

Matthew 18:21-35 - Our Patient God

- 1) Today's Attribute is Patience – very fitting in light of the last two (Jealousy and Wrath)
- 2) God's Patience is demonstrated in several ways:
 - a) 1 Corinthians 13:4: First of all, it is an expression of God's Love, because godly love is patient
 - b) Romans 2:4: If it were not for God's patience, we would not even have a chance to repent
 - c) 1 Peter 3:20: It was Patience that allowed God to withhold His wrath in the days of Noah until the ark was finished, providing salvation for his whole family
 - d) 1 Timothy 1:16: God's patience toward Saul (Paul) is a perfect example
 - e) 2 Peter 3:9: He shows patience to us as believers by bearing with us as we struggle with (and often stumble over) the temptation and the sin still in us on our way to "full repentance"
 - f) Romans 9:22: God is patient toward those who refuse to repent
 - i) He uses their sinfulness and its consequences as a warning to believers not to destroy themselves by toying with sin
 - ii) The consequences of sin serve as a warning to us
 - iii) He used the opposition of Jewish leaders to result in offering the Gospel to the Gentiles
 - g) 2 Peter 3:15: For this reason, we should praise God for His Patience, knowing that it is God's Patience and Grace that lead to our salvation, and not our own goodness
- 3) Matthew 18:23-35 (compare verses 26-27 with 29-30): In the same way that God was patient with our sins, we must learn patience
 - a) Psalm 37:7: It takes patience to understand the ways of God, especially in the face of evil
 - b) Ecclesiastes 7:8: Patience is valued above pride and the things that make us proud
 - c) Luke 8:15: Patience is like fertilizer that helps our faith to grow
 - d) Romans 12:12: Tribulation and hardship are the arenas in which our patience is tested
 - e) Ephesians 4:2: Sometimes, it is our fellow believers that most test our patience – just as the believer who continues to sin tries God's patience more than the unbeliever who doesn't know better (Luke 12:47-48)
 - f) As we learn patience in responding to the wrongs done to us we appreciate God's patience more and praise Him for His patience in dealing with us
 - g) James 5:7; Revelation 1:9 and 3:10: What we should most long for, and therefore what requires the most patience, is waiting for the promised return of our Savior Jesus Christ
 - h) Galatians 5:22: But "godly patience" cannot be achieved by our own effort alone
 - i) Patience is a "fruit" (a natural consequence) of the Holy Spirit's presence within us
 - ii) As we humbly confess our sins regularly before God and accept His forgiveness, the power of Self in us is diminished, making the presence of the Holy Spirit in us more fruitful and evident
- 4) One example of God's Patience is Genesis 3:8-13
 - a) Adam and Eve just did something deserving death
 - b) Yet God does not strike them dead, or even approach them in anger, but simply seeks them out
 - c) They hide, yet God calls out to them
 - d) He gives them opportunity to confess what they have done, though they hesitate to take responsibility and instead pass the blame
 - e) The end result is banishment, but not the immediate death they were warned would result
- 5) We live each day in the patience of our loving God