

“Slow to Distress, Apt to Bless”

Galatians 5:22; 1 Corinthians 13:4

²² **But the fruit of the Spirit is ... longsuffering, kindness...**
(Gal 5:22-23 NKJ)

Love suffers long and is kind... (1 Corinthians 13:4 NKJ)

Born to Be Wild / Born Again to Be Long Suffering and Kind

I. *Fruit of the Spirit characteristics are New Birth characteristics, inherited from our Heavenly Father –*

1. *Being “longsuffering”(long to get hot) μακροθυμία makrothumia {mak-roth-oo-mee'-ah} is one of God’s attributes –*

⁶ **And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, (Exodus 34:6 NKJ)**

¹⁸ **“The LORD is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.” (Numbers 14:18 NKJ)**

2. *Being long-to-get-hot (angry) does not mean God never gets angry –*

⁹ **The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. (2Peter 3:9-10 NKJ)**

A. *God’s long suffering nature must be seen in balance with His righteous wrath against sin!*

B. *Ungodly, fake-Christians preachers point to so called sinful anger in God and or Jesus Christ, they have replaced what God tells us about being long to get hot, with their fake righteousness of never getting hot, they are never angry with sin or sinners –*

¹⁴ **And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business. ¹⁵ When He had made**

a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. ¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" (John 2:14-16 NKJ)

3. *Being “kind” is also a fruit which we inherit from our Heavenly Father when we are born again, in fact all the fruits of the Spirit are evidence we are God’s dear children –*

¹³ **So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He *is* gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. (Joel 2:13 NKJ)**

¹² **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12-13 NKJ)**

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John 3:1-2 NKJ)

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. (Ephesians 5:1 NKJ)

II. *These two fruits I treat together because they are not only fruits of the Spirit (separate from Love) but they are also the first characteristics of love –*

Love suffers long and is kind... (1 Corinthians 13:4 NKJ)

1. *Just as love is distorted into LUST; so our world / our flesh – And the Devil distort these fruits into distorted sinful versions of the same ---*

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit ... (Galatians 5:17 NKJ)

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness... (Galatians 5:19 NKJ)

Longsuffering or patience with sin in our culture has been changed to a distorted form of tolerance of / acceptance of sin –

A favorite passage of preachers who promote such an ungodly "tolerance" is John 8 which provides for us the account of the woman caught in adultery –

They say see Jesus loved sinners, yet they miss –

¹⁰ When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" ¹¹ She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." (John 8:10-11 NKJ)

Their distortion really amounts to 'go and sin SOME MORE, and MORE and MORE!

2. Long suffering / long-to-get-HOT means we keep trying with sinners, yet not forever –

A. One day God will judge this world with fire – 2 Peter 3:10

B. Sometimes the judgment at least seems QUICK

^{NKJ} Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. ² And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? ⁴ "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." ⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. (Acts 5:1-5 NKJ)

3. Love, includes patience / long-suffering and yet hates evil – "Love suffers long" 1 Corinthians 13:4

⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; (1Co 13:6 NKJ)

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. (Romans 12:9 NKJ)

When a man is racing toward Hell's Fires and is ready to jump in head first, is it "loving" to tell him, "keep going, you're running FINE!"?

It is the fruit of the Spirit that keeps love and righteousness in proper balance!

III. While long-suffering slows down deserved wrath and justice, kindness is an expression of positive goodness!

1. Kindness is a non-specific word that refers to someone who does, says or gives to you SOMETHING GOOD!

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (James 1:17 NKJ)

⁴⁵ "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matthew 5:45 NKJ)

2. This makes "kindness" a fun fruit, as it comes in so many colors, the fact that it is non-specific means there are many different ways to be kind:

Gary Chapman writes about 5 Love Languages: Physical touch; Words of Encouragement; Spending Time; Giving Gifts and Works of Service -- All of these are expressions of kindness!

3. Yet, God has given us both talents and opportunities for kindness / the things we enjoy can be blessings

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10 NKJ)

ποίημα *poiema* {poy'-ay-mah} Meaning: we are Masterpieces of God's creation, works of Divine Artistry!

4. We were created to do good things, even the least of which will be noticed and rewarded by God –

⁴² "And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward." (Matthew 10:42 NKJ)

5. God's creative Spirit – Genesis 1:2 empowers our creativity

³⁰ And Moses said to the children of Israel, "See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; ³¹ "and He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship, ³² "to design artistic works, to work in gold and silver and bronze, ³³ "in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of artistic workmanship. (Exodus 35:30-33 NKJ)