

Fruit of Patience  
(2-21-2010)  
2Pt.3:8-15

We started some weeks ago looking at the facts of our salvation. When someone comes to the Lord in submission to the gospel message, God works in them such marvelous and wonderful things. He takes away sin. He makes them a child of His. He makes them citizens of His Kingdom. There is literally dozens of things that are the direct result of God's hand upon us. The greatest of these works that He accomplishes in humanity is the transformation at the inner level of our being. He places within each of us a portion of His Spirit: The re-birthing into the divine family. (Jn.1:13, 3:5-8; 1Pt.1:23; 1Jn.3:9-10)

That Spirit within us is the mark of our having been purchased or redeemed by Him. (2Cor.1:22, 5:5; Eph.1:13-14) Imbedded within that Spirit is the nature code of the Almighty. Paul in Gal 5:22-23 speaks of these as the "fruit of the Spirit." They are in truth the very attributes of the Jehovah God to whom we give praise and glory. Each of these traits is found in their fullness in Jesus because the Father was pleased to give Himself fully to His Son. (Col.1:19) We are to be like our older brother in that we have an obligation, not to the flesh but to the Spirit. (Rm.8:12-17) As Jesus grew we too are given charge to grow and labor toward maturity as well. (1Pt.2:2-3)

Love is the greatest quality of God. It is in us and is the attribute that brings the greatest glory to God; that is when we walk in demonstration of it. Joy is equal to Love in that it demonstrates our reception of the gospel message in a perceptible way; the twinkle in our eye. Peace is that

tremendous calming of our inner being; a quiet that speaks loudly in all of our affairs, even in extreme hardships.

The next attribute or fruit of the Spirit to be looked at is 'Patience'. This is one of those qualities that the world has little of. (Case in point: microwaves, modular homes, TV dinners, fast food, instant potatoes.) From scripture we find strong reason to accept patience as a required part of our new nature. In 2Cor.6:3-10 Paul shows its place in the lives of God's servants. In 2Tim.3:10-12 Paul indicates the common knowledge of such qualities being practiced. Paul gives strong charge to the Churches to use this facet of God's Spirit with purpose and diligence. (Eph 4:1-5; Col 1:9-14) Patience must be found in the redeemed. (Heb 6:9-12) Patience is expected in increasing measure in God's children.

As a preacher and you as teachers and deacons and elders and all the rest of you as fellow servants of the word, soldiers of the cross, it is commanded of us to practice what God demonstrates. (2Tim.4:1-3; James 5:9-11) Patience as a quality, if we are to gain some understanding, can best be viewed by looking at those who possessed and practiced it. As we do this, look for the *substance of patience*; that which *fuels it*. 2Pt.3:1-18 (9, 15) gives insight into this *fuel*. The desire of God's heart compels His patience! This same desire was demonstrated toward Paul. (1Tim.1:16) This same quality of God's being is made clearer in Rm.2:1-11 (4); 9:22-24 and in 1Pt.3:20. God shows us that *the fuel* of His patience is the intensity of His love toward both the redeemed and lost. He gives each of us a measure of this attribute of himself and calls for each of us to exercise it. The driving force of our patience should also be the same force that powers God's patience towards us – Love. What kind of mileage is your fuel getting?