribute of God himself. All of these qualities are characteristics of God which he desires to bring forth in our lives through His Spirit.

📖 Romans 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be \_\_\_\_\_ to the image of his \_\_\_\_\_, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

As we begin to display this quality of longsuffering towards those around us, we are showing Christ-likeness and allowing God to conform us to His image.

📖 1 Timothy 1:16. **Q.** Paul indicates that Jesus showed longsuffering when He saved him. How does Paul's conversion display the longsuffering of God?

📖 2 Peter 3:9. **Q.** According to this verse why is God longsuffering toward us?

📖 Romans 2:4. **Q.** Why might God be longsuffering and withhold judgment from the Christian?

God's longsuffering toward us is illustrative of his great love for us. Though we are sinners, unworthy of salvation, or a personal relationship with Him, He continues to *suffer long* waiting for us to turn to Him, whether for salvation, or for restoration. Consider this example as we interact with others!

📖 Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering,

---

📖 Colossians 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Longsuffering in our relationships means that we will show mercy and grace to those around us. As God has been patient, forbearing and merciful to us, we must also be so to others. Consider where we might be if God treated us the way that we treat others!

## Longsuffering in Service

Saturday

### Soulwinning

Not only should we be longsuffering in our relationships with others, but we should also be longsuffering in our service for God.

📖 Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in \_\_\_\_\_ we shall reap, if we faint not.

Throughout scripture, God uses the picture of a *harvest* to illustrate our service toward Him. Paul told the Galatians not to become weary in the work, because they would eventually reap the harvest. Note that in any harvest, you always *reap what you sow, reap more than what you sow, and reap later than you sow* Paul was reminding the church at Galatia that if they were patient, longsuffering, and did not faint, they would undoubtedly reap results.

A farmer can plant, he can water, he can weed, but ultimately he has no control over the growth of his crop. It is his responsibility to be faithful in the work, and to wait for the harvest.

📖 James 5:7 Be \_\_\_\_\_ therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath \_\_\_\_\_ for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

As a church we must remain faithful in all the work that God has charged us to do, while remembering that it is God who will bring the harvest *in due time*. If we become impatient in our service we will face the temptation to quit or to force results by using means other than what God has prescribed.

A spirit-filled church focused on reaching the lost and faithfully performing it, will doubtless reap a harvest of souls!

📖 Psalms 126:6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall \_\_\_\_\_ come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

### Discipleship

📖 2 Timothy 4:2. **Q.** According to this verse how are we to reprove, rebuke and exhort others?

Longsuffering is essential in the work of soulwinning and discipleship. We must not become impatient with the harvest of souls, nor with the rate at which others grow spiritually. Impatience in service will cause us to grow weary and faint, let us be faithful and rely on God to bring forth fruit!

# The Fruit of the Spirit is Longsuffering – Review

## From Thursday

1. Name the *Relational* fruit. How are these displayed?
2. What three things does the longsuffering person, not do?

## From Friday

1. What are some ways we can treat others that do not display longsuffering?
2. How should longsuffering affect our desire to forgive others?

## From Saturday

1. What are the three principles of the harvest?
2. How can we show patience in discipling others?

## From Monday

1. Why might God bring trials into our lives?
2. What is the best way to react to these trials?