

## **FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT:LONG-SUFFERING (PATIENCE)**

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, LONG-SUFFERING, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Galatians 5:22,23)

LONG-SUFFERING is from the Greek word 'makrothumia' which speaks of steadfastness of the soul under provocation. It means forbearance and patient endurance of any ill-treatment, without anger or thought of revenge. LONG-SUFFERING, or PATIENCE ("Hupomone") is the God-given ability of a Christian to remain upright in spite of overwhelming circumstances, tests and tribulations. It is a sweet attitude toward any trial that God permits in the life of the Christian. It is what enables the Christian to "give thanks in everything".

LONG-SUFFERING is a product of faith. We must believe that God is at work in our lives and that we will not be forgotten by the God to whom we have committed the keeping of our souls. LONG-SUFFERING grows where there is a continual awareness of God. God is faithful and will not allow evil to overcome us, but our trust must be anchored only in Him. It is inward peace, as well as outward control.

How is LONG-SUFFERING produced? TROUBLE!! Trouble alone will make us impatient, but trouble connected with faith produces LONG-SUFFERING.

LONG-SUFFERING is also produced by knowledge, faith and hope. When we understand what is going on we can patiently await the outcome. LONG-SUFFERING does not stand alone, it supports and is supported by the other fruit of the Spirit, for without love, faith, hope, kindness, etc., one cannot be patient. God's timing does not always coincide with our immediate plans, but LONG-SUFFERING offers opportunity for spiritual growth while waiting for God to intervene on our behalf. How do we recognize LONG-SUFFERING? Look for persons who:

- - have forgiving spirits. are enduring hardships, illness, or loss patiently
- - are obedient to God, even under great persecution
- - have control over their tempers and attitudes
- - despite great difficulty remain Christ like
- continue to praise and thank God in all things, whether good or bad
- face tribulations head on and do not try to escape the trial or take matters into their own hands.
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### **WARNING**

Avoid the enemy of LONG-SUFFERING - impatience, which if allowed to take root leads to disobedience. Impatience is a direct stance against God.

Additional Scriptures:

For a perfect example of LONG-SUFFERING, read the Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John to see how Jesus exhibited LONG-SUFFERING.; Colossians 1:11, Colossians 3:13, Luke 8:15, Luke 21:19, I Timothy 6:11, 12, The Book of Job, I Peter 2:19,20, Hebrews 6:10-15, 1 Peter 3:17, James 5.