

### **Eph 4:2-3 Walk Worthy With Patience with patience**

Walking worthy according to our calling requires patience, without becoming irritated and angry, or without taking vengeance. It includes the capacity to bear pain or trials without complaint, the ability to forbear under severe provocation, and the self-control which keeps one from acting.

God is the best example of patience. Several passages speak of him, in conjunction with other gracious attributes, as “slow to anger.” Numbers 14:18 **‘The Lord is slow to anger and abundant in mercy, forgiving wrongdoing and violation of His Law; but He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, inflicting the [i]punishment of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generations.’** In a context which stresses Israel’s rebellion and provocation of God, God demonstrates a forgiving, gracious, compassionate, character, slow to anger, and abounding in loving-kindness Neh 9:17 **They refused to listen, And did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You performed among them; So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But You are a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger and abounding in mercy; And You did not abandon them.** (Ps 86:15 **But You, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God,**

This attribute of God is seen clearly in his patient enduring of sinners, even though He could justly destroy them as a demonstration of His power, He gives them time to change, even though He knows that many, like Pharaoh will merely use it as an opportunity for greater sin—God still gives them a chance to prove that they will not change, by any means, and are worthy of destruction Rom 9:22 **22 What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with great patience objects of wrath prepared for destruction?** In fact, the only reason that any of us are saved, is that God has patience and is longsuffering with our sins and shortcomings. It is God’s forbearance and patience that gives people space and time to repent, and his kindness that leads people to repentance Rom 2:4 **4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and restraint and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?** He longs to restore people, asking them over and over to repent, but He cannot restore people to Him, unless they choose Him, and to walk in His Ways

The delay in Christ’s return is not an indication of slowness on God’s part, says Peter, but of his long-suffering, not being willing that anyone should perish—think about the people that you know that would not be saved, and part of the Church if Jesus had returned 20 or 30 years ago! In fact, Paul makes this specific point with regard to his own salvation as a demonstration of the perfect patience and forbearance of Jesus saying in 1 Tm 1:16 **6 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost sinner Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.**

Because of the example of God’s patience, we understand that we who are God’s people, must emulate His patience. The virtue of a patient spirit is extolled repeatedly in the OT, especially in Proverbs 14:29 **One who is slow to anger has great understanding; But one who is quick-tempered exalts foolishness.** Since We as Christians follow and emulate the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should be characterized by patience. Paul’s prayer for the Colossians in 1:10-11 emphasizes that it is our patience, the conducting of our life with long-suffering and mercy that demonstrates a life that is pleasing to the Lord, and it is a witness that God is at work in our life, saying **10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all perseverance and patience;** Notice that Paul prays for patience, and we should too! It is a fruit of a transformed life! So, of course it is included in the list of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives in Gal 5:22 **22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control;** God wants to cultivate patience within us, because it is needed in order to respond with Christian Character to the inevitable trials and troubles that come in life Col 3:12 **12 So, as**

**those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; ; see also 2 Tm 3:10 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; 1 Thes 5:14 14 We urge you, brothers and sisters, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.** Patience is not easy, but, it is a requirement; and we will be held accountable for how we treat people in love and patience. See Matthew 18:23-35 Our sin debt to our Holy God was so much greater than any ability for us to pay, that if we understand this, then we can only be so grateful and loving toward God, that we love who He loves, and we have patience with whom He has patience, which means our neighbors, our friends, our family, and all people, even if they aren't nice to us. And, we're not supposed to insist that God punish our enemies, and punish them, but rather pray that God changes their hearts and their ways, so that they may come to repentance, and be saved. We don't exclude others from salvation, but rather pray for them. We don't stand in the way of God who wants to save them, but rather help facilitate that process in the way that we treat them—as our neighbor whom we desire to serve, not who we pray for God's wrath to fall on.

#### **forbearing one another in love.**

It takes patience to bear with one another in love. This word means **“to take up, to bear up, to endure.”** Remember that the Christian that you forbear, that you have patience with in terms of their shortcomings today will be the Christian who is next to you, and available to help you when you need it tomorrow. If we're busy pointing fingers at everyone else's faults, then it will cause disruptions and strife, and ultimately cause a break in the bonds of brotherhood. So, literally, we “hold ourselves back from one another” in terms of judgement and insistence on our own way, and rather allow God to get His work done by continuing to pray. In other words, differences between believers are to be tolerated. And, how do we do this?

**In love,** further qualifies how they are to forbear one another. Galatians 6:1-9 **Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.** Agape is the kind of love that we should have for all men, and also for our enemies. It is a selfless kind of love that Christians must have in regard to acting in the best interest for all human beings. Agape is a love given despite the lack of merit in the person loved, and it is a love that seeks to give.” This kind of love seeks the highest good in the one loved.

#### **4:3. being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**

We are “to be zealously engaged, eager, making every effort to keep unity among believers, unity in the Church. We are the ones who have the responsibility “to keep, preserve” what is already in existence. It is not the establishment of a new thing, but rather to keep and not lose or destroy the peace of the brotherhood and sisterhood which is already something that God has given us as a virtue of the church by virtue of the fact that we all have the Holy Spirit.

#### **In the bond of peace**

We have a bond of peace that Christ has put us under, not a bond of fear, or of trying to control by fear, but of a peace given by the Prince of Peace. We should be delivered from fear and in peace.

The bond consisting of peace is possible because Christ brought peace.