**October 8, 2017 “Patience” Ephesians 4:1-6**

I do not know about you and how your reading of the Bible affects you, but for me, I am always amazed at the depth of wisdom and insight the Word of God illuminates into my life. As we have been studying the book of Ephesians, one section has seemed to stand out in my mind and I cannot get away from it because of the depth of the light of truth contained within that section.

I am speaking of Ephesians 3:16-21. I am especially hung up on verses 16 and 17 where the Word states, “That He would grant you… according the riches of His glory… to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man… so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith and that you being rooted and grounded in love”.

I have come to realize that this strengthening and rooting is an intense supernatural work of God. I am totally helpless and hopeless when it comes to attaining these changes in my life. How many times in my life have I not read some particular Scripture text and immediately, in my minds’ eye, pump my fist and say, “Yeah I can really use this text to prove my particular point in some debate or argument which will really support my personal doctrinal stance on a subject?” I am so happy because now I can use this passage to prove my point and “win” the argument.

Unfortunately, chapter 4 follows chapter 3 in this letter to the Church, which includes me and you. Do you, like me, find it interesting that as soon as Paul starts to instruct us in how we should conduct ourselves as a part of the Body of Christ, he lays out “unity” as the most important aspect of the Church? Have you ever asked yourself why would he do this? Note I Corinthians 12:13-23.

So how do we apply this insight into the Body of Christ, which makes perfect sense to us as Paul explains in I Corinthians 12, so that we too in our local church, “will be diligent to preserve unity of the Spirit?”

Paul explains this in these first six verses of chapter 4. We have already looked into the first two aspects which are humility and gentleness. Now that we know humility is the absence of self-centeredness and meekness or gentleness is being God-centered, let’s move on into “patience”.

One more little tidbit before we start. Don’t you find it interesting that Paul never lists actions that lead to unity? Why would he not list a number of things that we as church should avoid so that unity can be achieved?

Could it be that the Holy Spirit is far more interested in who you and I are “in the inner man” than what we do on the outside? I think this why the Holy Spirit is concerned with my attitude

1. Patience or long-suffering
   1. Makrothumia
      1. Macro… meaning large or long
      2. Thumia… meaning temperature or temper
   2. Makrothumia… being long tempered
      1. Three main ideas within the connotation of this word
2. Is not impacted by circumstances
   1. Abraham
      1. Genesis 12:1-4
      2. Genesis 15:1-6… 15 years after Genesis 12:1-3
      3. Genesis 17:1… now it is nine years later
      4. Romans 4:18-22
   2. Noah
      1. Genesis 6:13-14
      2. Genesis 2:6
      3. It’s going to flood? Genesis 6:17
         1. What is that?
      4. How long did it take to build the ark?
         1. Genesis 6:3… 120 years
   3. I don’t have time to tell of
      1. Moses… 40 years in the desert
      2. Jeremiah… the weeping prophet
      3. Ezekiel
         1. 390 days on your left side
         2. 40 days on your right side
         3. Ezekiel 24:15-18
3. Not impacted by people
   1. Matthew 5:11
      1. Because of Me
   2. Matthew 5:38-48
4. Not impacted by God’s plan
   1. Acts 2:22-23
      1. Luke 23:14… I find no guilt in this man
      2. John 19:1-3
      3. Luke 23:33-35
   2. Acts 7:54-60
      1. Lord… do not hold this sin against them
   3. Acts 20:18-24
      1. Acts 21:10-14

Humility leads to gentleness or meekness both of which lead to patience

Isaiah 40:28-31… wait

II Chronicles 20:15… for the battle is not yours but God’s