

The Fruit of the Spirit

(Lesson 5)

Introduction:

1. "The fruit of the Spirit" consists of nine special characteristics listed in Galatians 5:22-23.
2. "Longsuffering" is the fourth of these characteristics.
 - a. "Longsuffering" sometimes refers to patience, endurance, steadfastness, or perseverance that Christians are to demonstrate while facing affliction (James 5:7-11).
 - b. "Longsuffering" also refers to patience or forbearance that Christians are to demonstrate toward those who wrong them (Galatians 5:22).

Discussion:

I. THE BIBLE TEACHES CHRISTIANS TO BE LONGSUFFERING

A. Positive instructions are given in:

1. 1 Corinthians 13:4
2. Ephesians 4:1-3
3. Colossians 3:12-14
4. 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

B. The opposite of longsuffering [vengeance] is condemned in:

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:15
2. Romans 12:17-21.

C. Although Christians are to be longsuffering, this does not mean that we cannot:

1. stand against evil (Ephesians 6:11-13; Matthew 21:12-13)
2. rebuke others when their actions are wrong (Luke 17:3-4; Galatians 2:11-12).

II. THE BIBLE TEACHES CHRISTIANS HOW TO BE LONGSUFFERING

A. Putting off hindrances is necessary (Colossians 3:8).

B. The instructions given in James 1:19-20 must be followed.

C. Enemies are to be treated properly (Matthew 5:43-48).

D. The example of Christ must be followed (1 Peter 2:21-23; Matthew 26:59-68; Luke 23:34).