FOUNDATIONS, THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: LESSON #4

Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

I. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS _____________________

• We’re going to look at what longsuffering is and some of the characteristics of a person who is longsuffering

A. TO UNDERSTAND WHAT LONGSUFFERING IS THE BIBLE GIVES US A DEFINITION BY _______________________

Ephesians 4:1-2 (NKJV)
1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,
2 with all lowliness and gentleness, bearing with one another in love.

• Longsuffering doesn’t just relate to events or things that happen to us

1. In the Bible longsuffering deals mostly with _____________________
   a. “Bearing with one another” means literally “to put up with one another”
   b. Paul is writing this from prison
   c. His experience didn’t make him bitter or resentful

• The Bible says we are to be, “longsuffering, bearing with one another in love”

2. Longsuffering means we are willing to _____________________
   from people we wouldn’t normally put up with
   a. A major part of Christianity is learning to get along with people

Colossians 1:10-11 (NKJV)
10 that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;
11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy.

3. Longsuffering is also closely related to ______________
   a. They are like “first cousins”

- A complete definition of longsuffering, “bearing with, (to put up with), patience, with long enduring temper, slowness in avenging wrongs.”

II. BEING “LONGSUFFERING” IS GOING TO BE ONE OF OUR ______________

A. THIS IS DIFFICULT BECAUSE WHAT OUR SOCIETY RESPECTS TODAY IS THE ______________ OF “LONGSUFFERING”

- Listen to the definition of it again
- “Bearing with, (to put up with), patience, with long enduring temper, slowness in avenging wrongs”

1. Many respect the person who doesn’t put up ______________

2. Like all the other fruits of the Spirit, longsuffering is beyond __________
   a. It’s not our natural reaction to put up with people, have a long, enduring temper, and be slow to avenge wrongs
   b. Being longsuffering is a foreign concept to most of us when we give our lives to Christ

- It’s not always easy after we’ve been saved for awhile

- Moses had a hard time with it

Numbers 20:7-12 (NKJV)  
7 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,  
8 "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals."
9 So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him.
10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?"

11 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.

12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

- Paul and Barnabas were Apostles and had a hard time with being longsuffering

Acts 15:36-39 (NKJV)
36 Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing."
37 Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark.
38 But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work.
39 Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus;

- Even “mature believers” wrestle with being longsuffering
- One of the greatest challenges in life is being able to get along with and love others
- We have to become more longsuffering

III. _______________ LONGSUFFERING

A. WE HAVE TO LEARN TO _______________

Proverbs 16:32 (NKJV) He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

1. One of the things that indicates strength in our lives is when we are ___________________
   a. A question we should ask ourselves is, “How long does it take me to get mad?”
Quote:  *Thomas Jefferson,* “When angry, count to ten before you speak; if very angry, count to a hundred.”

2. This has to do with __________________________
   a. When someone has wronged or offended us, something inside us wants to lose control because it feels good
   b. It doesn’t take any strength to strike back
   c. Insult for insult, eye for eye, tooth for tooth...

**Matthew 5:38-39 (NKJV)**

38  "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'
39  "But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

d. The Bible says, “This is real power.”
e. When everything in us cries out to get even, we rule over our spirit, slow anger down, and let it pass

**Colossians 1:11 (NKJV)** strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, *for all patience and longsuffering with joy.*

- Why do we need to be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power...? So we can be longsuffering! “…for all patience and longsuffering with joy.”
- Remember, the fruit of the Spirit is fruit or evidence of God’s Spirit influencing our lives
- Longsuffering isn’t about “suppressing rage.”
- If we’re going to be longsuffering, we have to slow anger down
- The only effective way to do that is allowing the Spirit of God to influence and help us
- It’s not just suppressing rage but allowing the Holy Spirit who lives in us to “put the fire out”

**2 Corinthians 3:17 (NIV)** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

**John 14:16-17 (NKJV)**

16  And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another *Helper, that He may*
abide with you forever--
17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

• One of the names Jesus used to describe the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is the Helper

3. The Holy Spirit will help us with __________________________
   a. Freedom will come when we stop making excuses for our anger and yield to the Holy Spirit’s presence and prompting
   b. Jesus said the Holy Spirit abides or lives in us forever
   c. He doesn’t take time off
   d. When we’re angry He works in our conscience dealing with us, prompting us to let it go

4. The Bible warns us of the __________________________

Galatians 5:19-21 (NKJV)
19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,
20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions (disunion, divisions), heresies,
21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

   a. The “works of the flesh” are those things that come naturally to us
   b. Many of the issues Paul lists as the works of the flesh have to do with anger
   c. We are called to a bigger life!
   d. A life where we are not ruled by selfishness and anger but controlled and influenced by the Spirit of God

Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness, self-control.

• As we yield to the Holy Spirit’s influence we bear His fruit, like longsuffering
B. IF WE’RE GOING TO BEAR THE FRUIT OF LONGSUFFERING WE NEED TO BE ______________________

Colossians 3:13 (MSG) Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you.

Ephesians 4:2 (NKJV) with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.

- We learned earlier that “bearing with one another” means “to put up with one another”

Ephesians 4:32 (NKJV) And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

1. This is what it means to ____________________________
   a. It means to forgive
   b. We have no problem putting up with someone who has never done anything wrong to us – they haven’t done anything we have to “put up with”
   c. It’s when they have that we must be quick to forgive
   d. We don’t have control over what others do to us but we can have control over our reaction
   e. We can become vengeful, bitter people or longsuffering

2. Why forgiveness is such a ____________________________
   a. Longsuffering is a fruit of the Spirit and we can only express it by forgiving others

- Forgiveness is a big deal because it demonstrates we are becoming like God

Colossians 3:13 (NKJV) bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

   b. The fruit of the Spirit is no more evident than when we forgive

Luke 23:34 (TLB) "Father, forgive these people," Jesus said, "for they don't know what they are doing." And the soldiers gambled for his clothing, throwing dice for each piece.
Acts 7:59-60 (NLT)
59 And as they stoned him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
60 And he fell to his knees, shouting, "Lord, don't charge them with this sin!" And with that, he died.

- Stephen forgave just as Christ had forgiven him
- The fruit of the Spirit is longsuffering

C. WE NEED TO ____________________

1. Longsuffering is tempered ___________________

James 1:3-4 (NKJV)
3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.
4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

   a. There are some things in our life we can receive immediately; salvation, forgiveness, healing, etc.
   b. There are also some things that can only become ours through time and experience
   c. Longsuffering is one of those things

- When we're longsuffering it's a testimony to the grace of God working in our lives

Prayer and confession: Lord, thank You for being longsuffering toward me. I ask for the fruit of Your Spirit to grow in my life. Thank You for helping me to put up with others. I believe that the Holy Spirit will help me be slow to anger, quick to forgive, and grow in the grace of longsuffering.

FILL IN THE BLANKS FROM LESSON #4

I. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS ___ (LONGSUFFERING)

   A. TO UNDERSTAND WHAT LONGSUFFERING IS THE BIBLE GIVES US A DEFINITION BY ________ (ASSOCIATION)

      1. In the Bible longsuffering deals mostly with ________ (people)
2. Longsuffering means we are willing to ________(put up with stuff)
   from people we wouldn’t normally put up with

3. Longsuffering is also closely related to _____(patience)

II. BEING “LONGSUFFERING” IS GOING TO BE ONE OF OUR ______(GREATEST CHALLENGES)

   A. THIS IS DIFFICULT BECAUSE WHAT OUR SOCIETY RESPECTS TODAY IS THE ______(EXACT OPPOSITE) OF “LONGSUFFERING”
      1. Many respect the person who doesn’t put up _____(with anything)
      2. Like all the other fruits of the Spirit, longsuffering is beyond _____ ______(the natural)

III. ______(BECOMING) LONGSUFFERING

   A. WE HAVE TO LEARN TO _______(SLOW DOWN)
      1. One of the things that indicates strength in our lives is when we are _______(slow to anger)
      2. This has to do with _________(ruling our spirit)
      3. The Holy Spirit will help us with _________(anger management)
      4. The Bible warns us of the ____________(works of the flesh)

   B. IF WE’RE GOING TO BEAR THE FRUIT OF LONGSUFFERING WE NEED TO BE ________(QUICK TO FORGIVE)
      1. This is what it means to ________(put up with each other)
      2. Why forgiveness is such a _________(big deal)

   C. WE NEED TO ____________(GIVE IT TIME)
      1. Longsuffering is tempered ________(over time)