

Topic 15: Patience, Kindness & Goodness *Enjoying a Radical Relationship*

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Galatians 5:22-23

The Disciple of Jesus needs to know certain things about the Bible, God (the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost), and the Church

We're examining the qualities that mark a follower of Jesus.

Discipleship isn't just studying the Bible and engaging in religious activities. Rather, it involves a slow, steady transformation into Christ-likeness. In other words, it isn't simply knowing and doing new things; it's becoming the new people God created us to be.



According to Galatians 5:22–23, our lives – and our interactions with others – can and should be marked by supernatural patience, kindness, and goodness.

Looking at the Text

Patience

The most common Old Testament Hebrew word translated “patience” comes from a verb that means “to be long.” The idea is that one with this virtue takes a long time to get ticked off, or “slow to anger.”

In the New Testament two primary Greek words convey the idea of patience. The first, *hypomené*, means to “remain under” – to remain steady during tests and trials. It is often translated “endure” or “persevere” without grumbling or complaining.

The other word, *makrothumia*, refers to patience as the ability to bear, tolerate, or put up with others without becoming provoked. The word suggests restraint, being slow to speak and slow to become angry (James 1:19).

1. Nehemiah 89:19 - *"Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the wilderness. By day the pillar of cloud did not fail to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. "What does this say about God?*

Consider also: 1 John 4:8, 1 Timothy 1:16, Psalm 103:10, 2 Peter 3:9 and Colossians 3:12-13

Some Bible Verses about Patience

The importance of patience can be seen in the many verses in the Bible about this virtue. This list includes but is not limited to:

1 Corinthians 13:4 "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant."

Psalm 37:7-9 "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices! Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil. For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land."

Romans 12:12 "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

Proverbs 16:32 "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city."

Ecclesiastes 7:9 "Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the bosom of fools."

Romans 5:4 "And endurance produces character, and character produces hope."

1 Thessalonians 5:14 "And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all."

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

James 1:19 "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger."

Hebrews 6:12 "So that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Kindness

In the New Testament, a number of Greek words express the idea of kindness. One New Testament Greek word translated "kindness" is the word philanthropia from which we get our English word philanthropy. It means "love for mankind" and suggests providing generously to others. It is often associated with being friendly, generous and considerate. This is the word found in Acts 28:2.

Another word is the word philadelphia, which refers to “brotherly affection that results in acts of kindness” (Romans 12:10; 2 Peter 1:7).

A third is the Greek word translated simply “kindness” in Galatians 5:22, *chrestotes* (see also Ephesians 2:7), which can also be translated “good” (as in Romans 3:12).

When used of people, *chesed* is often translated “kindness” or “loyalty” (Genesis 24:49; 2 Samuel 2:5).

Put all this together and the idea behind the concept of biblical kindness is a kind of benevolent friendliness and sympathy that gets richly expressed in words and deeds. In other words, kindness isn’t just a warm feeling, it is action on behalf of another.

Kindness is Powerful – Titus 3:3-4

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared...

Kindness Is Stronger than Death – Ruth 2:20

Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!

Kindness Prepares for Repentance – Romans 2:4

Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

Kindness Can Hurt – Psalm 141:5

Let a righteous man strike me – it is a kindness; let him rebuke me – it is oil for my head.

Kindness Brings Honor – Proverbs 21:21

Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness, and honor. (Proverbs 21:21)

Kindness finds its ultimate expression in God’s actions toward us:

“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?” (Romans 2:4).

“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:4–7).

2. Colossians 3:12-14 - *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. “What does “clothes yourself with...kindness” mean to you?*

Goodness

Consider the following passages that discuss *goodness*:

“The lord is good to everyone. He showers compassion on all his creation” (Psalm 145:9, nlt).

“And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another” (Romans 15:14, nasb).

“So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith” (Galatians 6:10, nasb).

“So, we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do” (2 Thessalonians 1:11, nlt).

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

3. What do these verses say about the Lord’s character, the way he relates to people, and the new nature of a child of God?

Life Application

It’s been suggested that in the same way we only get better at a thing – running, weight lifting, etc. – by training to do that thing, the only way we’ll ever get better at patience is by purposely putting ourselves in situations that will force us to slow down and/or deal with frustrating people. What are the pros and cons of taking such a direct approach to learning patience? What are you going to do?

Until we meet again next Wednesday, what’s a specific act of kindness you could show to someone in your life who maybe doesn’t “deserve” it? Write it down in the space below.

