

KINGS NORTON BAPTIST CHURCH (Wharf Road Chapel)

Sunday 20th September 2020 10 am

Love is patient

Welcome.

Opening Scripture from Ps 71:15,16,19,22,23

Hymn mp 496 O for a thousand tongues to sing
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i289qFwVGKo&t=61s>

Scripture Reading Ps 37:1-9,23-34a

Prayer / testimony

Operation Chad BMS video

Reading 1 Cor 13:1-8

Hymn mp 1207 Mighty is our God

Sermon *Love is patient*

Hymn mp 1165 Crown of glory, crown of thorns

Closing prayer/Dox.

Close -----

Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.

The audio file is [20_09_20.mp3](#)

Welcome, pray

■ Do you drive? If so have you ever had an accident? Yes of course, who hasn't! And what was the cause of the crash? An Insurance company has put a list of the causes of road accidents and first on the list, top of the list is – impatience. Was that the cause for you? Was it 'impatience'?

✚ **Impatience crashes cars – but it also crashes relationships, dents them, takes the paint off.**

Today's the start of a new series in between people Jesus met and the walk through the Pastoral letters. It is very practical as it is all about how you relate to each other, in the family, at school, in church, with neighbours with everyone you will meet.

The God of love calls you and I to love one another - and that requires patience! Let me ask you: "Are you patient?"

✚ **How patient you are - is a simple measure of how loving you are!**

3 sections: Being patient - Showing patience – Being shown patience, firstly

Being patient

Love is Patient. Let's be clear what we mean by 'patience' in case you're not sure.

The word used (strong's 3114/5/6) is translated 'being or having patience', or being 'longsuffering' i.e to be of a long spirit, not to lose heart. To persevere in enduring misfortunes and troubles. To be patient in bearing the offenses and injuries of others, to be mild and slow in avenging.

Perhaps you are wondering why those in hospital are called 'patients'. The word comes from the Latin 'patientem' which means "capable of enduring misfortune and suffering without complaint," often an apt description.

We read **Love is Patient**. Patience is a key expression of love. As you can see it's first on the list. Do you see yourself as a loving person?? Did you answer yes earlier? If so, then you are a patient person.

Proper love is other centered. Love always, always does what is best for the other person – not me. For that is how God is.

This is difficult because we all naturally prefer what is best for me. Love says NO, I will submit myself - for him, for her, for them.

So you can see this is tough stuff - and therefore love is not about feelings, feelings are almost always against, or oppose, love.

Love is not a feeling, it's a position. It's a determination to act in a certain way. Love is a decision that requires us to act contrary to our feelings.

- You may feel annoyed – but you don't act on it and say something you shouldn't. You may not want to talk to someone -but you do, and kindly.

You and I are committed to love others whatever our feelings may be doing!

In the Christian life much of how we act is contrary to how we feel. You get out of bed in the morning not because you feel like it - but because you decide you should to. You acknowledge feeling but acts on what is the right thing to do.

You may feel 'a' but you don't have to act 'a'. - You can feel 'a' and act 'b'

- ✚ **Impatience is natural and reactive; patience displays a disciplined will.**

So patience, and everything on the love list in 1 Cor. 13 is contrary to our natural inclinations and feelings.

Patience is in short supply in this world. That is because love is in short supply. The more ungodly society becomes - the more impatient. The Lord predicts that the **love of most will grow cold** - and can't we see it!

- Traffic, the car behind mounts the curb and races off dangerously obviously annoyed because he or she just won't wait a moment longer.
- So with the shop scene suddenly there is a burst of anger and the man or woman throws the shopping down and stomps off impatiently – it's just too much. Etc. etc. you will all have your examples

It's even more serious as impatience, - an unwillingness to bear with someone else - becomes the reason behind: unfaithfulness, adultery, marriage break-ups. The children don't see love worked out because mum and dad won't bear with each other any longer. Wherever you find people engaging with each other - there are break-ups – that includes the church!

To be unloving is a sin – and God sees it. It is a sin you and I must repent of. Is that you? Are you unloving towards others? – and you know it in your heart? Then confess it to God and seek forgiveness. His shed blood on the cross is sufficient to forgive - if only you will look to him alone. There are some here who have never sincerely turned to Jesus with you whole heart that - he might change your heart - remove its hardness and soften it. Ask him to put love into your heart.

Don't look for love in your own heart - you won't find it there! Look to God who is love. Love and patience are from God through Jesus Christ.

When Christ does a work – it is very real inner work. - **God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.** Ro 5:5

Has he poured his love into your heart? If he hasn't then you'll be empty... What you do comes from who you are. The amount of love you have - is seen in the amount of patience you have.

How can I know I have received from God? It will show. The first thing that changes is a new attitude, a heart desiring to love God - and to love others.

Showing patience

Showing patience shows I love my brother and sister. That is how I show love for my neighbor. That is how I even show love for my enemy.

That is why Paul says Col 3:13 **Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.** Paul says the same to the church in Ephesus **Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.** Eph 4:2 The more impatient those around are the more amazing it is when you see someone who is being patient.

Paul is being very practical when he says that **Love is Patient**. To understand what he means please look with me at the context. The church there had been given many gifts, i.e abilities. Paul said they **had been enriched in their speaking and knowledge**, they **did not lack any spiritual gift**. They immediately concluded that God was very pleased with them so they patted themselves on the back.

It's an easy trap to fall into. Which is why Paul gives fair time to explain how these gifts were to be used in Ch. 12 and Ch. 14. Here in the middle, in the centre, Paul says the main point is not gifts - but love.

Those gifts God has given you – he gives you as he determines, - for his purposes, - for His Glory – and the good of others. It's not about you!

So they had their fruit and gifts mixed up! If you are rooted in Christ, then love is the fruit. Every Christian must, must display love. If you don't love your brother or sister, if you don't act in love then you are not a Christian. .

In 1 Cor 11 we have the passage about the Lord's supper. Paul rebukes the church because some were impatient: **when you come together, it is not the**

Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. v20,21 they were acting impatiently towards each other.

That's the immediate context but it is also true in the context of the whole of God's revealed word, the Bible. The men and women of God have always shown patience. Take Abraham the man of faith – you cannot look at his life without saying here is a patient man. Faith = patience. We are told: **And so - after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.** Heb 6:15

✚ **True patience is waiting without worrying.** C. Swindoll, *Growing Strong*, p. 124

The Christian life is one of learning patience - **If we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.** Ro 8:25

■ I'm often reminded that I am so far from where I should be - **Teaching Ana to drive, two attempts = failure not the student - but the instructor!**

In considering my failure, I asked the Lord to help me. If you pray for patience – what can you expect? yes challenges

Preparing this sermon I had decided it is time I took my mother for lunch.

■ We were sat down outside, then nothing. The food arrived for the table in front. Others who came after us had their orders taken. Those in front finished their meal and still no-one had come to take our order.

Ahh I get it Lord – here is the test. I think I was looking calm on the outside. How was I doing? I tried to take my temperature. How long should I wait before I say something? How long would you wait? Can you still be patient and yet say something? Is patience the same as tolerance? I thought. Perhaps I have shown patience - now I will say something – to help them, so they know. But all the times we have been there the service has been fine.

Speaking can be born out of anger and frustration and lack of control - but speaking can also be considered and calm, letting the staff know of the problem. I did a motive check.

God is in the business of reforming character that is why he puts you in situations. – and it is not just now and then – it is continuous or it seems like that - time is short, there's much to be worked out/in to make me Christ-like

■ So on the way home a car reversed out on to the main road bringing me to a standstill and then drove off at 15 mph! – another good test for me!

Christ is the great example of patience. He did not respond to the taunt of the Pharisees, he did not lose his temper, he did not say things he should not

say or walk off in a huff, he showed perfect patience – all of the time – in every situation.

Patience can endure evil, injury, and provocation, forgiving again and again and again... without being filled with resentment, indignation, or revenge.

The church is made up of saved sinners. We are growing up into Christ. It's a slow process and God is using each of us to help not hinder us in this. And like any child growing up it takes time and patience. Overlooking the mistakes of others, bearing with people who go at different speeds, adjusting to them not trying to make them adjust to me. Different levels of uptake and understanding, so we adjust my conversation to theirs.

Love always wants the best for the other person, it will rather wait and seek the reformation of a brother than fly out in resentment of his conduct. Love will put up with many hurts and upsets for the sake of seeing his or her progress in the faith.

God gives us people to help us – often at work or at home.

I, we look after my mother to honour the Lord. He has the added benefit of free lessons in patience, short term memory loss – repetition 100 times + .

Who is helping you with patience? Remember the more the difficulty the more the help! – and the Lord will never give you more than you can cope with – with his all sufficient grace!

It is also true - the more difficulties you avoid – the less you will learn.

If you live alone, doing what you want, when you want for as long as you want, then engaging with the church family is crucial. I say 'engaging' because that is God's workshop for our growth. You can't do this on zoom!

The Lord has intentionally brought us together; sinners with all our foibles – so we will all learn to bear with each other in love. Do not do as some that is merely 'go to church' and not engage with others. Rather commit to your brother and sister, even when it is difficult, especially when it is difficult.

■ Let us make the most of ways to do things together. It's important, church house cleaning/decorating – all ways in which we help each other

✚ **Genuine love makes my mind firm, gives me power over my angry passions, and furnishes it with a persevering patience. Patient endurance promotes peace and harmony in the Church.**

How different from society around where people only meet with those they want to meet with, and if there's no-one I can find easy to get on with then there's always the dog. I'm not exaggerating that is how it is. Those outside avoids difficulties, if there are difficulties, (in a relationship for example) then I'll walk away.

The result is taking the easy out option means you never develop or grow.

Remove competitiveness or anything combative from school or a child's upbringing means they won't grow, they will be ill prepared for the realities of life with all its frustrations and disappointments. The result is impatience.

Scouts, Guides, D of E, etc., are good because they develop character.

- William and Alec the lessons are in the team not on the brochure.
- Logos hope – Nathaniel and Renz, several hundred people all together, fall out there's nowhere to go. Imagine someone was sharing a cabin with you? – how would they cope with all peculiarities and odd habits?

Patience is the ballast of the soul, that will keep it from rolling and tumbling in the greatest storms; and he that will venture out without this to make him sail even and steady will certainly make shipwreck and drown himself, first in the cares and sorrows of this world, and then in hell. Hopkins

Christ-likeness will mean a patient submission to God's good will...

- In his book entitled 'The Patient Ferment of the Early Church' Alan Kreider investigates 'patience' as the prime quality displayed by the early church. He says "Patience was not a virtue dear to most Greco-Roman people, but it was centrally important to the early Christians. They talked about patience and wrote about it; it was the first virtue about which they wrote a treatise, and they wrote no fewer than three treatises on it. Christian writers called patience the "highest virtue," "the greatest of all virtues," the virtue that was "peculiarly Christian." The Christians believed that God is patient and that Jesus visibly embodied patience. And they concluded that they, trusting in God, should be patient—not controlling events, not anxious or in a hurry, and never using force to achieve their ends. "

So the Godly quality of patience has been displayed by the church right from the beginning.

Being shown patience

✚ God is patient, very, very patient. And because he is patient - he can give you and I patience

"May the God who gives endurance (that is **patience) and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,"** Ro 15:5

So you and I should suffer long with others because God has - and is - doing that with you. He is so long suffering, how amazingly patient he is with each one of us.

The first occurrence is in Nehemiah's prayer: **For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you admonished them through your prophets.** Ne 9:30a The Lord is so patient with us as a father is to his children

My father, with whom I was cold and disrespectful was so patient with me.

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." 2Pe 3:9 **He is patient with you,** he is talking to Christians

How patient The lord was while God's people were sinning in the desert. How patient he was for centuries as again and again when His people were so unfaithful to him.

So if God is patient with us – should we be patient with God?

It sounds strange to say it like that. But I should be patient with God not because God does things wrong - but the opposite – because he always does what is right – Therefore I need to be patient.

1st use in NT - Mt 18:26 **"The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.'** and God forgave him. Was he then patient with others? NO not at all he went off and treated them harshly.

Do you expect God to be patient with you? Probably. Will you then be patient with others?

Will you show Christ-like patience, look long term not short term, - look to their benefit not yours - entrust the person and situation to God and his sovereignty over everything - for He knows what he is doing!

That is why we all need to learn to wait upon the Lord, for His timing is not my timing. Just ask Abraham and Sarah regarding Hagar.

Wait, patiently wait, God is never late; The budding plans are in thy Father's holding, and only wait His Divine unfolding; Then wait, patiently wait.

His ways are not my ways - so I must wait patiently on the Lord

■ Some of the greatest missionaries of history devotedly spread the seed of God's Word and yet had to wait long periods before seeing the fruit of their efforts. William Carey, for example, laboured 7 years before the first Hindu convert was brought to Christ in India. In Burma Adoniram Judson toiled 7 years before his faithful preaching was rewarded. In western Africa, it was 14 years before one convert was received into the Christian church. In New Zealand, it took 9 years; and in Tahiti, it was 16 years before the first harvest of souls began.

✝ God wants us to see results as we work for Him, but His first concern is your growth. That is why He often withholds success until you have learned patience. The Lord teaches us this needed lesson through the blessed discipline of delay. *Our Daily Bread.*

Summary

If you profess to follow Christ then it will show in your love for your brother and sister. How will they see that? In your patience, bearing with each other in love. Not crashed dented relationships but wholesome and good and God honouring.

What a wonderful testimony this is to an loveless and impatient world.

What a Joy it must be for your loving heavenly father to see this characteristic, - his characteristic - displayed in his children.

That is what attracted people to the Lord in the early church, so it is today.

When others see how we - with all our peculiarities - lovingly bear with each other - seeking the best for each other.

When people see that – then they take note and listen to what we say.

May the Lord help us to be lovingly patient with each other. Amen

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