

Galatians 5:22-23; Colossians 3:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

Series – Forward to Maturity

Message – Forbearance: The Practice of Loving Tolerance

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Fifth Reformed Church

Jon Sherrill

“Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity” (Hebrews 6:1a).

Patience and Forbearance

- Makrothymia – patience, forbearance, internal and external control in a difficult circumstance, in which control could exhibit itself by _____ action
 - Patience is “the Christlike response to all that is maddening” (J.I. Packer).
 - Patience is “long-suffering toward aggravating people” (John Stott).
 - Patience is “long-suffering in the face of hardship – the ability to endure through adversity” (Philip Ryken).
 - Forbearance is “the loving tolerance shown towards the weaknesses, failures, and sins of others against us, responding in compassion and mercy and not retaliating in judgment or vengeance, no matter how warranted that may be” (Jonathan Landry Cruse).
- Impatience and _____ walk together.
- Patience and self-control are friends.
- Patience and _____ are research partners.

God’s Forbearance

- “Patience is who God is. The pinnacle of God’s revelation in the Old Testament comes in Exodus 34 when he allows his glory to pass by Moses on Mount Sinai. And when that happens, God declares a definition for himself: ‘The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.’ *Slow to anger* captures perfection... the character of God” (Jonathan Landry Cruse, The Character of Christ, p.67).

- Psalm 78:37-39
- 2 Peter 3:9
- 1 Timothy 1:15-16

Repent and Represent

- Repent – change your mind.
- We are called to _____ the immense patience of Jesus in all our relationships.
- Patience gives others the room to _____ into the people God is calling them to become.

Reflection Questions

1. Based on what was shared in the message, how would you define biblical patience?
2. Describe the relationship between anger and patience.
3. Are you able to imagine that God is patient with you? What ideas have shaped your ability – positively or negatively – to imagine this reality?
4. Share an experience where you sense the Lord has been, or is being, patient with you.
5. Are you able to imagine that God is patient with others? What ideas have shaped your ability – positively or negatively – to imagine this reality?
6. Discuss the claim that: “Patience gives others the room to grow into the people God is calling them to become.”
7. What was the most challenging part of this message for you?
8. How is God getting your attention?
9. What might God be saying to you?
10. What is your next faithful step?