

Lesson 6

WHAT IS PATIENCE?

The fruit of the Spirit is ... patience
(Galatians 5:22).

Another characteristic of *agape* love is patience. The original Greek word used in Galatians 5:22 translates as “long-term patience” or “longsuffering with people.” There is another Greek word that means “maintaining patience under heavy circumstances.” The fruit of the Spirit is longsuffering (patient) with people.

God's desire for Christians is to show longsuffering with others—just as God has shown His longsuffering patience toward us. Suffering teaches us patience.

1. Write Hebrews 12:3.

Even though we were hostile sinners against Jesus, He never gave up on us. When we face difficulties with others, remember that Jesus was patient with us. It is easy to lose sight of God's purpose. Longsuffering is the training ground for Christian maturity. God wants to establish this same longsuffering in our lives too.

2. Write 1 Timothy 1:16.

The longsuffering of Jesus is a pattern for all believers. Jesus is our example to follow that we might be an example to others. What does this example look like?

3. Write James 1:19-20.

A patient person holds their peace. They do not blurt things out nor do they lose their temper. When we get angry, it does not produce the righteousness of God. As followers of Christ, we are commanded by God's Word to show patience toward others.

4. Write Colossians 3:12-13.

Spirit-filled believers are calm in the face of provocation. They do not complain about other people nor do they allow themselves to become irritated. These believers can defer anger and are willing to accept pain inflicted by others.

5. Write James 5:11.

What is God's purpose in longsuffering? Why is it necessary to have patience with others? Why is patience an attribute of the fruit of the Spirit?

6. Write 2 Peter 3:9.

Even as people continue to mock God and the second coming of Jesus Christ, God patiently endures with us. He shows longsuffering because He is not willing that anyone should perish. The purpose of longsuffering is to bring people to salvation.

Longsuffering patience cannot come from human efforts or by striving for it. Patience that is the fruit of the Spirit becomes evident when the believer fully trusts God in every area of their lives. As we submit to God's will, His Spirit will guide us, and we will begin to develop this fruit of patience in our lives toward God and others.

7. What does Jesus tell us in regards to obtaining the fruit of the Spirit? Write Luke 11:13.

8. What happens after you ask God for patience? Write James 1:3-4.

God expects us to suffer long, even if the cause is just. The Bible tells us to be patient with all people. The length of our patience with people determines the measure of our spirituality. Remember, the purpose of longsuffering is to bring people to salvation.

How do you endure exasperating people? Do you lash back with insulting words? So many of us can be impatient when it comes to our family, and say things we regret later—words that lead to bitterness, strife, and rudeness. These types of reaction will never improve anything!

Agape patience bears all things. It does not retaliate. It is not bitter. It is not provoked. It does not behave rudely. It endures all things.

Agape patience is quiet. It thinks before speaking. It has a long temper, and it always gains victory over the short temper. It has the quality of self-restraint.

9. Write 1 Corinthians 13:4a.

10. Write Hebrews 12:2.