

Despising God's Goodness, Forbearance and Longsuffering

Rom. 2:1-4

Introduction:

A. Can be no question about God's having these traits.

1. Goodness (1 "kindness" Vine)
2. Forbearance (2 "deferral of punishment" Vine)
3. Longsuffering

(3 "Quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger, associated with mercy, and is used of God." – Vine)

B. Can be no question that these traits are often "despised"

(4 To treat lightly or disregard – not necessarily to hate. (cf. 1 Tim. 4:12; Mt. 6:24) – as did Jews.

Discussion:

I. God's Goodness Is Often Repaid with Impenitence (Rom. 2:4-5).

A. Mistake His favors and deferral for acceptance.

1. Bestows favor upon all men – good and bad. (Matt. 5:45).
2. Defers judgment to give time to repent. (2 Pet. 3:9).

B. Mistake His forbearance and longsuffering for approval.

II. God's Forbearance Is Often Repaid with Hardness (Rom. 2:5).

A. Jews were hard and unfair in their judgment of others (Rom. 2:1-2; cf. Mt. 7:1-5).

1. Ignored own sins, magnified sins of others.
2. Ignored God's years of mercy to them as a people.

B. We must guard against hardness: arrogant, self-righteous, overbearing.

1. Allow knowledge to puff up (1 Cor. 8:1).
2. Forget that we received our position from God. (1 Cor. 4:6).

III. God's Longsuffering Is Often Repaid with Impatience.

A. Impatience with God – Want to reap harvest right now (cf. Gal. 6:9).

B. Impatience in dealing with sin in the world and church. (Cf. Lk. 9:54-56).

1. Can "reprove and rebuke" with all longsuffering. (2 Tim 4:2).
2. Can gently teach those in opposition (2 Tim. 2:23).
3. Can discipline when this fails (1 Cor 5.2; 2 Thess 3:6).

C. Impatience in expecting every wrong to be corrected now.

1. Need to leave something for Lord to do. (Cf. Ps. 37:1-11).
2. May do more harm than good (Parable of tares).

D. Impatience in our stand for the truth. (Cf. Gal. 2:5).

Conclusion:

A. Let us treasure the goodness, forbearance and longsuffering of God.

B. Let us profit by coming to repentance.