

Long Anger
2017-06-11

1 Cor 13:4a

Love is patient

- When I don't need it, I want it & vice versa.
- It is listed 1st in the biblical description of "love", also on "fruit of the Spirit" list, but we hesitate to pray for it because it usually comes thru trials.

The Greek for patience is two words: makrothumos...makros = long, thumos = wrath or anger, literally a "long anger" = has a long fuse. *2 Cor 6:6, Eph 4:2, Jam 1:19-20*

- Context: extreme patience with people rather than with circumstances/events.
- Slow in becoming angry, endures personal evil, injury, & provocation without being filled with resentment, anger, or revenge.
 - Virtually never gets angry no matter how treated.

Beautiful, reassuring truth that God is slow to anger/punish! *Ex 34:6, Num 14:18, Ps 86:15, 1 Tim 1:16*

- Not amazing – omnipotent God is able to create/destroy all/anything.
 - Amazing – omnipotent God is patient with rebellious, disobedient, sinful ungrateful inferiors who challenge His authority. *Rom 2:4 & 9:22-23*
- We even foolishly misinterpret His patience, which is meant to lead to repentance, as "evidence" He approves our sin or does not take sin seriously or that there is no God!
 - When justice comes, we think it's injustice!

From my perspective, the Lord extends greater patience toward Christians than the lost.

- Sin, rebellion is natural for fallen/unrenewed nature of unbelievers.
 - Lord's patience is not forever...*Gospel 2 Pet 3:8-10*
- Holy Spirit indwells Christians, yet we are ungrateful, complain, sin, not forgive others
 - Easier for me to be patient with the lost than Christians...they should know/act better.

The Greek word is a present tense verb which expresses "habitual & present actions" and shows who a Christian is day-to-day.

- Patience is a great barometer of spiritual health & maturity.
 - Christian virtues like faith/hope/love/joy are dependent on patience. *1 Cor 13:4a, Gal 5:22-23, Col 3:12-14*

Yet we are often impatient because we're self-centered, short sighted and/or self-righteous.

- It's all about me. My comfort, agenda, time schedule...my way.
 - Especially frustrated when "short term" goals are blocked.
- In our self-righteousness, we see others' imperfections and faults but not our own & often impose higher standards for others than self.
 - But our joy, peace, contentment can't be based on others' performance, or even our own, but on who Jesus Christ is for us and in us.

The foundation to tangibly glorifying God by being patient with others is God's incredible patience toward us because of the cross.

- We can be patient because the Holy Spirit indwells & empowers Christians. Col 3:12-13, 1 Thes 5:14-15, Eph 4:1-3, Prov 16:32
 - By God's grace be like Jesus Christ and put others before yourself. *Phil 2:3-4*
 - Ask "Why am I impatient now?" and walk away if necessary.
 - Pray for "long view perspective" of others/self because God is not finished with them or you.
- Extend abundant patience toward others as you have abundantly received it from the Lord....He's your example of and source for patience!