

Doctrine of Longsuffering

1. The Bible presents God by divine revelation. The Bible reveals five majestic attributes of God in Exodus 34:6 of which longsuffering is one.

- *Exodus 34:6 And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,*

Five Divine Attributes

- ❖ The Lord God is Merciful
- ❖ The Lord God is Gracious
- ❖ The Lord God is Longsuffering
- ❖ The Lord God is Abundant in Goodness
- ❖ The Lord God is Abundant in Truth

2. Additional attributes of God are mentioned in Numbers 14:18. Longsuffering forms part of the revelatory list.

- *Numbers 14:18 The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation.*

- ❖ God is Longsuffering
- ❖ God is Merciful
- ❖ God is Forgiving
- ❖ God is Just (by no means clearing the guilty)

3. The attributes of God continue to build. In each list the longsuffering of God is mentioned and thus forms an important theme in the revelation of Him.

- *Psalms 86:15 But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.*

- ❖ God is Compassionate
- ❖ God is Gracious
- ❖ God is Longsuffering
- ❖ God is Merciful
- ❖ God is Truth

4. It is not wrong to pray the attributes of God when pleading for divine mercy.

- *Jeremiah 15:15 O Lord, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.*

5. The wicked will despise the attributes of God and persist in sin. One purpose of God's longsuffering is to lead individuals to repentance.
 - *Romans 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*
6. One reason for God's longsuffering toward some, is that He is allowing them to become vessels of wrath suited to destruction.
 - *Romans 9:22 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:*
7. It is the will of God that the believer gives no offense in the work of the ministry, for the Christian is to reflect the divine attributes of the Lord. This is asking a lot, but it is the will of the Lord.
 - *2 Corinthians 6:4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, 5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; 6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned,*
8. Longsuffering is a fruit of the Holy Spirit manifested in the life of the person who is controlled by Him.
 - *Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*
9. Time and again the ideal Christian is set before the church with numerous exhortations to live up to the divine ideal.
 - *Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;*
10. God the Holy Spirit will enable the believe to walk the worthy walk of faith. Therefore, prayer should be made for one another to that end.
 - *Colossians 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;*
11. Paul might appreciate a modern day expression as an imperative for the believer to live out the ethics of the Christian faith. "Just Do It." "Just Put On Longsuffering". "Just Do It."
 - *Colossians 3:12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;*

12. When a Christian is longsuffering towards the ungodly, that believer becomes a visible expression of the pattern of God who shows love to the unlovely.
- *Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
 - *1 Timothy 1:16 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.*
13. Not only does the believer, who is long suffering, demonstrate God's divine attribute towards the ungodly, the Christian who is longsuffering becomes an example to other Christians how to act. Paul was an example to Timothy in the area of being longsuffering.
- *2 Timothy 3:10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,*
14. There are specific areas in which the Christian is to be longsuffering. One area in particular is that of exhortation. Those who engage in counseling can appreciate the need for longsuffering as a fruit of the Spirit, because it is very frustrating to give good counsel and see it rejected time and again, or have to teach the same basic principles over and over.
- *2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*
15. While God is longsuffering, there is a time limit. The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah for 120 years, and then came the flood.
- *1 Peter 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.*
 - *Hebrews 3:15 While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.*
16. Despite the fact that more than two thousand years have now passed, the Lord has not returned the second time for all who believe for He is longsuffering, not willing that any of the elect should perish, but that all who have been chosen for salvation will come to repentance.
- *2 Peter 3:9 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.*

17. What a blessed thought, the longsuffering of our Lord brings salvation to the soul. Those who are unbelieving need salvation from the penalty of sin for “*The wages of sin is death.*” (Romans 6:23). Those who do believe need deliverance from the pollution of sin for without holiness, no man, no woman, or child shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).

- *2 Peter 3:15 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;*