Fruit of the Spirit

Lesson 4: Wednesday April 9th, 2022

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**TEACHING NOTES**

**Fruit of the Spirit: Patience**

## Introduction

Good evening church. It is with great pleasure that I get to bring you the Word tonight.

Please pray with me before we get into our lesson.

Tonight, I get to teach on the Fruit of the Spirit, patience.

It’s fitting that I am assigned this task as I, I assume like many, struggle profoundly with patience. And how sweet it is that the Spirit’s work in our life is the means for Him to greatly increase our own practice of patience.

The great Charles Spurgeon said, “Between here and heaven we have no guarantee that the road will be easy, or that the sea will be smooth sailing. We have no promise that we will be kept, like flowers in a greenhouse, safe from the breath of frost, or that we will be veiled from the heat of the sun.

The voice of wisdom says, “Be patient, be patient, be patient; be ready for the trials that will come.”

As we dig in, I aim to show us the following:

1. What is patience? What is long-suffering?
2. Why is patience important?
3. What is the impact of God’s long-suffering toward the reprobate? & What is the impact of God’s long-suffering toward the elect?
4. How was Christ patient in his earthly ministry?
5. How then do we reflect Christ in our patience?

## What is patience? What is long-suffering?

Turn with me to Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

The various characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit are not burdensome laws that aims to accuse and condemn us. No, instead they are found in the Spirit of God. The Spirit leads us in His fruit. The works of the flesh, as we know, are bound to the law. We fail at law-keeping all the time. We possess no merit in our own filthy and flesh ridden work. Rather, the fruit of the Spirit are of a different essence altogether. They are shared from God’s good nature and pleasure to sinful Men, in order to assist us in devotion to Himself and others.

This is at the core of the definition of patience. Patience is ultimately for God’s glory. All things on Heaven and on Earth aim to show God’s manifold perfections. Patience is no different. Patience shall be prominent in our conduct as Christians, not only because the Word states this clearly, but because of the many reasons by which God aims to use patience in our lives.

Look with me now at the definition of patience from Webster’s 1828 dictionary:

PATIENCE, n.

1.  The suffering of afflictions, pain, toil, calamity, provocation or other evil, with a calm, unruffled temper; endurance without murmuring or fretfulness.  Patience may spring from constitutional fortitude, from a kind of heroic pride, or from Christian submission to the divine will.

2.  A calm temper which bears evils without murmuring or discontent.

3.  The act or quality of waiting long for justice or expected good without discontent.

4.  Perseverance; constancy in labor or exertion.

5.  The quality of bearing offenses and injuries without anger or revenge.

In the Galatians passage the ESV renders the word as patience, but another word can be used synonymously. That word is long-suffering. Indeed, the KJV and a few other translations use this word. I believe the word long-suffering is helpful, if not more clear, as we delve into the importance of patience. It conveys a reality about God that is crucial in our understanding of patience.

We see God’s long-suffering in Exodus 34:6-7a KJV

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, **longsuffering**, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty

While I plan to touch on this more fully later in this teaching, I want to look at it briefly now. God bears with man in our sin. He *is* long suffering, meaning – in the midst of our sinfulness or iniquity He endures it for a specific time for specific purposes with much restraint.

As a parent, I know this challenge well. Parents are constantly being tested to show self-restraint in the face of frustrating circumstances. The very idea behind raising children is the truth that our children are immature, they’re not disciplined and mature. They need us to work with them and lead them. However, all too often, we put our selfish desires before our noble task of parenting, leading, and caring for our children. As my children can attest, I don’t always show great self-restraint. However, as parents, we often know that to show little self-restraint will always make the situation more difficult.

Again, Spurgeon says: “The mute Christian under the afflicting rod is not your everyday person. We kick like an oxen which feels the goad for the first time; we are, most of us, for years like a young bull unaccustomed to the yoke. “Be patient, be patient, be patient,” is the lesson that needs to repeated to our hearts many times, even as we have to teach children over and over again the very same words, until they know them by heart. It is the Holy Spirit, ever patient at our frustrations, who calls us to be “patient.” It is Jesus, the unmurmuring sacrifice, who charges us to, “be patient.” It is the tolerant and forgiving Father who commands us to “be patient.” Oh, you who are soon to be in heaven, be patient for just a little while longer and your reward will be revealed!”

When we think about patience, or long-suffering as applied to God, we start to see the beauty of this fruit. All throughout the redemptive narrative in scripture, God has *endured* with much patience. We see this explicitly taught by the Apostle Paul in Romans 9:22-24.

What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory-

even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?

God is bearing with creation. He is bearing with the reprobate and the elect. He is long-suffering toward them. Later we will see the significance of this and the importance of this. For now, let’s move on to our next point.

## Why is patience important?

We’ve defined patience and long-suffering. But why is this an important part of the fruit of the Spirit?

The importance of patience cannot be understated. Firstly, and primarily from a Biblical point of view, but secondarily from an application point of view. God’s purpose for His saints to exercise patience is to embody radical Christ-centeredness in the midst of harsh or difficult circumstances.

Look with me at James 5:10-11

As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

There is much to be mined out of this passage. First, let us consider the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. According to theologian John Gil, the Old Testament Prophets “were sent forth by him (God), and prophesied in his name what were made known unto them; and yet, though these were his favourites, they suffered much; as cruel mockings, scourgings, imprisonment, famine, nakedness, and death in various shapes; some being stoned, others sawn asunder (apart), and others killed by the sword; all which they endured with incredible patience.”

The wicked Jezebel killed prophets of the Lord as detailed in 1 Kings 18:13.

In Jeremiah 20:2, we see the Prophet beaten by a wicked priest of Israel who opposed his prophesy: Jer 20:2 Then Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD.

The book of Nehemiah details the death of many prophets: Neh 9:26 “Nevertheless, they were disobedient and rebelled against you and cast your law behind their back and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies.

The New Testament confirms the slaughter of the Prophets of Old: Matt 23:37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!

Again in Luke 11:47: Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. Luke 11:48 So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs.

Surely the calling and appointment of the Prophets would mean much endurance of evil. And yet, they did so with patience and long-suffering. But James doesn’t stop with them, he points us toward Job. The infirmities of Job are truly beyond our comprehension. Let us look to scripture to see what he endured:

Job 1:13-22

Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and there came a messenger to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, “The Chaldeans formed three groups and made a raid on the camels and took them and struck down the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

While he was yet speaking, there came another and said, “Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house, and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

See the restraint in Job. This man lost it all. And what does he do? He worships the Lord. Amazing. Throughout the book of Job, we see him patiently endure with long-suffering. Job wasn’t perfect, at times he was impatient with his friends and with the Lord.

John Calvin says of this, “If, however, it be asked, Why does the Apostle (James) so much commend the patience of Job, as he had displayed many signs of impatience, being carried away by a hasty spirit? To this I reply, that though he sometimes failed through the infirmity of the flesh, or murmured within himself, **yet he ever surrendered himself to God, and was ever willing to be restrained and ruled by him**. Though, then, his patience was somewhat deficient, it is yet deservedly commended.”

Job was greatly tested. He was tested in his wealth and assets, he was tested in extreme familial suffering and trial, he suffered personal affliction and he suffered mental distress. However, in all of this, Job endured to the end. He stuck it out. He didn’t give up. He would go on to say, “I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know...Now my eyes see you, therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”

Job persevered. He was patient.

Look with me at the verses preceding our James passage:

Jas 5:7-9 Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door.

The subheading of this section is titled “Why is patience important?” And while I believe you’ve picked up the meaning behind why patience or long-suffering is important given what I’ve already taught on, let me draw your attention to a few key points.

Long suffering implies suffering. To be patient and to endure means that you’re persisting through a trial of some sort. As Christians when we encounter or consider suffering, we should ask a vital question: What is the purpose of suffering?

John Piper says, “The universe, everything that is outside God, exists to display the glory of the grace of God in the sufferings of Christ in the place of sinners. That’s the reason everything exists: to display the glory of the grace of God, which reaches its apex in the sufferings of Christ for sinners.”

The implications of this are massive in magnitude.

Piper goes on, “The aim of the universe necessitates that there’d be suffering, so that the Son of God can suffer for sinners and thus display the greatness of the glory of the grace of God. To put it very starkly, the ultimate reason that suffering exists is so that Christ might suffer for sinners and thus display the magnificence of the grace of God. In conceiving of the universe that he would create in which to display the glory of his grace, he did not choose plan B. He chose plan A, and plan A was Good Friday.”

Church. These truths are weighty, and iron wrought with Biblical foundations.

The purpose that suffering exists. The purpose of your suffering. The purpose of it RIGHT NOW is to display something. It’s to display the greatness of the glory of the grace of God. There is a crimson river that runs through all of the suffering of God’s elect. The source of that river are the veins of the son of God.

Patience seeks to show that we are in submission to God’s will for our lives. We TRUST Him. When things are bleak, when we cannot fathom that our suffering can possibly bring God glory, we are to continually endure for a period of time. We are to long-suffer, to be patient. For even though the afflictions we presently experience are difficult, they pale in comparison to our eternal home. To when we will be with the Father, with the Spirit, and with Christ. To when we will be in eternal worship of the Lamb who was slain.

Let me encourage you with some Biblical nourishment.

1Pet 1:6-9 In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith-more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire-may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1Pet 5:10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

Rom 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Long-suffering is important because it brings glory to God. Our aim as Christians is to bring glory to God in all things. God decreed that sin would exist. God decreed that we would walk through excruciating trials. He did this so that Christ would be sent as a propitiation for our sin. He did this to show His majesty. He did this to make His name great among the nations. When you suffer, and you will, endure it with long-suffering so that you may KNOW that God so loved you that He sent His Son to be the spotless lamb for your salvation. Consider the patience of God and of Christ Jesus in the flesh during His suffering and let it be an anchor for you to suffer well.

Let us look to the gospel reality of such things.

This is why patience is so important. It speaks volumes about the God we serve. It speaks volumes about His sacrificing of His only begotten son for us. For us? For lowly, and broken sinners! Amen.

## What is the impact of God’s long-suffering toward the reprobate? & What is the impact of God’s long-suffering toward the elect?

First, let us consider God’s long-suffering toward the reprobate. The reprobate are those whom God will not save. They are what Paul calls in Romans 9, vessels prepared for destruction.

We know from history, and from our contemporary perspective that the world is lost. It has been plunged into sickness and sin. Suffering abounds. Wickedness abounds. From wars to famines, there is no shortage of maladies to go around.

Is God merely a God that spins up the world and walks away, giving His creation some form of free will, allowing them to do whatever they wish? Or, has God decreed that this would come to pass for specific reasons? Obviously, we confess the latter as true.

God is not off the throne. He is not dismayed by the events of the world. God’s response toward the wicked is for a specific reason.

It is true that God shows the reprobate a type of temporal kindness. Scripture says: Matt 5:45b “For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

However, there is a specific reason that He is enduring the vessels of destruction. What is that reason?

That brings us to the next point: What is the impact of God’s long-suffering toward the elect? These two questions can’t be answered apart from one another.

Let us look to a few places in scripture.

2 Peter 3:8-9 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 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.

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?

God is meticulously savings His elect throughout the corridor of time. During that period, He is patient toward those who spurn & hate Him. He endures the reprobate so that He would gather all whom He will save to Himself.

Again, in Romans 8:18-25 Paul echoes these truths.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The creation was subjected to futility, meaning that sin would reign in this world. But look who subjected the creation, it was God. Remember what I’ve been teaching tonight, none of the sufferings that you or I experience is an afterthought to God. Rather, He is subjecting us to these present sufferings for specific reasons.

Now, it is crucial that I draw out a point here about the reprobate. While men and women have breath, they are within the reach of Christ’s blood. We confess the doctrinal truth that their election must be planned and secured in God, but Church – we don’t know the hidden will of God in these things. We don’t know who is or is not reprobate. History is littered with God hating idolaters who by grace through faith turned from their sins unto Christ. I say this so that you would continue to pray for those who have breath and life, that the Lord would save them and draw them.

## How was Christ patient in His earthly ministry?

I want to turn our attention now to Jesus Christ. I want to ask a fundamental question: How was Christ patient in His earthly ministry?

Since Christ is God incarnate, it follows that He is patient. Indeed, He would have done so with perfection. Turn with me to 1st Timothy 1:12-17. Here Paul is recounting His conversion.

1 Timothy 1:12-17 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

This, fundamentally, is the story for all who are in Christ. What does it mean for Jesus to display his perfect patience? Simply put, Jesus is patient toward His elect, His sheep. For those who *will* love God, there is a day of conversion. But the ways leading to this cataclysmic event are filled with much hatred and sin. Jesus is patient to wait for us.

Just as Paul was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent, we are as well. We spurn God. We sow seeds of bitterness and arrogance. How wonderful is it that Jesus is waiting on His elect sheep?

1Pet 2:24-25 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Not only does Jesus have patience toward the elect for their day of salvation. He also has patience toward us while we journey to glory.

Before we move on to application. I want to read a portion of scripture that perfectly illustrates Christ’s long-suffering with his elect. Let us look no further than the Apostle Peter.

This is the night when Peter denied Jesus:

Luke 22:54-62 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. 56 Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, “This man also was with him.” 57 But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know him.” 58 And a little later someone else saw him and said, “You also are one of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not.” 59 And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, “Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean.” 60 But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.” 62 And he went out and wept bitterly.

And this was the day when Jesus revealed his patience with Peter:

John 21:15-17 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” 16 He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” 17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.

Do we not see a beautiful picture of Christ’s perfect patience toward His beloved Apostle? Church, if you are in Christ, His love for you is no less than this. Let this example fill your heart with gratitude for Christ and His affection toward you.

Finally, I’d like to consider our last question.

## How then do we reflect Christ in our patience?

In this portion of teaching, I’d like us to focus on some application. We’ve talked a lot about patience. But I haven’t spoken about how we’re to practice patience.

Look with me at the following Proverbs:

Proverbs 15:18 ​​​​​​​​A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, ​​​​​​​but he who is slow to anger quiets contention. ​​​

Proverbs 14:29 ​​​​​​​​Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding, ​​​​​​​but he who has a hasty temper exalts folly. ​​​

Have you ever been in situations where you failed to watch over yourself and allowed yourself to bring vent to your anger? I find it helpful to meditate on these situations after the fact in order to understand our hearts desires. Sinful anger reveals a heart that is fundamentally not resting in the sufficiency of Christ.

We must ask ourselves: What is causing my lack of patience in this circumstance? And more fundamentally, what am I idolizing before God? What does my heart desire above Him?

If your children are not doing what you want, if your spouse is upsetting you, if your employer isn’t doing what you want, if you’re experiencing pain, if you’re dealing with the consequences of your own poor stewardship, then ask yourself why these circumstances would allow you to sin? Often times we pursue sinful anger instead of long-suffering because we idolize comfort and ease. We state in our inner dialog, “How dare they do this or that, don’t they realize how this inconveniences me!?” Often – the “they” in these thoughts are pointed to God. We may think, “Doesn’t God realize that this isn’t good for me!?” Sin always betrays our heart.

Unfortunately, the heart that rejects patience is a heart fundamentally of selfish desire, of pride and of idolatry. Every spiritual fruit should be as convicting as it is glorious when we consider what our lack of fruit says about our love and devotion for God.

Instead, when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances, let us instead patiently praise God! Why?

Jas 1:2-3 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

God is working in your trials. He is teaching you to rely more on Him and not the world. Often times when we’re in these trials, a simple prayer can go a long way to help us step back from the precipice of sin.

Let us look to another proverb:

Proverbs 25:15 ​​​​​​​​With patience a ruler may be persuaded, ​​​​​​​and a soft tongue will break a bone. ​​​

So often scripture encourages us to bridle our tongue. James speaks to this well.

Jas 3:4-6 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. ​​​​​​​​​​​How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!​ And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell.

Brother and sister, when you’re speaking to another person, an authority, a peer, an elder, a family member, or a spouse, take care to heed James’ words in Ch 1:19-20: Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

God is surely testing you in those moments. Be quick to slow down and to be patient with the situation. I am reminded of a situation recently where I was in the car with my kids. We were jamming out to Citizens, listening to Kids of Grace. I rolled through a stop sign and got pulled over. I was very patient, well spoken, agreeable and kind to the policeman. I didn’t hate him or give him grief. I instructed my children to be respectful as well. I exercised patience in that situation. Not only was my conduct reflective of the work of God within me, but it communicated to my children an example of being content in what God gives us (circumstantially pleasant or not). To my surprise, a year later – after checking the traffic website, the policeman never turned the ticket in. Apparently, I never got the ticket. Perhaps my good conduct persuaded the authority in this situation to toss the ticket. I will never know. However, it shows me how when we walk with the Spirit, God is greatly magnified in our conduct. Our testimony is magnified. And our own contentedness is magnified in our Lord. Longsuffering doesn’t always produce favor with the world but it honors God and that’s our aim.

Finally, turn with me to Mathew 24:9-14 “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. **But the one who endures to the end will be saved.** And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Those of us who follow Jesus will have trials and tribulation. There is no doubt. You all know this because you walk these fiery paths. There is much upheaval in our world today. Perhaps it’s no different than what we’ve seen before. Perhaps we just are more ‘in tune’ to the iniquity of the world because of a 24/7 global news cycle. Regardless, we see sin up front and personal in our day and age. Like Spurgeon said that the beginning of my lesson: We have no guarantee that the road will be easy, or that the sea will be smooth sailing.

When those trials come, let us endure them with patience. Have you lost your job because you didn’t get a vaccine? Endure with patience. Have you been canceled by your family because you reject LGBT sinful ideology? Endure with patience. Have you been mocked for your steadfast faithfulness to Christ? Endure with patience.

Our endurance, as Christ says, is evidence of one who will endure to the end. How sweet it will be when our long-suffering comes to an end, and we see Him face to face.

## Conclusion

In closing - we must confess the following passage as our fundamental truth.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

In all that we do, let us trust in the Lord with all our heart. Pray to the Spirit to give you patience. Pray that God would embolden you when the day of trial is at your doorstep. I know many of you have walked and are walking in difficult trials. In the midst of these difficulties, see that it is actually God’s love for you, for He is refining you in the fire of affliction.

God is so good church.

Let’s pray.