



August 5, 2019

In the last few hours of his earthly ministry, Jesus Christ spoke these words to his disciples, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love” (John 15:9). Jesus Christ loved people, and an attribute of that love he manifested was long-suffering. Let’s look at what it means to be long-suffering and how God’s Son, Jesus Christ, manifested this characteristic of the love of God.

In I Corinthians 13:4, God’s Word tells us that “Charity suffereth long...” This word “charity” can be understood as the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation: it is God’s love as it is manifested by the born-again believer. One of the characteristics of God’s love that we can evidence to others is to “suffer long,” or to be long-suffering, which means to be long-tempered, patient in bearing the offenses of others, mild and slow in avenging, and to not lose heart. Though we may be tempted at times to grow impatient, lose our temper, or lose heart, we can remember that we have God’s divine nature. His love was shed abroad in our hearts at the new birth, which enables us to be long-suffering.

We can learn how to manifest this characteristic practically by looking at the example set by Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of John, we see Jesus patiently enduring, not losing heart with his disciples as he prepared them for his departure. His brief ministry was quickly coming to a close, and although he faced enormous pressure, one of his priorities was to help his disciples understand what was forthcoming.

*John 13:33,34:*

*Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews [Judeans], Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.*

*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

In John 13, Jesus began teaching his disciples about a new kind of love—the love of God—which they would soon be able to fully manifest once they were born again. This was a very important teaching. However, Peter asked Jesus to go back and explain where he was going. He asked, “Lord, whither goest thou?” (verse 36). Rather than growing impatient, Jesus took the time to help Peter understand by answering him, “Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards” (verse 36).

In that answer, Jesus was making another tremendous promise to Peter, but Peter didn’t quite comprehend what he was saying. He asked another question in verse 37: “Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.” Though Jesus could have been frustrated by this further questioning, instead he was long-suffering. He answered Peter’s question with forthrightness.

*John 13:38:*

*Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.*

Jesus spoke to Peter about his commitment during this difficult time, prophesying of Peter’s future denials. Jesus didn’t just “let things go” but rather told Peter what God had showed him. At times, we too will need to speak forthrightly to others; we can do so with long-suffering. With a patient mind-set, we can listen to the Father, Who can help us know the right words to say or actions to take. This record continues in John 14 with Jesus speaking to his disciples.

*John 14:1,4:*

*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.*

As Jesus continued to give his disciples the direction they needed, Thomas asked, “Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?” (John 14:5). As with Peter, Jesus didn’t lose heart because of what his disciples didn’t yet know or understand. He manifested the love of God by continuing to teach. Jesus showed Thomas another way to look at it to help him understand by replying in John 14:6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

In the verses that follow, Jesus kept explaining, encouraging, teaching, and preparing them for what was to come. Their questions could have been frustrating to Jesus when he had so much on his mind and so little time to communicate it, but instead he

had great love for his disciples and was very patient and long-suffering with them. As a result, they eventually came to understand what he had so patiently taught them.

In our everyday lives, we may face many different scenarios that call on us to manifest long-suffering. We can let the example of Jesus Christ's life show us how to be long-tempered and patient in bearing the offenses of others. Let's follow his example and demonstrate God's love to others by manifesting long-suffering.

*For more information, visit [www.theway.org](http://www.theway.org)*

© 2019 by The Way International™. All rights reserved.