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YOKEFELLOW

Vol. 37, No. 1

January 2010

LONGSUFFERING (III)

Bobby Liddell

GOD'S LONGSUFFERING

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory (Rom. 9:22-23).

Men can learn about how they should be longsuffering by looking to God's longsuffering. Let us examine what Paul wrote to Timothy, gospel preacher and Paul's son in the faith, about how God was longsuffering toward Paul.

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save

sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen (1 Tim. 1:12-17).

God extended mercy, in His longsuffering, to the "chief of sinners." Surely, we are to be thankful for God's patiently enduring with us, and be patient with others as well. Paul obtained mercy, he wrote, "that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." The lesson Paul learned made a great impression upon him, so much so that he could write (without boasting):

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea,

Continued on page 3

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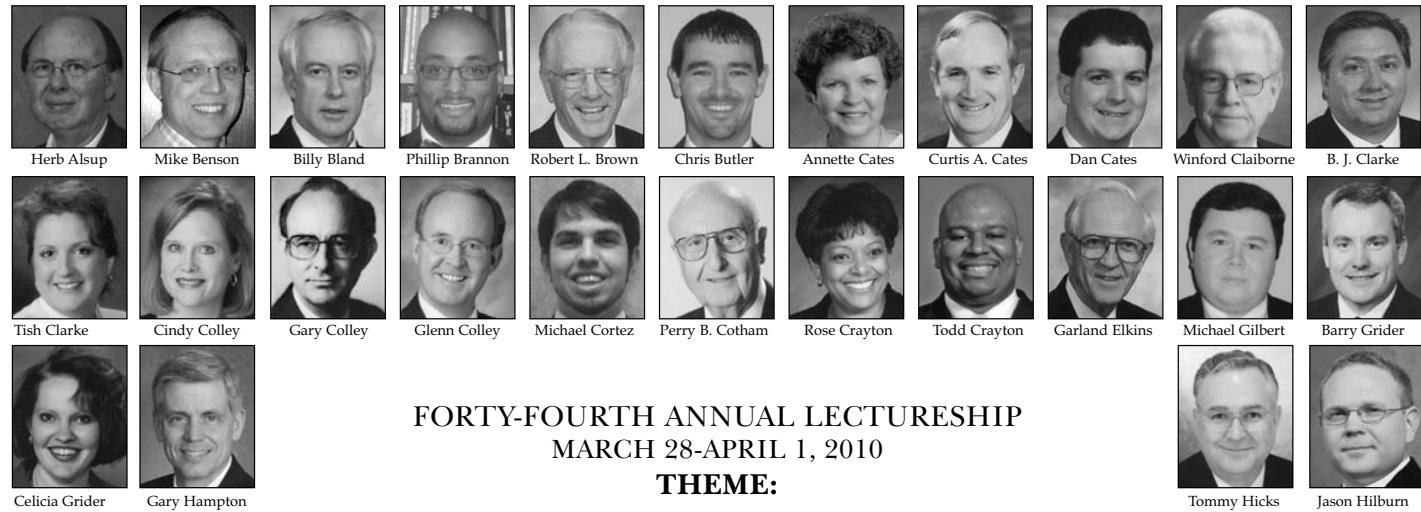
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**FORTY-FOURTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP
MARCH 28-APRIL 1, 2010**

THEME:

“SHADOWS OF GOOD THINGS”

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, Memphis, TN 38125-2560 • (901) 751-2242

SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 2010
9:30-10:20 A.M. Evangelism: The Tree of LifeDavid Sain
10:30-11:30 A.M. Isaac: Submission Personified.....Barry Grider
5:30-6:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
6:00-7:00 P.M. God: Our Portion.....Paul Sain

MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2010
8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL: What Is A Metaphor?.....Jerry Jones
9:00-9:50 A.M. Nature and Purpose of TypesWayne Price
10:00-10:50 A.M. Adam and Christ.....Michael Light
LADIES*
The Church Compared to a Virgin
(Women Only).....Cecilia Grider
11:00-11:50 A.M. Christ: Heir of All ThingsGary Colley
CLASS*
Noah and Christ.....Phillip Brannon
LUNCH
11:50-1:30 P.M. Christ: Captain of Our Salvation.....Winfred Claiborne
1:30-2:20 P.M. The Church Compared to a Mother
LADIES*
(Women Only).....Jane McWhorter
2:30-3:20 P.M. Moses and Christ.....Rusty Hills
CLASS*
Hagar and Sarah: An Allegory.....Dan Cates
3:30-4:15 P.M. Christ: The Mercy Seat.....Cliff Sabroe
4:15-6:30 P.M. INTERMISSION
6:30-7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00-8:00 P.M. God: A “Father”Dan Winkler

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2010
8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL: Saints Compared To LightDevin Dean
9:00-9:50 A.M. Christ: A Mediator.....Wayne Lankford
10:00-10:50 A.M. Christ: The Wonderful CounselorNeal Pollard
LADIES*
The Church Compared to a Wife
(Women Only).....Cindy Colley
11:00-11:50 A.M. Joseph and Christ.....Tom Wacaster
CLASS*
Manna: A Type of ChristJason Hilburn
LUNCH
11:50-1:30 P.M. Christ: The Paschal Lamb.....Glenn Colley
1:30-2:20 P.M. The Church Compared to a Garden
LADIES*
(Women Only).....Kathy Pollard
2:30-3:20 P.M. Christ and the Ark of the Covenant.....Mike McDaniel
CLASS*
The Ark: A Type of the Church.....Michael Gilbert
SEMINAR FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS
AND SUPPORTERS (MSOP CHAPEL)
3:30-4:15 P.M. Melchizedec: A Type of the Christ.....Michael Cortez
4:15-6:30 P.M. ALUMNI AND FRIENDS DINNER
(FELLOWSHIP HALL)
6:30-7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00-8:00 P.M. God: A “Habitation”Tom Holland

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2010
8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL: Saints Compared To SoldiersJesse Claunch
9:00-9:50 A.M. Job and Christ.....Curtis A. Cates
10:00-10:50 A.M. Leprosy: A Type of Sin.....Tommy Hicks
LADIES*
The Church Compared to a Flock of Sheep
(Women Only)Irene Taylor
11:00-11:50 A.M. Jonah and Christ.....Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
CLASS*
The Tabernacle TypesTodd Crayton
LUNCH
11:50-1:30 P.M. David and Christ.....Bobby Liddell
1:30-2:20 P.M. The Church Compared to a Golden Candlestick
LADIES*
(Women Only)Rose Crayton
2:30-3:20 P.M. Christ: A FountainB. J. Clarke
CLASS*
Joshua and ChristBilly Bland
3:30-4:15 P.M. Christ and the Brazen Serpent.....Jerry Martin
4:15-6:30 P.M. INTERMISSION
6:30-7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00-8:00 P.M. God: An HusbandmanPhil Sanders

THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2010
8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL: Saints Compared To Pilgrims.....Jesus Perez
9:00-9:50 A.M. Christ the “Smitten Rock”Perry Cotham
10:00-10:50 A.M. Jerusalem: A Type of the ChurchGarland Elkins
LADIES*
The Church Compared to a Lily (Women Only).....Tish Clarke
11:00-11:50 A.M. Christ the “Root of David”Robert Brown
CLASS*
Christ the “Bright and Morning Star”Chris Butler
LUNCH
11:50-1:30 P.M. Rebuilding the Walls.....Riley Nelson
1:30-2:20 P.M. The Church Compared to a Household
LADIES*
(Women Only)Annette Cates
2:30-3:20 P.M. The Church: “A Burning Bush”Gary Hampton
CLASS*
Israel Saved: A Type of Salvation.....Herb Alsup
3:30-4:15 P.M. God: A Man of War.....Mike Benson
4:15-6:30 P.M. INTERMISSION
6:30-7:00 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
7:00-8:00 P.M. God: A BuilderRobert R. Taylor, Jr.

* All Men’s Classes meet in the School Building in Room 405

* All Women’s Classes meet in the Fellowship Hall



Rusty Hills Tom Holland Wayne Lankford Bobby Liddell Michael Light Jerry Martin Mike McDaniel Jane McWhorter Keith A. Mosher, Sr. Riley Nelson
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Longsuffering continued

and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (2 Tim. 3:10-13).

Having learned, from God, how to be longsuffering, Paul could patiently endure persecutions and afflictions. He did not allow anger to overcome him, and he sought the good of others in spite of how badly they treated him. All Christians, must learn that godliness will bring persecution (v. 12). The question is not, “Will persecution come?” but “Will we endure?” Of note also, from this passage, is the truth that evil men and seducers will grow worse and worse. Let us have hope in longsuffering, knowing this: “The Lord knoweth them that are his” (2 Tim. 2:19), and those who are not.

At the same time, we must forbear, even with those who would persecute us, and be willing to forgive. We dare not allow ourselves to be pressured, or goaded, into an angry response to those who would oppose us and persecute us. If we allow someone to make us angry, we are no longer in control, but he controls us. Instead, our trust in God should increase, our confident hope should grow stronger, and our prayers for our enemies should be fervent and frequent.

In a discussion of the promise of the Lord’s second coming, Peter pointed to scoffers who deny Christ’s coming, by their affirming uniformitarianism, and he used the flood (cf. 1 Pet. 3:20) as proof that all things have not continued “as they were from the beginning of the creation” (2 Pet. 3:1-6). By the word of God, the heavens and the earth are “kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (v. 7). Peter wrote:

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (v. 9).

Then, he penned: And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you (v. 15).

The Lord does not want any to perish, but does want all to come to repentance; thus, He is longsuffering. Every day, we should thank God that he is longsuffering toward us, allowing us time to repent.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another; thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? (Rom. 2:1-4).

God’s great example, “the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering,” should inspire us to endure patiently, to forbear lovingly, and to forego revenge, because of love, that we might offer forgiveness. God’s longsuffering does not mean that He overlooks sin, but that He is willing to work toward man’s salvation, even in the face of provocation, for He desires sinners to be saved.

THE BLESSINGS OF LONGSUFFERING

“Ministers of God” are to be longsuffering (2 Cor. 6:1-10). Why? In order that we might give “no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed,” as we seek our own salvation and the salvation of others (v. 3). While we know the urgency of our work (John 9:4; Mat. 24:36; Heb. 9:27; Mark 16:15-16), those whom we seek to save may not. Men in sin, generally, think they have plenty of time to make any needed changes, if indeed there are any changes that need to be made, for some think they may live as they please, and still be saved (cf. Mat. 7:13-14, 21ff). When we emphasize the importance of their obedience, we may find their reaction is to blame, accuse, oppose, and persecute us (cf. Gal. 4:16). Too often the messenger receives the angry response to the message; however, if we manifest calm, compassionate concern, in spite of such anger, we are blessed, and we may well be a blessing to the ones who, by their sin, oppose not only us, but themselves.

In preaching, we must patiently endure. Paul wrote: “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2). So, we must exhort with longsuffering, not seeking to take revenge upon those who

mistreat us, or to destroy those who oppose us, but to show the example of godliness by patiently entreating, being slow to anger; but “long in spirit.”

Likewise, in our dealings with our own brethren, we often find opposition, persecution, insult, and injury. What shall we do in response? We must be longsuffering.

Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience [longsuffering, BL]. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy (Jam. 5:9-11).

We know that through longsuffering, we shall receive the blessings God has promised for us. The Hebrews writer put it this way:

And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience [longsuffering, BL] inherit the promises (Heb. 6:11-12).

If we are longsuffering, we will be fruitful and strong, and we will partake in the inheritance of the saints in light.

That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1:10-12).

CONCLUSION

Longsuffering, included in the “fruit of the Spirit,” means we are slow to anger, ready to forgive, and gentle in our dealing with others. It does not mean just accepting wrong done to us, but it does mean engaging in enduring wrong with the right attitude of heart, and with the right purpose in mind. As God has been longsuffering to us, so we should learn to be longsuffering, and we will be truly blessed by doing so.