The Abounding Patience

This is one of "*God's attributes*" which He wants to imprint in us. This *attribute*with which we are to be clothed is obtained by following the leadership of the Spirit, through obedience to the Word of Christ. *(He that has my commandments, and keeps them, is him that loves me. John 14:21)*Let us look at the work of each party involved:

God's part: First, Lord Jesus is given to us as an example of abounding patience. *"I turned my back before them that beat me, and my c--heeks before them that pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from insults and spitting". (Isaiah 50:6); "In His humility, the judgment was taken". (Acts 8:33)*

"Christ suffered for you, and left you an example, so that you might follow in his footsteps. When he was mocked, he did not answer with mockery; and when he was tormented, he did not threaten, but submitted to the right Judge. (1 Peter 2:21)

Jesus gives us teachings that force our faith to work with the acts of faith. To dress ourselves with patience, he teaches us: *"Do not resist the one who hurts you,anyone that sues you for your coat, leave him your shirt too". (Matthew 5:39); "If someone takes your coat by force, don't stop them from taking your shirt". (Luke 6:29)*If we accept and want to keep this teaching without taking anything out of it, then whenever an injustice, trouble, or persecution will arise, the Holy Spirit will urge us to be patient and will lead by telling us what to do and what to say. *(But when they will catch you into their hands… the Spirit of the Father… will speak inyou. Matthew 10:19-20)*

God uses troubles, trials, sufferings, injustices to model us, because these types of tests are strictly necessary in reaching His *"abounding patience".*

"We rejoice even in our troubles; for we know that trouble brings patience, patience brings victory over troubles, and this victory brings hope. And this hope does not deceive". (Romans 5:3–5) "Brothers, count it all joy when you go through difficult temptations, as you know that the testing of your faith works patience. But patience must do its work perfectly, that you may be perfect". (James 1:2–5)

When we are going to be persecuted, the Holy Spirit will not take away from us the blessing, the love for those who persecute us. He will urge us to pray for them, not keeping in mind their sin. To reach this *"abounding patience",* the Lord shows us the limit to which we must endure. *(But he that endures to the very end, shall be saved. Matthew 24:13)*

Our part: In order to have this fruit, it will be possible only if we fully trust in Him and His Word regarding resistance, forgiveness, love, blessing… and if we do exactly as the Holy Spirit urges us to do.

We must trust the Lord's instructions as given. We must look to His example and follow in His footsteps, doing as He did in His relationship with the Father and with the people. *(…for Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you may follow in his steps. 1 Peter 2:21)*

On a day-to-day basis, we encounter many challenges/injustices. Many of them can be avoided by using the available means at hand. The alternative is to accept and keep the teachings of the Lord, which will bear in us patience, kindness, blessing, peace, love for the enemies.

As an example, we may be going through a liver crisis *(or other medical urgency)*, which will force us to go the emergency room. People arriving after us start using bribes to get ahead of us in the queue. However, the Lord forbids us to use bribes, because bribes corrupt the heart. *(Ecclesiastes 7:7)*

All that we will have to do is endure this trial/injustice through hours of extra pain, up until the Lord will urge the doctor's heart to take care of us as well.

When the driver behind us clashes into our vehicle, and then tells us that we are the guilty one, starts speaking ill of us, swings at us… we will have to not resist and endure this challenge. Also, if we end up hospitalized for a surgery, because of not using bribes, we will have to bear the respective outcome.

Maybe someone wants to sue us and take what is ours. If he takes something from us by force, let us not stop him from taking the other things from us as well. *(If someone takes your coat by force, do not stop him from taking your shirt either. Luke 6:29)*

Or maybe our *(unfaithful)* wife tells us an inappropriate word, or she takes away our legitimate right to be the man of the house. We should not stop her from taking away our other rights; we must endure until the end to win our souls.

When we are deprived of our legitimate rights, we are called by Lord Jesus not to oppose through words, or any other means *(eg. the justice system)* that we have at hand. The Lord calls us to be patient until the end. *(Through your patience,you will win your souls. Luke 21:19)*

We must keep the Lord's command just as it was given to us, practicing non- resistance in all things. *(Do not resist the one who is hurting you. Matthew 5:39)* This is how abounding patience, the fruit of the Spirit's work, will appear in us.

We must accept any harm that is done to us, even that which takes our lives, without resisting. We must follow in His footsteps.*(And to this you were called;* *…and He left you an example, that you might follow in His footsteps. 1 Peter 2:21)*

The Lord will pass us through fire, which is the test of faith. If we remain faithful, the acts of our faith regarding the teaching of non-resistance will produce the expected fruit, namely abounding patience. *(Beloved, do not be astonished at the fiery trial happening among you for

your testing, as if a surprise were occurring to you; 1 Peter 4:12)*

This unwavering trust in His Word has as its end the faith and the salvation of the soul.*(You will gain the salvation of your souls as the end of your faith. 1Peter 1:9)*

We must carry out, word by word, all that He has commanded, without resisting/opposing injustice, suffering, and persecution. When persecuted, we must bless, pray for our persecutors, and love them.

The work of perfection is His, but He does not work alone, but with the works of our faith. *(See that faith is working with his works, and through works the faith is made perfect. James 2:22)*

Thus, the *"test of faith"* works patience, which will perfectly do its work in us to become perfect. *(… as some who know that the test of your faith works patience. But patience must work perfectly, that you may be perfect. James 1:3-4)*

He works with us through various trials for our growth. These tests, which God promised are not above our power, will work the character of Christ in us. When trouble/injustice comes, and we fully trust in Him, having a strong confidence that this trial is happening for our perfection, by doing what He says, we will be victorious.

We must trust in God that He does not allow temptations which are beyond our power to come upon us. *(There is no temptation for you, which is beyond the power of man. And God, who is faithful, will not allow you to be tempted beyond your powers. 1 Corinthians 10:13)*

There are countless opportunities to obtain this fruit. Once we are able to endure small things, the Lord will allow even heavier trials into our lives.

In this way, we will finally be clothed with abounding patience, which is the fruit of the Word and the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.

We should ask ourselves a couple of questions:

Do we have a permanent, daily concern for the things from above? Do we seek, starting dawn to sunset, to obtain this patience and kindness?

How about for doing good, peace, faithfulness, gentleness, love, restraint?

Are we interested in dressing with the wedding garment?

Have we enrolled as disciples in the school of Christ? Do I follow the things of the Spirit as a daily priority? *(Then he said to all, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23) or:

Do we have similar activities as before the conversion, such as watching TV,

freely surfing the internet, going on seaside holidays, drinking, earning through undeclared work, using unlicensed software…? **This is the difference** between a child of God and a

religious person.

The religious man did not enter this school of Christ, he is not interested in obtaining the image of Christ in him. He does sporadic acts of goodness, but without having given up his life, that is, his heart. He wants salvation without giving up the things of the world.

He does not consciously work to obtain the fruits of the Spirit, such as kindness. He does not walk after them as after a precious treasure. He has no interest in using the commandments provided by God to obtain these fruits. The religious man does not see that the Lord's commandments are for his perfection, with the purpose of obtaining the wedding garment.

Goodness, kindness, and love are three of the nine attributes of the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22. As a result, a third of our daily concerns for the things of the Spirit should be for working on goodness, kindness, and love.

In order to have all the attributes of the fruit of the Spirit, the Lord gives us teachings and then gives us opportunities to put them into practice. Let us take as an example the Lords teaching regarding goodness : „But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. (Matthew 5:44); "Do good and let them borrow from you, without hoping for anything in return". (Luke 6:35); "…when you give a meal, call the poor, the lame, the sick, the blind". (Luke 14:13)*

"Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their afflictions, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world". (James 1:27) "Let us not be weary in doing good; So, as long as we have the opportunity, to do good to all". (Galatians 6:9)

He will make sure we have work to do, whether it is in the church or outside, by helping orphans, widows, strangers, the poor. These are some of the good works that God has prepared for us to walk in. *(Ephesians 2:10)* The Lord shows us that in the end our garment must have goodness in its fabric, which is a fruit of the Spirit.

Those who did what He taught them are invited to the wedding of the Lamb. *"Come in, you who are the blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me".(Matthew 25:34-35)*

The religious man ends up having decades of "*repentance*" and yet did not work at all/almost at all towards obtaining this fruit. Or rather he was not preoccupied with following the urges of the Spirit. Doing good was not a priority for him in his daily life. See this fruit in Tabitha. *(Acts 9:36)*

The religious man does not see that these teachings, which he avoids, will keep him out of the Kingdom, where the weeping and gnashing of teeth is. *(Depart from me, you cursed ones, for… I was naked, and you clothed me not: Matthew 25:41)*

If we use our ability to believe, putting our trust in Christ, giving up control over our life, obeying His commandments and denying our own will by doing exactly what He tells us to do, without deviating left or right, then we will have the faith which is pleasant in the eyes of God. The faith which *obeys* everything that it is being told will save us.

If we will trust Him in proportion of 99% and not 100%, this 1% percentage of doubt/unbelief will not let Him finish what He started. *(Take care, brothers, that **there not be in any one of you with an** evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. Hebrews 3:12)*

God cannot work with us if our faith in Him is solely mental. Our part in this covenant is self-denial and obedience. Our faith in Him must be complete, otherwise His image cannot take shape in us.

The book of the New Covenant contains all the teachings of Christ, which are necessary for us to become like Him. *(The gospel of the glory of Christ, which is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4)* No teaching can be set aside. Each has its own purpose; none was given randomly. Some are for patience, some for kindness, some for a pure heart, some for gentleness, and so on.

Each teaching contributes to the formation of the image of Christ in us. The Holy Spirit will not leave us alone and will work with us as we grow.

If we only disregard just one teaching, such as resisting, the Spirit will not be able to work in us patience and kindness.

In this case, His image can no longer be complete in us; we would remain unfinished or incomplete. It is like a car that would lack the steering wheel, the brake, or something else, it would simply be malfunctioning.

As a result of this type of partial obedience, on the day of the Lamb's wedding, we will not be clothed in proper clothing. The patience and kindness will not be found in its fabric. (*He was given to wear fine linen… the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Revelation 19:8; „Friend", he said, „how did you get in here without a weeding garment? " „For many are called, but few are chosen". Matthew 22:12,14)*

May God help us understand what we are truly called to, so that we may reach the salvation of our souls. *(…you shall receive,**as an end of your faith, the salvation of** your souls.1 Peter 1:9)*

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