



Long suffering

God's Special Long-Suffering Love
1st Corinthians 13:4a

God's Special Long-Suffering Love

- **Exodus 34:29-30 NIV**, 29 When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. 30 When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him.
 - **Exodus 34:33 NIV**, 33 When Moses finished speaking to them, he put a veil over his face.

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- **2nd Corinthians 3:18 TLB**, 18 But we Christians have no veil over our faces; we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.
 - Biblical Greek “reflect” - to behold (*to bring in, bring close*), contemplate, or mirror the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces (*Holy Spirit anointed*)
 - As believers focus on Christ, the Holy Spirit transforms us into His likeness from one degree of glory to another
 - It implies a continuous process of being changed into Jesus' image by reflecting His character

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- **2nd Corinthians 3:18 TLB**, 18 But we Christians have no veil over our faces; we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.
 - How do we reflect the glory of the Lord?
 - We must allow His glory to come within us
 - You can't reflect what is you do not possess or what doesn't possess you
 - We allow the glory of the Lord to begin transforming us in the way we think, respond, love as Christ did on earth

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- We marvel at Jesus' miracles, but the greatest miracle is how He lived while walking this earth
 - **1st Corinthians 13:1-3 ESV**, 1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
 - 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.
 - 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

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- **1st Corinthians 12:31 ESV**, “I will show you a still more excellent way” to display the glory of the Lord
 - Let His love for you in extending out to others like yourself that are so underserving

Scripture

- 1st Corinthians 13:4a NIV, “(God’s kind of) Love is patient”
 - AMP, “(God’s kind of) Love endures (*is steadfast*) with patience”
 - NKJV, “(God’s kind of) Love suffers long”

God's Special Long-Suffering Love

- The church at Corinth was really struggling
 - False teachers and false interpretations being accepted as truth
 - Both liberal and conservative mindsets
 - Jealousy over spiritual gifts
 - Master and slave issues

God's Special Long-Suffering Love

- The church at Corinth was really struggling
 - Result was Jesus was not being reflected in a way that allowed others to see Him that led to a desire to accept and follow Him as Savior
 - Paul is telling them there is a better way to live, reflect the image of Christ and that is by allowing God's kind of love to lead
- What does God's long-suffering love look like?

To begin understanding God's long-suffering patience we must view it through His deep love for His creation

- **Genesis 1:31 ESV**, “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.”
 - **MSG**, “God looked over everything he had made it was so good, so very good!”
 - Hebrew – “good to the max” or “wow! it was really good”
- **Psalms 104:31 ESV**, “May the glory of the Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in his works”

To begin understanding God's long-suffering patience we must view it through His deep love for His creation

- **Psalms 19:1-4 NIV**, 1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. 3 They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. 4 Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

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- How do the heavens declare the glory of God?
 - By acting as a silent, continuous, and universal testament to His creative power, intelligence, and majesty
 - Through the vastness, order, and beauty of the stars, sun, moon, and skies, they reveal God's handiwork, power, and divine nature to all humanity without words
 - What we see in nature is meant to constantly show us that God exists and tell us how amazing a Creator He truly is

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- How do the heavens declare the glory of God
 - Its purpose is to draw mankind to Himself
 - **Romans 1:18-20 NIV**, 18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

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- Into God's perfect creation reflecting His glory we bring our sinfulness and wickedness
 - We tarnish God's perfect with our sin
 - Think of cleaning silver
 - And God calls our sin wicked and evil and He hates all that is wicked and sinful
 - **Hebrews 1:9 ESV**, "You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness"

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- What's the big deal with sin?
 - It contradicts God's Holy Nature and the purpose of our creation
 - It is a destructive force—like a cancer—that harms humans, which is why God hates it out of love for His creation
 - It separates people from their God and hides His face
 - **Genesis 3:9-10 ESV**, 9 But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”

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- What's the big deal with sin?
 - It corrupts His very good and the glory of His creation which ultimately points to Him
 - **Isaiah 42:8 NIV**, "I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols (*or anything or anyone else*).
 - We bring our sin into God's very good creation, when we do this who is getting the glory?

To begin understanding God's long-suffering patience we must view it through His deep love for His creation

- What's the big deal with sin?
 - **Romans 3:23 NIV**, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
 - **Romans 6:23 NIV**, 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 - **AMP**, 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God [that is, His remarkable, overwhelming gift of grace to believers] is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Despite our sinfulness God chooses to love us through His long-suffering patience

- **Isaiah 30:18 NIV**, Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion (*by waiting*). For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!
- **2nd Peter 3:8-9 TLB**, 8 But don't forget this, dear friends, that a day or a thousand years from now is like tomorrow to the Lord. 9 He isn't really being slow about his promised return, even though it sometimes seems that way. But he is (*patiently*) waiting, for the good reason that he is not willing that any should perish, and he is giving more time for sinners to repent.

Despite our sinfulness God chooses to love us through His long-suffering patience

- **Exodus 34:5-6 ESV**, 5 The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him (*Moses*) there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. 6 The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness”
 - This was God’s declaration of Himself after the Nation of Israel made calf idols of gold

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- The Hebrew phrase “long-suffering” paints an image of God taking a long-drawn breath through the nose before letting out His wrath
 - Israel deserved God’s wrath, judgement and condemnation
 - God breaths deeply letting His anger pass
 - Long-Suffering is God’s gift of grace postponing judgement with a view toward repentance
 - It is not the elimination of judgement and wrath but hoping for or looking for repentance

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- God withholds His rightful wrath as a gift to all mankind
 - This is the free gift of love that postpones judgement prior to the act of repentance
 - It is not swayed by human emotion
 - It is a deliberate decision of The Lord despite the action of others
 - It is not subject to the lack of response of the other person

Despite our sinfulness God chooses to love us through His long-suffering patience

- Another word you will find in Scripture is forbearance
 - This refers to the deliberate, patient, and loving restraint, where God holds back from deserved wrath, judgement or retaliation toward sin and human weakness
 - It is divine mercy that delays punishment to allow for repentance
 - In essence, biblical forbearance is a “holding back” (*similar to a truce*) that gives space for grace to work

Long-suffering patience is vital for His children to accurately reflect The Lord's glory

- It is a necessary quality of service to God
 - And we choose it because God has lovingly long-suffered with us
 - We are responding to others as God responds to us

Long-suffering patience is vital for His children to accurately reflect The Lord's glory

- It's not a gritting our teeth and white-knuckling through life but rather choose to leave the results in God's hands
 - If I am honest with myself, I will identify that I am not in control and that my world is not up to me
 - If I am modeling God's character than I choose to wait under His providential care
 - Long-suffering love surrenders its own desires and concerns to the will of another

Long-suffering patience is vital for His children to accurately reflect The Lord's glory

- It's not a gritting our teeth and white-knuckling through life but rather choose to leave the results in God's hands
 - Imagine that the God of all creation actually allows us to exercise our will, to have our desires, even when they are not compatible with His own or even what is best for us
- Love suffers, accepts, surrenders long
- Love always waits in hope of repentance

God's Special Long-Suffering Love

- For love to be patient and reflect God's character we must decide that
 - His will be done
 - His hands are adequate
 - His strength is enough
- This is not patience by our self-control
 - It's patience that surrenders everything to God's control

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- **1st Samuel 25:7-8 TLB**, 7 I am told that you are shearing your sheep and goats. While your shepherds have lived among us, we have never harmed them, nor stolen anything from them the whole time they have been in Carmel. 8 Ask your young men and they will tell you whether or not this is true. Now I have sent my men to ask for a little contribution (*share the wealth*) from you, for we have come at a happy time of holiday. Please give us a present of whatever is at hand.”

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- **1st Samuel 25:15-16 TLB**, 15-16 But David's men were very good to us and we never suffered any harm from them; in fact, day and night they were like a wall of protection to us and the sheep, and nothing was stolen from us the whole time they were with us.
- **1st Samuel 25:10-11 TLB**, 10 "Who is this fellow David?" he sneered. "Who does this son of Jesse think he is? There are lots of servants these days who run away from their masters. 11 Should I take my bread and my water and my meat that I've slaughtered for my shearers and give it to a gang who comes from God knows where?"

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- **1st Samuel 12-13 TLB**, 12 So David's messengers returned and told him what Nabal had said. 13 "Get your swords!" was David's reply as he strapped on his own. Four hundred of them started off with David and two hundred remained behind to guard their gear.
- **1st Samuel 25:21 TLB**, 21 David had been saying to himself, "A lot of good it did us to help this fellow. We protected his flocks in the wilderness so that not one thing was lost or stolen, but he has repaid me bad for good. All that I get for my trouble is insults."

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- **1st Samuel 25:25-26 TLB**, 25 Nabal is a bad-tempered boor, but please don't pay any attention to what he said. He is a fool—just like his name means. But I didn't see the messengers you sent. 26 Sir, since the Lord has kept you from murdering and taking vengeance into your own hands, I pray by the life of God, and by your own life too, that all your enemies shall be as cursed as Nabal is.

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- **1st Samuel 25:32-34 TLB**, 32 David replied to Abigail, “Bless the Lord God of Israel who has sent you to meet me today! 33 Thank God for your good sense! Bless you for keeping me from murdering the man and carrying out vengeance with my own hands. 34 For I swear by the Lord, the God of Israel who has kept me from hurting you, that if you had not come out to meet me, not one of Nabal’s men would be alive tomorrow morning.”



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