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A tremendous avenue for Christian service is to avail oneself of opportunities to lead God's people. A true Christian leader helps those he or she is leading to live God's Word and thus to live the more abundant life. What better way is there to lead others than the way God leads? With His love, God leads people to a genuine change of heart for the better.

Let's consider two qualities of God's loving nature: gentleness and long-suffering. When we lead with these qualities in our homes, at our workplaces, in our household fellowships, or elsewhere, we provide a service to others. The greatest leader is the greatest servant. As we serve others by leading with God's love, manifesting gentleness and long-suffering, we can encourage others to live fuller lives for God.

Romans 2:4 shows us how God's gentleness leads people to a genuine change of heart.

Romans 2:4:

Or despisest thou the riches of his [God's] goodness [gentleness] and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness [gentleness] of God leadeth thee to repentance?

In Romans 2:4 the two occurrences of "goodness" are in the same word family as the Greek word translated "gentleness" in Galatians 5:22, a verse we will look at later. It is God's gentleness that motivates people to repentance, to have a change of heart—a change for the better. This loving and encouraging motivation is just the opposite of fear motivation, which comes with harshness and obligation. We can encourage others to make godly adjustments in their lives in the same way God encourages us—by manifesting His gentleness.

Gentleness is kindness; it is moral goodness. We are very kind with those we lead. The kindness we extend to them will inspire them to be their best. When someone is kind to you, it can make your whole day and inspire you to be kind to others as well.

Look at the qualities of the servant of the Lord in II Timothy 2:24:

II Timothy 2:24:

And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.

In our loving leadership, we are gentle, mild, to those we lead, just as God is gentle with us.

Another quality of loving leadership is “long-suffering.” To be long-suffering is to be long-tempered, to be patient in bearing the offenses of others. We can be patient with those we lead because we know how patient God has been with us. When we are encouraging and long-suffering—not impatient—with those we lead and serve, we give them the opportunity to grow and change. We allow them time to do what is needed to live a life based on the truth of God’s Word. God helps us to be long-suffering with others.

Colossians 1:11:

Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.

We are strengthened with all might to manifest this quality of being patient with those we lead, and we do it with joy.

God has enabled us to manifest both gentleness and long-suffering because they are fruit of the spirit qualities that we produce in our lives as we manifest holy spirit.

Galatians 5:22:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.

They are also qualities that God’s Word encourages us to manifest in our renewed-mind efforts. When we manifest these characteristics in our leadership, we will be providing a wonderful service to people.

As we lovingly lead and serve others the way God leads us, we reach people with God's love. God has encouraged each of us to change for the better because of His love. We can express His love to those we lead as we are gentle and long-suffering in our leadership. For those of you who want to lead, you too can experience the joy of serving and inspiring others to live fuller lives for God as you seek out opportunities to serve others by leading with God's love.

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