

Four Men without a Name

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[0 : 00] Galatians chapter 5. Once more. Galatians chapter 5 again? Yes. But I will tell you, the next couple of weeks, we will not be in Galatians chapter 5 the next couple of weeks. We're coming up on Easter, so I'm going to key in on Easter more than Galatians the next couple of weeks.

So, we'll be looking at things. Galatians chapter 5. Galatians chapter 5. And I know you can't predict what verses I'm going to go to, but 22 and 23. It says, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such, there is no law.

We've looked at love. We've looked at joy. We've looked at peace. Today, one that probably all of us can kind of say, yeah, I wish I had more of that, or I wish I didn't have more of that.

Long-suffering, long-suffering, patience. I hate patience. Or, I need patience, and I need it right now. No, that's not quite how it works.

So, we're going to be looking at long-suffering, patience. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, I just thank you for the time we have together this morning, Lord, to look at this word, long-suffering, patience.

[1 : 41] Lord, I pray that you would help us. If there's one thing that we probably have more trouble with than anything, it would be having patience. Lord, especially in the society we live in, the culture that we have, we want things done, and we want it done in a hurry.

And, Lord, to learn to just wait, to wait on the Lord, that is tough sometimes. So, Lord, I pray that you would help us this morning as we look at this idea of long-suffering, that you'd help us to realize that it's a fruit, part of the fruit of the Spirit.

And so, you will give it to us if we will allow you to work in our life, if we will allow you to have your way. You will help us with being long-suffering.

Lord, let's take this time now, use it to help us to grow, help us to understand more about you, and to understand more about how we should live Christ-like lives.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. And there's an area in California, Indio, California, it's known for its date trees.

[2 : 57] Every year, they have a date festival in this area, and they're famous, this sounds terrible to me, but apparently they're famous for their date shakes.

Does that sound good to anybody? A date shake. Yeah, good, I'm glad I'm not alone. Anyway, apparently they're famous for them and stuff. And the date palms that they have there, they can produce about 100 pounds of the fruit annually.

Every date tree can produce about 100 pounds of these dates. And one of the qualities of these trees is the fact that they have very extraordinarily long lives.

As a matter of fact, for the first four years of a date tree, they don't produce any fruit at all. Nothing. And then they start, in the fifth year, they start to produce some.

And then, talking about the longevity, their most productive years start around 80 years old. Kathy's learning that.

[4 : 04] She's more productive now than ever. But they start producing, and it's just a testimony to the fact that having patience, spending time, waiting, for when it's your time for things to happen.

And here's God, he's working in our lives. He wants us to accomplish great things. But sometimes we have to wait. We have to wait for God to get ready, get done changing us, molding us, shaping us to be Christ-like.

And then we start seeing the fruit that needs to come. And Paul mentions this word long-suffering here in this passage of Galatians chapter 5.

And the word is made up of two different words. One of them means slow, long. The other one means wrath, suffering.

Slow wrath. Slow wrath. And thankfully, this is one of God's attributes.

[5 : 13] God is patient with us. He is slow to wrath. He puts up with us. As a matter of fact, you don't have to turn there, but in Exodus chapter 34, verse 6, should be up on the screen actually.

Remember when Moses came down off the mountain, he had the Ten Commandments with him and everything. And the Israelites had made the golden calf, and they were doing all their stuff. And he winds up breaking it. Well, God brings him back up on the mountain again to get another copy of the Ten Commandments.

And while he's up there, Exodus 34, this verse, it says, And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.

Long-suffering. You think about it. Why was Moses back up there? Because they had been partying. They had made false idols. They had done all kinds of things. And then Moses winds up breaking the Ten Commandments.

And God said, okay, come on, let's do this again. He's long-suffering to us. You know, that's also a commandment he gives to us.

[6 : 27] He says, you need to be long-suffering. You remember in Ephesians chapter 4, verse 26. Be angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.

You need to be long-suffering. You need to be patient. You need to be able to see things and say, okay, I know God has got this. God is going to take care of this. God is going to meet the need.

We live in a day of quick retribution. Oh, we see something happen. Boom, we're going to take care of it right now. We see something happen. Man, we need to, something needs to be done about this.

We don't practice the patience that the Bible talks about. We need to have patience like the little boy. The little boy was standing at the bottom of an escalator and he's watching it.

And the sales lady comes up to him and says, son, are you lost? He says, no, ma'am, I'm just waiting for my chewing gum to come back around. Do we have that kind of a patience?

[7 : 30] Just stand there and just wait. We need to have patience. Let God do his work. See, the fruit of long suffering, we don't develop it by our self-determination.

I'm going to be patient and I'm going to be patient right now. And I'm going to be, you know, that doesn't work. It's the Holy Spirit working in our life. The Holy Spirit teaching us about waiting on God and waiting for what he's going to do.

So let's look at this idea of long suffering. And the first thing I want you to see this morning is the perseverance of long suffering. The perseverance. See, long suffering allows us to persevere in even the most difficult of days.

It doesn't matter what's going on in our life. It doesn't matter what's happening. See, I can wait until God reveals to me what is going on, what needs to be done, and what God is going to do.

2 Corinthians 6.4. It says this, But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions and necessities and distresses.

[8 : 46] He says approving ourselves as the ministers of God. You know one of the key notes to know that you're doing God's work? Can you do it with patience?

God's timetable is not the same as ours. God does a work and it's not the same as what we would like. There are some things I would like to see done and God hasn't seen fit to do that yet.

I believe he's going to, but he hasn't seen fit to do it yet. In my timetable, it would have happened five years ago. But you know, okay. But God has a work that he's going to do. James chapter 5, verse 10.

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience.

You read through the Bible. You look at all the different prophets in the Bible. You look at the things they went through. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, others. You look at the things that they faced and things, and they were patient.

[9 : 45] They trusted in God and said, God is going to do a work. And I am waiting on him when his timing is right, when he wants to do this thing. So I'm waiting on him.

Prophets are great examples. You read through your Bible. So look at the things that they faced. So why is it so important that we have long suffering? Why is it so important that we persevere?

First of all, because of God's purpose. We're fulfilling God's purpose. And God's purpose is, first of all, to correct us. To correct us. Hebrews chapter 12, verses 6 and 7.

It says this. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons.

For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? He says sometimes God's going to put us through things to correct us. He's going to put us through things to get us on the right track, to get us back where we belong.

[10 : 47] A human father would do that. He would help you get on the right track, help you to see this is the way you need to go. And he'd do that, he's going to do some chastening sometimes. He says God's doing the same thing.

Just wait on him. Let him do his work in your life and see where he's going to lead you. Second thing, he's going to challenge us. To challenge us.

Sometimes we need to have challenges put in front of us so that we know the right way to go. Psalm 119, verse 71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn by statutes.

He says it's a good thing that I have faced things. It's a good thing that I've gone through things. It's a good thing because, he says, it helped me to learn God's word.

It helped me to learn God is working in my life. It helped me to see God doing his thing in my life. So, it's a challenge to us. And then the third thing is to use us.

[11 : 52] To use us. This one, I always think of Joseph. Remember Joseph? Sold into slavery by his brothers.

Winds up as a slave, a servant in Potiphar's house. Winds up in prison because of things that happened at Potiphar's house. All kinds of things he's facing. He goes through prison there, and he's there for a long time.

And some guys were supposed to help him, and they forgot about him and everything and stuff. And then he comes out to be used of God to answer a question for Pharaoh.

And he winds up being second in command behind Pharaoh. And after he's second in command behind Pharaoh, he winds up coming up with a plan for a famine that is coming. God has revealed to him.

And the people do not starve. They have plenty of food. His family comes from Israel and comes to Egypt. And he's able to feed his family and take care of them. And you remember in Genesis chapter 50, verse 20, it says this.

[12 : 52] But as for you, ye thought evil against me. He's talking to his brothers. But God meant it unto good to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

God put me through all of these different things. I went through all kinds of things. And it all started with you guys selling me into slavery. But God had a reason for it. God had a purpose for it.

And because of me going through all of these different things, all of these people here in Egypt are alive. And you guys are still alive. Because there was food for you to have.

You stop and think. God can use things in our life to help mold us and shape us in what he wants us to be. Then we persevere because of God's priority.

God's priority. What is it God has for us? When you stop and think about, okay, I'm here on earth. Why does God have me here? Well, we can think of, we need to see people saved.

[13 : 55] We need to take the gospel. We need to. But the main thing is to be conformed to the image of his son. To be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Romans chapter 8, verses 28 and 29.

For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Then say everything is good, but all things work together for good.

I'm dealing with the guys at the jail. Our body is dealing with the ladies at the jail. God put you here for a reason. Well, I don't get it.

This was not a good thing. Really? Really? I had one guy, I've told you about him, Mike, got saved. Because he was in jail.

What good came out of this? It doesn't say anything about it is good, but it says all things work together for good. He got saved because of that. Then in verse 29 it says this. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

[15 : 03] He says, I predestinated you to be conformed to the image of his son. I want you to be like Jesus. I want you to be like Christ-like.

I want you to follow his example. I want you to be like him. Somebody has said, I don't know who said it, but in adversity, we want God to do a removing job when he wants to do an improving job.

God, take this out of my life. Why am I going through this? Why am I, there's all this happening? Go, take it away. And God says, no, no, no, no, wait a minute. I've got you going through this for a reason. Because I want you to come into this pathway.

I want you to come into this. I want you to be molded and shaped like this so that you can be used to take the gospel to those around you. See, are we willing to wait on God?

Wait on the Lord. We saw, those of you with me on Wednesday nights, wait on the Lord, we saw there in Psalm 37. Second thing, the influence. The influence of long-suffering.

[16 : 08] One man has said, long-suffering is the grace of the man who could revenge himself and does not. We like to take things in our own hands.

We like to say, oh, I'm going to take care of this. I'm going to fix this. I'm going to do this. And he says, look, you could take revenge. You could go out and take care of it yourself.

But he says, those who are long-suffering don't do that. They wait on the Lord. They have patience. When we exercise long-suffering, we are able to have a godly influence on the people around us.

First of all, with your family. With your family. You know, Winston Churchill, somebody was quoting Winston Churchill. And he said, who can ever forget beaches?

Remember, they went on to the beaches. And he says, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields, we shall, in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We're ready to fight anywhere. And one person said, sounds like some family vacations.

[17 : 13] But that's not what he meant. He said, we're ready to do whatever God wants us to do, wherever God wants us to do it. And we have the patience to wait for God to work in our life.

How about, as part of our families, your marriages? I love this quote. I'm not sure who said it, but I love the quote. A good marriage is not the result of finding the right person.

It is the result of being the right person. You know, when you look for that perfect mate, I've got news for you.

There is none. Except for me, right, Bonnie? No. Okay. There is no perfect mate. But, you can be the right person.

You can be the one who brings the love of Christ into the marriage. You can be the one who treats the person with the love of Christ. You can be the one who shows the love of Christ.

[18 : 23] Be the right person. Ephesians chapter 4, verse 29 says this, Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Christ comes into a life and he starts working in a life and he starts changing a life. What does he do? He changes the heart. He changes the language, the way we communicate.

He changes the way that we affect people and deal with people. He says, Look, you're going to watch what comes out of your mouth and you're going to be used to edify, to build up, to improve, to make better.

We talked about that in Sunday school a little bit. Making better. See, we need wisdom. We need long-suffering so that we see things from other people's point of view, our spouse's point of view and others, which brings me to the second thing, with others around us.

We're going to improve in our family. We're going to have an influence in our family, but we're also going to have an influence on those around us. patience. See, patience is a product of love.

[19 : 31] You ever notice the way this is going? We talked about the fruit of the Spirit, love. What does love do? It affects our joy. What does love do? It affects our peace. What does love do?

It affects our long-suffering. It changes us. It makes us more like Christ. 1 Corinthians 13, you know that famous love chapter? Well, verse 4 says this.

Whenever you see the word charity, think love. Charity suffereth long and is kind. Charity envieth not. Charity vaunteth not itself. It is not puffed up. Love suffereth long.

Suffereth long. That sounds a lot like long-suffering. He says, love suffereth long. You know, we put up with the weaknesses.

We put up with the sometimes lack of understanding. We put up with because we wait on God to fix it. Our complaining, our yelling, our screaming, our doing, whatever, it's not going to fix things.

[20 : 37] We allow God to work in people's lives. Romans 12, 19. He says this. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, vengeance is mine.

I will repay, saith the Lord. Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. What does that mean? Put it to the side. Don't give it a place in your life.

Put it somewhere else. Because God says, vengeance is mine. I'll repay. Let him do a work. Whether it be with neighbors or coworkers or family or whatever, let God do a work.

Ephesians chapter 4, verses 1 through 3. It says, I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherein ye are called, with all loneliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

He says, you go face the situations in your life with long suffering. You go and you face the situations in your life forbearing one another, forgiving one another. And then he says, why?

[21 : 49] Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We're trying to keep a unity. We as a church, we should come at it everything with long suffering to try to keep the unity of the Spirit.

1 Peter chapter 2, verse 23. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

Jesus is here on earth. He's in human form as Jesus. And he says, he did not try to revile again. He didn't fight back against people. He suffered, and he didn't threaten them.

When he went up on that cross, he said, you guys just wait and see what's going to happen to you. He didn't do that. He says, he committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. Third thing, the deliverance.

Deliverance of long suffering. How do we get deliverance? First of all, the deliverance of salvation. 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 9 says this, The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

[23 : 10] God's desire is for every lost person to repent and receive Christ. He is long suffering. How many of you have sinned this last week?

Even you're, you're saved, but you've sinned this last week. Notice nobody's going to go, me, me, me, me, me, me, me. Don't tell anybody, but me. Okay? And what was the reaction?

Did you all of a sudden, God said, Margie's in, poof, Margie's gone. He said, oh, look, Fred's in, poof, Fred's gone.

No, he doesn't do that, does he? He says he's long suffering. He wants us to repent. He wants us to come back to him. He wants us to follow him.

1 Timothy 1.16. 1 Timothy 1.16. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering.

[24 : 14] For in a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. God uses us to show others. See, God is long suffering. We mess up. We sin.

We do things wrong. But he says, he's used us as a pattern to show people that God is long suffering. God is not up there waiting, just waiting to throw lightning bolts.

He's not up there just waiting, oh, Earl over here. I'm waiting. I'm ready to get him. No. He says, he's long suffering.

So, through our salvation, the fact that Christ came and died for us and he gives us time. Some people hear the gospel again and again and again and again and then they get saved.

God is long suffering. Here you go. You have one shot at this. If you don't do it right, that's it. He didn't do that. He's long suffering. Second thing, the deliverance of the second coming.

[25 : 24] The deliverance of the second coming. He reminds us. He is coming again. I was at a Bible study the other night we were talking about this. He reminds us. James chapter 5, verse 8.

Be ye also patient. Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Jesus is coming again and he's giving us time to be saved.

He's giving people time to do the work he's called them to do. He's giving people, he's long suffering with us. Second Peter, chapter 3, verse 13, it says this. Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace without spot and blameless.

You know he's coming. So if you know he's coming, get yourself prepared. Be ready. Be spotless. Be blameless. Be living according to the way he wants to. Verse 13. And according that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you.

[26 : 39] And account that the long suffering of the Lord is salvation. Oh, so if I just keep waiting and waiting and waiting, I'll get it someday. No. That means he's giving you time to get it.

He's giving you time to make that decision for Christ. He's giving you time to be able to come to him and say, Lord, I'm a sinner in need of a Savior.

I need you. He's giving us time to come to him. See, we can face a lot of challenges on a daily basis. A lot of things happen, but the Holy Spirit has the power to give us patience as we go through each thing.

The long suffering of God comes in, and because of that long suffering, we're able to persevere through everything that comes in our way, and God is able to help us.

We can have a godly influence on our families and our friends. We can have deliverance through salvation. We can have deliverance through remembering that God is coming again. Jesus is going to come back.

[27 : 48] Are we long suffering? Are we patient? It says, one of the characteristics of God, therefore, one of the characteristics of Christians who have God living within them should be patient.

Are you patient? Are you looking for God to come again? And he said, look, God is coming back. And if God is coming back, he wants us to remember that.

He says, look, God is going to come again, and go to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. 1 Corinthians chapter 11. And 1 Corinthians chapter 11, beginning of verse 23.

For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread. And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, take eat, this is my body which is broken unto you.

Do this in remembrance of me. In the same manner also he took the cup. When he had stopped saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood. This do ye as often as ye drink it in remembrance of me.

[28 : 59] For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. He says, look, I want you to remember I am coming again. I want you to remember what I did for you.

I want you to remember the long suffering that I went through for you. I want you to remember the long suffering that I have now for you. I'm not just writing you off, I'm waiting for you to be saved.

Are you ready for it? I don't know if there's anyone here this morning that does not know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, but it's not. What are you waiting for? what are you waiting for?

Allow God to come and do a work in your life. Allow God to come in and save you and prepare you for all eternity. Are you ready for him? Those of you that are safe, he says here, examine yourselves.

[30 : 07] Make sure you're living the way God wants you to. Examine yourselves. Make sure that you understand that God is long suffering. He says, you've messed up, you've sinned, you've done all these things.

Even as a Christian you've done all these things. He says, you know what? I'm willing to forgive. I'm willing to allow myself to forgive you for everything that you've done.

So are you ready for all of that? We're going to take a few minutes, we're going to have communion, so we're going to take a minute or two and examine ourselves. We're going to look at ourselves. We're going to say, God, am I living the way you want me to?

God, am I long suffering? Am I patient? Am I an example to the people around me of what you want us to be? God, work in our life.

So take a few minutes right now to examine yourself. what do you Thank you.

[31 : 42] Thank you.

Thank you. Amen.

Amen. Father, I pray that we might be a clean people in front of you. Lord, as we come to this time, we've examined ourselves. We've asked for forgiveness of sin.

Lord, we come before you with pure hearts. Lord, I pray that you would help us as we take this bread. It reminds us of the body that was broken for us.

Lord, you went through so much for us. You gave of yourself so that we would not have to face these things. Lord, help us to be thankful.

[33 : 02] Help us to be grateful. Help us to understand what great lengths you went to to show us long-suffering, patience with us, that we might be saved.

Lord, and I pray again, if there's anyone here that is not saved, Lord, may today be the day of salvation. May today be the day they come to know you. Lord, those of us who are saved again, may it be a matter of, are we clean?

Have we come to you confessing our sins? Asking for your forgiveness. Lord, just bless this time we have together right now. May it be a time, as your word says, a time of remembrance.

Lord, may we remember with a great God who gave himself for us. Thank you. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[34 : 09] Amen.

Amen. Amen.

As I read there just a second ago. And when you had given thanks, he break it and said, Take, eat. This is my body, which is broken for you.

This do in remembrance of me. Amen. And Jared, you want to give thanks for the blood?

Amen. I have been father. We thank you. Work at the time. You give a moment. To remember.

[36 : 33] To remember that the blood that you shed for us. Amen. Lord, we thank you because of that blood.

We have to do this. We have that bond. In the Lord Jesus Christ. So we deserve that blood. We can have a new life.

Lord, it's not just that you're a perfect God. That's given up. Not just your ability to know you. Especially in your soul and sanity.

So there may be some of you in that. That don't know your blood. So they don't remember. They can't remember. It's just a man. So I would say that today.

They would be that day. That they would realize. The bond that they can have. And Jesus Christ. Because of your blood. And you say. For them. And now they're you. That you do remember.

[37 : 35] And you know. Your blood. And you said for us. Thank you. Amen. And you just be reminded. Thank you.

for it's been our lives, and we remember when we have been for that. So now and for you. So, Lord, let us thank you. Thank you so much.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[39 : 33] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.