



## E5. Q.4. Pt.2. Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness

**Continuing Question 4.** What does it mean to be “*in the loins of,*” or “*of the seed of*” another? If man inherits more than just biological genes from their parents that affect our appearances, but something that affects our nature as well, is there also a kind of *spiritual* inheritance that also affects our nature\_ that determines who we are?

**Core scripture:** 1 Jn. 3.9 “*Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.*”

Briefly, in review, “major sins” committed sever relationships, and the severing of any relationship is a type of death, such as spiritual death in relation to God, or separation in relation to the Church, or final and physical death of the body. The seed of Christ resident in the believer puts up a barrier between the believer and his willingness to commit major sins. Regrettably, each man has a will and can submit to this sin. This sin is described in Gal. 5.19-21,

*19Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: **adultery, [e]fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21envy, [r]murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.***

In addition, every believer has been known to stumble, and to do those things in which his conscience quickly convicts him. These acts of spiritual offences may be referred to as “stumblings (Jam. 3,2) or “minor sins” as opposed to major sins previously mentioned. Minor sins, such as anger or apathy are vices, which are moral faults, bad habits, or unacceptable behavior; these must be acknowledged, confessed, repented of and dealt with by the blood of Christ in a fresh way for the cleansing of the soul. This is needful for the spiritual well-being of the believer and the health of the Church. These minor sins may be explained as the “**opposites**” of each fruit of the Spirit listed in Gal. 5.22-25,

*22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”*

What is not a fruit is not a virtue, and the opposite of a virtue is a vice or worse yet, an offence to God. Thus, a vice is a bad or undesirable trait, which is the opposite of virtue; like sin, these need to be acknowledged, repented of, and forever put to rest.

Thus far in the previous Episode, I discussed the opposites of *love* being **apathy**, of *joy* being **sorrow**, and of *peace* being **conflict**, all things that a new creation in Christ must

acknowledge as offensive to God and commit him or herself to repentance and acknowledged cleansing by the blood of Christ. I will now continue with the opposite, *longsuffering*.

## **Longsuffering (Patience) as a Fruit or the Opposite Vice**

*Longsuffering*, often interpreted *patience*, refers to the quality of being patient or enduring, especially when facing difficulty or maybe being provoked by a person or situation. Believers will often find themselves encountering difficult situations and provocations. However, *longsuffering* or *patience* is both a fruit and is frequently connected with the character of God and is the expected behavior of believers; patience here emphasizes the virtue of enduring trials and showing mercy to others, even the provocateurs.

**Impatience** is the vice, the opposite of longsuffering. It implies a hastiness to respond or to take revenge, of not being able to bear injuries or situations contrary to your nature. Impetuousness is another word opposite to *patience*, which is doing things suddenly without considering the possible consequences, and is also often characterized by impulsiveness. Paul prayed for the Church,

Col. 1.10-11 *“that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all **patience** and **longsuffering** with joy;*

Impatience often leads to poor decisions and regretted actions. As always, it begins with knowing and acknowledging this vice, committing it to prayer, repentance, and cleansing by faith in the blood of Christ.

## **Kindness as a Fruit or the Opposite Vice**

**Kindness** or *gentleness* as a virtue refers to the quality of being kind, or good. It is being gentle to all people, but in particular even to ignorant evil people, the word implying a sweetness of speech and manners. It is also often used to describe the character of God and the expected behavior of believers.

I believe the opposite to the virtue *kindness* is the vice **harshness**, which means to treat another cruelly, without empathy. The root of the word lies in bitterness, such as having emotional bitterness or bitterness towards another; it conveys a sense of irritation or causing distress. Harshness is certainly not a virtue of God and should not be found in the character of the believer. Prov. 15.1 reads, *“A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.”* A troubling scripture is found in Heb. 12.15,

*“looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;”*

Extreme caution and care must be taken here of the vice that may be hidden in the heart of the believer, for it is written above, *“by this many become defiled,”* The word *“many”* is speaking of believers becoming defiled and unapproved. A *“root of bitterness”* is a root that lies hidden in a man’s heart, a bitter root that is apt to bring forth bitter fruit and cause trouble to a believer’s self and to others, and may bring great trouble into the church. It is a harsh root, full of strife, variance, and contention generally aimed at another individual or group. It arises out of envy or resentment or a false sense of entitlement; for example, *“you have been wronged by another,” “you deserved to have been promoted or made an elder,”* or *“you have been ill-treated and manipulated by the pastor.”* Forgiveness is most difficult to come by, and resentment is harbored deep in the heart. Much prayer and spiritual counseling is required to overcome this sin. It is the worst of minor sins because it continues on, and deliverance as well as forgiveness must be sought. Nevertheless, it **MUST** be dealt with and not left to linger on in the soul of the believer\_ the consequences are not good.

## **Goodness as a Fruit or the Opposite Vice**

*Goodness* here means a benevolent disposition, essentially a good man having **“internal”** or *inherent* moral quality that reflects a rightness from the heart, it is an essential rightness of his nature and does not simply come out of the mind, nor is it dependent on external circumstances; it is simply inherently in his nature. This righteous goodness is termed for the sake of discussion, **“internal”** goodness, meaning that someone, is basically good in of themselves, regardless of any external factors or consequences; in other words, one’s goodness is not dependent on rewards, or to have some kind of gain, or recognition, or a favorable response from another. Simply, a “good” believer is inherently and *righteously* good. This fruit has special value to God. James 5.16 reads *“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”*

The opposite of “internal” (or inherent) goodness may be considered **“external”** goodness. This is a kind of goodness one may seek that is **not** inherent in the heart of one’s self, but he sees goodness ‘in’ something outside of himself, and that thing may be used as a tool for a good purpose. For instance, a TV evangelist may feel that money is “externally” good, because having a lot of it enables him to achieve the higher good of being able to evangelize more extensively. Therefore things, like money, airplanes, religious icons, and psychological techniques may considered “externally” good “if” they are useful to achieving a desired good outcome. That thing or object which may be considered “externally” good is good, not for its own sake or its own value, but for the sake of something else to which it may be connected in some way. This external activity or thing that may be considered good is a means to an end and is not an end in itself. This thought requires more practical examples, for instance:

**Manipulation.** Oftentimes pastors, evangelists, and teachers think it is good to use any means to get people to repent, accept Christ, or follow a particular doctrine or teaching. So, they become very good at manipulating people, reading their emotions and using that skill to play on the weakness and sensitivity of their feelings, to “control” the moods of people, to get them to respond to their message—perhaps with an altar call for prayer. They often invoke feelings of guilt, fear, playing on desires and cravings, even promises of spiritual expectations of power or authority, trying to tap into their hearts. Many souls won for Christ is the supposed goal, whether truly achieved or not is questionable, and the method used is unethical, not goodness, most often producing a false result.

**Psychology.** Too often secular psychology and counseling techniques are used to help manage people’s lives who are dealing with emotional problems or difficult situations, such as marriage issues, sexual relationship, family issues, or even career or ministry problems. They often use multi-step programs as tools, such as: ten-step program to a healthier life, or 7 steps to a better marriage, or 4 steps to evangelizing and so on. I personally know older adults who have been in counseling all of their lives, and are no better today for it. The world has its approach to solving personal and social issues, all of which may be helpful to a point, but in reality are only bandages to cover and protect a wound that cannot be healed.

The good news is there is a better way, as written in 1 Cor. 1.24-25, “*24*but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ** the power of God and the wisdom of God. *25*Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” All may not understand this now, but the pursuit of Christ is also simultaneously the pursuit of His inward working power to the salvation, strength, and well-being of your soul.

**Grandeur of Churches.** The thought here lies in the hopes of man to create a physical environment to duplicate the heavenly environment as the place of God, an environment to touch every natural sense. So, man creates magnificent churches made of stone with pillars of granite and floors of marble, with brass lampstands and burning incense, with pictures or stain glass windows depicting heavenly scenes and icons representing heavenly bodies. This is the ultimate of man’s goodness. In reality it is a fleshly environment that distracts from the true spiritual and places the focus on the natural and not the heavenly. It is written in Acts 7.48-50,

*48*“However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:  
*49*‘Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the LORD, Or what is the place of My rest?*50*Has My hand not made all these things?’”

The true tabernacle is spiritual, and this is the tabernacle we must by faith seek to dwell in and find our fellowship with God. As it is written in Heb. 8.1-2, “*1*Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, *2a* Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and **not man.**” And,

Col. 3.1-3 *“1If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”*

Where is the Church, the temple of God? Is it not written, Mt. 18.20 *“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”* And 1 Cor. 3.16 *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”* We must reject the fleshly enticements and seek only the higher spiritual fellowship in Christ Jesus.

**Business Techniques.** All too often business or worldly practices are used to better organize the church, according to their own successful standards. Like every worldly organization, the Church is organized in a hierarchy of authority, as a chain of command with popes or prophets at the top, then archbishops, bishops, pastors, etc. From the beginning this was not so; Christ was and is the spiritual Head of the Church and all eyes were (or should be) upon Him. A Church full of people, each independently looking away to Christ, are more in harmony with than if they tried to be in harmony.

In the beginning the Lord appointed elders to govern and oversee the Church. Paul charged the elders at Ephesus in Acts 20.28 *“28Keep watch over yourselves and the entire flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.”* And God Himself set ministries in place to function within the body of believers to strengthen, teach, guide, and protect the believers, as written in Eph. 4.11-13,

*“11And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”*

The church was never intended to be a congregation of “lay people” and led by a “clergy,” but to be a functioning body of believers each fulfilling the purpose of a task or ministry towards the growth and well-being of the whole. Gal. 3.28, *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”* Young or old, rich or poor, educated or uneducated; all may serve the Lord to the measure of their calling.

It is realized that the all of the above goes against the grain of most churches today. There is a cost to pay, on the one hand of submitting to the authority and ministry of others, and on the other hand leaving their comfort zones and assuming a role in the Church they had not known before. What is evident, however, is that to use worldly techniques to better shape the church is not internally good but fails to build up and bring to spiritual maturity a church that functions according to the purposes of Christ.

**Worldly Influence.** Solomon in all his wisdom warns us to guard our steps when entering the “house of God;” he meant it as the temple, but we now know it as the Church, not the

building but a gathering together of believers for worship. He wrote in Ecc.5.1 *“Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the **sacrifice of fools**, for they do not know that they do evil.”* What does it mean *“to give the sacrifice of fools?”* It is engaging in worship as a ritual, as a formal process, as a religious act without solely focusing on genuine reverence with humility and surrender to God. Jesus chided the Pharisees and said to them in Mt. 15.7-9,

*z”You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you: g”These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. q”They worship Me in vain; they teach as doctrine the precepts of men.”*

And so, it has been the goals of many to put what they think is externally good in music and apply it to the church to enhance worship, to make it more meaningful to men and God. But does it really? Two things are foremost here: 1. To be often in the practice of offering worship, and 2. To offer true worship acceptable and pleasing to God\_ avoiding the **sacrifice of fools**. It must be remembered, the absence of either is not a sin, but they are not a virtue either and are displeasing to God, and therein lays the need to repent and change.

Of primary importance is Jesus’ explanation of worship, when He said to the woman He met drawing water from Jacob’s well, Jn. 4.23-24,

*“23But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24God is Spirit, and those who worship Him **must worship in spirit and truth.**”*

The essence of worship extracted from this verse is that worship must be *“in spirit and truth.”* Spiritual worship in the New Testament is quite different than the physical worship of the Old Testament, and the two must not be intermixed, even though they very much are today. Those of the Old Testament had never been born anew of the Spirit; therefore they only know the worship of the natural man in physical temples, at sacrificial altars and holy places, but having known nothing of spiritual worship. All worship involves coming into God’s presence in humility and surrender, with an open heart of praise and thanksgiving. However, worship of the Old Testament involves elements of the natural man not found in the New Testament. For instance, Ps. 150.4

*“Praise Him with the timbrel (tambourine) and dance; Praise Him with stringed instruments and flutes!”*

Using instruments and dance are physical in nature but worship is spiritual, being extraneous to the natural world. The New Testament does not mention instruments and dance in worship, nor are there any doctrinal statements giving advice on what kind or music may accompany worship. There are no examples of instruments and dance ever being used in any of the early churches. Christians have no Biblical or prophetic command from God to introduce musical instruments or dance in the worship of God. The early church, from which I



personally pattern the whole of my spiritual life, used only singing and prayer for both personal and public praise and worship.

Even in the Old Testament, there were no instruments or dance in Moses' Tabernacle or Solomon's Temple: nothing in the Outer Court at the altar of burnt offering, or in the Holy Place, and especially not the Most Holy Place. There was prayer in these places, and maybe some songs or psalms only. The only place where you might hear instruments and see dance is outside, in the camp, among the tents of the tribes.

However, there is no scripture that openly condemns the practices and no evidence that they are sinful per se. I believe the only reason the early churches did not involve instruments and dance, or any other props or activities, is because they are simply not of the spirit but of the natural man, and we are advised to worship in spirit and truth. Instruments, dance, and other props only help to enhance the emotions of the soul but do not add an iota of spiritual adoration. As a matter of fact, they may exact the opposite, to diminish the attitude of true worship of God for the sake of soulish emotional and physical pleasure. Research has shown that actively participating in music, dancing, singing, or playing an instrument can lead to a greater release of endorphins, a chemical the brain releases in our bodies; these act to naturally boost our moods, even as pain relievers, leading to feelings of pleasure and well-being\_ sometimes even to cultish euphoria.

Even the ancient Greek philosopher Plato noticed the link between such music and emotions. Music played in different modes would arouse different emotions whether they are happy or sad. In music, a particular cord is formed by combining three or more notes simultaneously forming a particular harmonious sound. What are known as major cords are perceived to induce cheerfulness, while minor cords are perceived to induce sadness. The tempo or movement in time is another component of this, slower music being more somber and less joyful than faster rhythms. It has been noted that even the word "*motion*" is a significant part of the word "*emotion*" and that in dance we are in motion, \_as we are moved physically and emotionally by the music. O' how we must be aware that things we can touch, and see, and hear, and smell and feel emotionally are NOT of the spirit but of the flesh. Things of the spirit are inward, of the heart and by simple faith access the heavenly realm of God.

Do you see that this is not spiritual worship to God but a mixture of soulish feelings and fleshly attempts at worship. Is it the "*sacrifice of fools?*" You judge for yourself whether this be true or not. True worship is motivated by the spirit drawing forth from the resources of the heart. It is not, and should not, be tainted or driven by music-induced emotions. But true spiritual worship originates in the heart and finds its expression in obedience and love for God, rooted in a genuine understanding of His will and purpose, rather than driven by outward music, rituals, or formalities.

True spiritual worship is always God centered; the "I" is omitted, but all is just focused on glorifying God, His greatness and worthiness of praise, with thanksgiving and adoration. This

may be expressed in prayer and singing, but the ultimate of true worship transcends these and is about the state of the heart, and the intimate fellowship with our Father and with our Lord Jesus Christ\_ in whom much reverence and thanksgiving is focused.

Romans 12.1-2 describes the highest form of true worship, presenting our bodies (the self-centered nature) as a “*living sacrifice*,” which is holy and acceptable to God; with the quiet anticipation of being transformed in His presence. And 1 Pet. 2.4 encourages us to come to Him “*as living stones*” looking to be built up as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices* acceptable to God through Christ Jesus.

Whether the “*sacrifice of fools*” is a sin or not, you must judge for yourself. However, it is for sure missing the mark of true worship and must be acknowledged as such, repented of, and a truer form of worship be embraced. Worship must be “internal,” arising from within, and absent of “external” worldly, fleshly man-induced activities.

We will continue next time with the fruit and vices of *faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*.

#### S5.E5. Questions for Discussion

1. What vice or minor sin opposite to the fruit of *longsuffering*, Do you see this working in your life? How may this affect you relationship with others in the Church? With God?
2. Explain *kindness as a fruit*. In a recent Bible study, the vice of *harshness* seemed to surface in some marriages. Do you see this vice happening in your life? Explain. How should this vice should be handled in your life? Explain the devastating effect of the *root of bitterness* in one’s life and in that of the Church.
3. To the best of your ability explain the difference between *intrinsic goodness* and *extrinsic goodness*. Site some examples of wrongfully using extrinsic goodness in the Church. Could this be considered a sin?
4. How has the use of business techniques and methods to manage the Church affected it in a negative way? How may this be corrected?
5. Explain why the use of instruments and dance in worship can be found only in the Old Testament and not in the New Testament.
6. Explain the phrase “*the sacrifice of fools*” as used in Ecc. 5.1.



