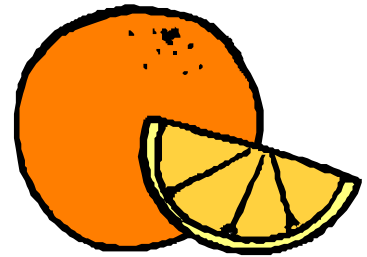


Spirit Fruit

Galatians 5 v 22 - 23



1 fruit 9 segments

4. Patience

1. Patience in the New Testament

The word patient/patience/patiently is found mainly in the New testament where there are two words used.

In Galatians, Patience is Makrothumia which refers to our response to people. It identifies such qualities as self-restraint, longsuffering and forbearance.

Self-restraint: before it gives room to action or passion.

Longsuffering: the person who has power to avenge himself, yet refrains from the exercise of this power.

Forbearance: refraining from hasty anger or punishment.

Some of the scriptures that show this quality...

- Romans 2 v 1 – 4 a quality of grace
- 1 Corinthians 13 v 4 a quality of love
- Ephesians 4 v 1 – 2 a quality of our calling
- Colossians 1 v 9 – 12 (11) a quality of God's power in our lives
- Colossians 3 v 12 – 13 a quality of God's chosen people
- 1 Timothy 1 v 15 – 16 a quality to display as an example
- 2 Timothy 4 v 2 a quality to pass on to others
- Hebrews 6 v 12 a quality necessary to inherit the promise
- 2 Peter 3v 9 / 15 a quality seen in the grace of God

The other word translated Patience is hupomone which means to abide under, patience and endurance. It speaks of our response to the things around us. It is the God-given ability not to surrender to things or circumstances or to fall under

trials. Where Makrothumia refers to people, Hupomone refers to things or circumstances.

- Romans 5 v 3, 4 patience is a building block
- Romans 8 v 25 linked with hope
- Romans 15 v 4 linked with encouragement
- Romans 15 v 5 linked with unity
- 2 Corinthians 12 v 12 linked with ministry
- 1 Thessalonians 1 v 3 linked with hope
- 2 Thessalonians 1 v 4 linked with the local church
- 1 Timothy 6 v 11 linked with our spiritual walk
- Hebrews 6 v 12 linked with faith and inheritance
- Hebrews 10 v 36 linked with the will of God
- Hebrews 12 v 1 linked with vision
- Revelation 1 v 9 linked with the Christian life
- Revelation 2 v 2/3 linked with hardship
- Revelation 3 v 10 linked with the church at Philadelphia
- Revelation 14 v 12 linked with the end times

There are some instances where the two words work together people/circumstances

- 2 Corinthians 6 v 4/6
- 2 Timothy 3 v 10
- Colossians 1 v 11
- James 5 v 10 – 11
-

2. Patience is seen in the hand of God

In his book Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem speaks of the patience of God in this way...

'God's mercy, patience and grace may be seen as three separate attributes or as specific aspects of God's goodness...'

*God's mercy means God's goodness toward those in misery and distress
God's grace means God's goodness toward those who deserve only
punishment*

*God's patience means God's goodness in withholding of punishment toward
those who sin over a period of time'*

Grudem points out that these 3 qualities of God are sometimes used together, such as found in Psalm 103 v 8¹

God's patience, as described in the bible is Makrothumia, relating to patience with people. God's patience is always toward people not circumstances because there are no circumstances which directly affect God, except those which affect people. His patience (like ours ought to be) comes from His love which is available to all and his forgiveness, offered to the whosoever.

God's patience was displayed in a wonderful way to His people in the Old Testament (Exodus 34 v 6)

It is the same display of patience which we see in the Old Testament that is continued on into the New Testament.

In Romans 9 v 22 Paul is addressing the rejection of God by His own people, Israel. Paul is so devastated by Israel turning their back on God that he wishes himself to be delivered over to the anger of God on their behalf (Romans 9 v 3). This verse has two effects...

1. It shows that Paul has not given up on the Jews in favour of the Gentiles
2. It shows the total commitment of Paul and the willingness to give up his own life on behalf of others.

Paul's concern for the Jews continues in verse 4 when he uses the phrase 'the people of Israel' which is literally 'Israelites', Gods chosen people. Paul rarely uses this phrase and when he does, he is referring to the special relationship between God and the Jews.

Israel was rebellious and Paul was willing to take their place, but it was Israel who stood accused of the problem and not God. Verses 6 -9 bring this into context 'it is not as though God's word had failed' The word 'not', is Ouch and is the absolute negative, the strongest way of saying no way – Ouch! No way had God's word failed, but his people had.

In verses 19 – 21 Paul speaks of God's remedial work of grace for His people, using the picture of the potter. This begins with a rhetorical question in verse 19 'one of you will say to me "Then why does God still blame us?"' The point here is the sovereignty

¹ Grudem, Wayne, Systematic Theology, page 200, 12th edition 2005, Inter-varsity press

of God. Nothing can be done without God's ultimate will, so if Israel is wrong, it is not their fault but the will of God.

If we were to take that line of thought to its ultimate conclusion, we would negate all responsibility and push the blame onto God for everything. It would also mean that we had no free will, but we certainly do.

There is however the thought that there are two wills of God, his perfect will and his permissive will. The perfect will is just that, God's real purpose and the permissive will is God allowing our own free will to take its place.

The latter is obviously true; otherwise we would be nothing more than automatons, mechanisms operating within a predetermined sequence. Verse 20 is a firm response 'who are you, O man, to talk back to God?' This seems to be a quote from Isaiah 29 v 16 and leads us nicely to verse 21. The idea here is that God is the Master Potter and what right does the clay have, to object to the potters' alterations or even the decision to flatten the item and start again, especially if it turns out to be a beautiful vessel. This is the idea in Isaiah 45 v 9. There is also the picture of the potter going about this process in Jeremiah 18 v 1 - 11

This shows the passion of Paul when he speaks in verses leading up to and including verses 22 – 23 where he argues that God has the right to do as he wills and his actions are never wrong or contradictory.

In verses 22 – 23 there are basically two questions...

- (a) what if God chose to show (make known) his wrath? – v22
- (b) what if God chose to show (make known) his grace? – v23

Although Paul offers no answer to these questions, the meaning is clear, if God acts in accordance to his wrath, or his mercy, there can be no possible objection.

The part of this passage which is appropriate to this study is found in verse 22 'What if God, choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath?' Here the word used for patience is Makrothumia, God's response to His people.

Here he speaks of the wrath of God being delayed due to His patience. This time gap would give his people longer to repent, however, if they refused to do so, the punishment would be great. This is what was being spoken of in verses 16 – 18 where the Old Testament reference is Exodus 9 v 13 – 18.

God's patience is wonderfully displayed in these verses. He is patient, but there is a responsibility upon the one to whom he shows patience.

Patience is seen in the grace of Jesus

In 1 Timothy 1 v 12 – 16, Paul is writing to Timothy and giving thanks for the grace of Jesus toward him.





Paul looks back at his life and points to several aspects from his past...

- he was a blasphemer
- persecutor
- violent man
- the worst of sinners









But Christ raised Paul from that past and considered him faithful for service (v12)

The reason? that Christ might display his **unlimited** patience.

3. God's love is seen in his reluctance to show anger

| | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
|  | Exodus 34 v 4 – 7 | God's patience still requires justice |
|  | Psalms 86 v 14 – 17 | God's patience can challenge us |
|  | Jonah 4 v 1 - 4 | God's patience can upset us |
|  | Romans 2 v 4 | God's patience can be refused |

4. We are to have patience with others

| | | |
|--|------------------------|---|
|  | Matthew 18 v 23 – 35 | Patience and forgiveness go hand in hand |
|  | 1 Corinthians 13 v 4 | Patience and love go hand in hand |
|  | 1 Thessalonians 5 v 14 | Patience and teaching go hand in hand |
|  | Ephesians 4 v 1 – 3 | Patience and fellowship go hand in hand |
|  | Colossians 1 v 10 – 12 | Patience and service go hand in hand |
|  | Colossians 3 v 12 | Patience and Christian living go hand in hand |
|  | Hebrews 6 v 12 | Patience and victory go hand in hand |
|  | 2 Timothy 4 v 2 | Patience and sharing go hand in hand |

5. Patience bring rewards



2 Peter 3 v 15

The patience of Jesus brought salvation



James 5 v 7

The ultimate reward is the 2nd coming of Jesus



2 Corinthians 6 v 3 – 6

The ability to stay the course



Hebrews 12 v 1

Energy for the race