**PP Love Is…**

**Part 2-*Love is Patient*, 1 Corinthians 13:4a 9/14-15/2024**

I was 12 years old in 1979, and I loved watching the hit TV series, Happy Days

In one episode, Potsie was about to quit school convinced he couldn’t pass the anatomy final

At the Fonz’s suggestion, Potsie wrote a song called *Pump Your Blood*, which helped him

memorize the information on the body’s circulation system

I only clearly recall one other Happy Days episode-*Fonzie Jumps the Shark*-but I remember

*Pump Your Blood*, although it never did help me pass college anatomy!

Songs can powerfully get information into our minds often with feelings and passions

You can hear a song from decades ago and an emotional memory can come right back to mind

1 Corinthians 13 is, quite likely, a song, and one that powerfully teaches the nature of love

But, notice with me that here didn’t list the virtues of compassion, or mercy, or tenderness,

or even a forgiving heart, all of which we associate with love

This is a list of the virtues of love that Corinth lacked, not all the virtues of love there are

What characteristics of love do we lack in our church, and do each of us lack personally?

Well, the virtue most lacking at Corinth, that impacted all the others, was patience

In other words, today we are going to look at agape love that shows itself in patience

**PP Read 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:8a**

**PP 1-What is patience?**

Christians often say they won’t pray for patience because then they’ll get stuck in traffic jams,

slow checkout lines, and bombarded by difficult people at work and home

*First*, God isn’t waiting for you to ask for patience before He begins to help you grow in it

It’s not as if He wasn’t noticing, to ask is to partner with what He is already determined to do

*Second*, God is your Heavenly Father, and He will never allow into your life anything that will

not bring about your highest good, no difficulty but that which is needed

*Third*, to avoid praying for patience is to set it aside as if you can compartmentalize it

All of these virtues are demonstrations of love; to pray for patience is to pray that you will love

God has already poured out His love in our hearts, the Holy Spirit is working deeply in us so that

God’s love will powerfully demonstrate itself in these virtues

***‘Love’*** is the ***‘still more excellent way’*** of 12:31, and it is the Greek word *Agape*

**PP** Agape love is God’s love that He showed by God sending His Son into the world; It is love

that reaches out to those who do not deserve it, sacrificing itself for others

It is a love that only God possesses and He gives it to His children

**PP *“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born***

***of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God***

***is love.”* 1 John 4:7-8**

**PP** ***‘Love is patient’***

There are two words for ***‘patience’*** in the Greek New Testament

One means to *remain under*, to stand up under difficult circumstances without quitting

**James 5:11** refers to the ***steadfastness of Job***, he stood up under severe circumstances, patience

But here, **PP** ***‘patience’*** is the Greek word, makrothuméō: *makros* (long) and *thumos* (anger)

**PP** Here, ***‘patience’*** is not standing up under difficult circumstances, but *difficult people*

It is love that is willing and able to suffer for a long time with difficult without anger

Patience enables you to not be easily annoyed, able to delay a response until you can discern

what is best for that person

It is the power of restraint, emotions kept in check

It is slow to take offense with no desire to retaliate, able to bear difficult people without

complaint, slander or gossip

But we need to go a bit deeper to really grasp how great a love is demonstrated in patience

**PP 2-The motivation behind patience**

In Paul’s day, patience was absolutely NOT a virtue and in fact, if you were self-sacrificing and

non avenging, you were considered a weak, unworthy person

Aristotle taught that one of the highest Greek virtues was a refusal to tolerate insult or injury and

to retaliate and get vengeance

In the sports world, teammates are expected to retaliate, pitchers are expected to hit the batter

John Wick kills thousands of gangsters because his dog was killed and car stolen

The world makes heroes of those who fight back standing up for their welfare and rights

How different is God’s way, for it is the patient, the long-suffering who do not retaliate, who do

not defend their rights that are honored above others

Some here are already in full blown disagreement: *No way, not me, I fight and defend my rights!*

Biblical patience refuses vengeance and retaliation and it has the power to wait…why?

It’s been said, **PP** *patience has a long fuse and a short memory* but what’s the goal of patience?

A patient Christian is slow to become angry and gives people time to grow

**PP** If you want a description for a patient person, it is someone who can wait in faith

One of the clearest verses on this is **PP *“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.”* 2 Peter 3:9**

God’s patience moves Him to delay our punishment for our sins, slowing down judgment and

giving us time to repent so He can forgive

You see, to suffer long with difficult people, is to have a love that enables you to see them the

way God sees them, as people under construction and in need of grace

Patience waits for a godly outcome, gives time for God to work in that difficult person, and you

Now, think on this with me: Impatient people won’t suffer long, won’t wait, and really it’s

because they won’t wait on God

To not suffer long with people, to not be patient with people, is to doubt that God will or can

change that person, so it’s up to you with your anger and revenge to do His work

God is too slow, if He even does anything, so I erupt in frustration, I get angry, and I make that

person pay and learn their lesson

Impatience is a judgment on God, and it destroys relationship and community: impatience gives

up on people and breaks the relationship, and if frustrated at a church, leaves

A lack of love demonstrating itself in patience is one of the chief reasons people leave a church

And all the while is this truth: You don’t see that your sins are as serious as that difficult person’s That oh so familiar compass needle is stuck on you…*homo curvatus in se*

No one treated President Abraham Lincoln with more contempt than his secretary of war, Edwin

Stanton, who publicly called him a *‘low cunning clown’*, and *‘the original gorilla’*

Despite this, Lincoln said nothing and gave Stanton that position because he was best qualified

for the job and he showed him every courtesy

The years went until that terrible night of Lincoln’s assassinated and Stanton stood looking down

on Lincoln’s lifeless face and in tears said, *‘There lies the greatest ruler of men*

*the world has ever seen.’*

Patient love can conquer an and that is what leads us toward the gospel solution: **3-How can we**

**become more patient?**

I love a good watermelon, but growing up, my older brothers told me, *‘don’t swallow the seeds*

*or you’ll get a watermelon growing in your guts, and you’ll explode and blow chunks!’*

I was terrified of swallowing a seed, but I inevitably did and immediately I could feel stomach

pain as I imagined swelling up, bursting, and splattering my guts all over the place

But melons don’t grow in stomachs, they grow in dirt where they can get the nutrients they need

Similarly, human effort is not enough to grow patience, the Holy Spirit must produce it in us

Jesus tells us how: **PP *“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in***

***him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”* John 15:5**

An apple grows as the roots of a tree travel fruit-growing sap through the branches to the buds

The fruit of patience grows in the same way as we walk with Christ and the Spirit produces it

White-knuckling won’t work, and neither can you fake it ‘til you make it

God’s working deeply in our hearts, by His powerful Word, and when you delight in that word,

fixing eyes of faith on Jesus, you’ll be like a tree yielding its fruit in every right moment

*I’m an angry, impatient person, I have to find a way to control this!*

God's not teaching you how to control your anger, He is going to the source of it, and unleashing

His love in your heart, and some of the fruit you will bear will be patience!

Let me say it like this: **PP** God is not telling you to try harder to be patient, He is promising

to give you the desire to love, patience will be a way that love shows itself through you

Patience is not the desperate effort to bite your tongue, unclench your fist, it is the joyful

submission to Christ for the good of that person, trusting that the outcome will be good

Paul taught Timothy the secret of growing in patience, and here it is:

**PP *“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.”* 1 Timothy 1:16**

Paul wouldn’t have sat here today thinking of someone who really needs to hear this message

No, he would be thinking of himself, for he kept top of mind that he was a terrible sinner, and

Jesus had waited patiently for him to repent, showing him mercy upon mercy

If you are impatient, quick to judge others, listen carefully, you have forgotten this truth

If you desire love to demonstrate itself in patience, then this is where you must go

You, just like me, have rebelled against God in sin more ways that you could ever count

Yet He delayed punishment, was slow to judge you, instead giving you time to repent

He was long-suffering toward you, and He still is as you blow it day after day

Until that truth grips your soul and moves you to joy and wonder in Jesus, you cannot have love

overflowing your life with patience toward difficult people

If you lack patience, come to Him and ask for it, look to Him in His example, and you will find

that slowly, bit by bit, and you likely won’t notice it until later, you are growing in love

that is demonstrating itself like never before in patience

Pray