

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 17, Communicable Attributes, Part 4, Good & Patient

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 17, Communicable Attributes, Part 4, Good & Patient, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This audio transcript features Dr. Robert Peterson delivering Session 17 of his "Theology Proper" series, focusing on the communicable attributes of God. Specifically, this session explores **God's goodness**, understood as generosity and care for all creation, evidenced through provision and compassion in both general and special revelation. Peterson also examines **God's patience** or long-suffering, highlighting God's slowness to anger and delay in punishment as seen throughout the Old and New Testaments, and its implications for believers. The lecture utilizes biblical examples and encourages listeners to reflect and embody these divine qualities.

2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 17 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology → Theology, Peterson → Theology Proper: God).



**Peterson_TheoProp
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3. Briefing Document: Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 17, Communicable Attributes, Part 4, Good & Patient

Briefing Document: The Communicable Attributes of God - Goodness and Patience

Main Themes:

This lecture by Dr. Robert A. Peterson delves into two crucial "communicable" attributes of God: His goodness and His patience. Unlike incommunicable attributes which are unique to God, communicable attributes have some semblance in humanity. Peterson clarifies the meaning of these attributes, provides extensive biblical support, and discusses their implications for understanding God and how believers should reflect His character.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. God is Good (Generous):

- **Definition:** Peterson clarifies that God's goodness is not merely the absence of bad, but actively means He is "generous," caring about and cultivating the well-being of all His creatures, both believers and unbelievers. He states, "By good or generous we mean God cares about and cultivates the well-being of all his creatures. You heard me right. Not only believers and unbelievers, but God is good to all his creatures."
- **Biblical Support: James 1:17:** "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the father of lights." This verse highlights God as the ultimate source of all good.
- **Matthew 5:45:** Jesus states that God "causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous," illustrating His indiscriminate goodness.
- **Psalms 145:** This psalm is rich with descriptions of God's goodness, including providing food for all living things ("The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing." - Psalm 145:15-16) and having compassion on all He has made (Psalm 145:9).
- **Psalms 23:** While the initial verses use shepherd imagery depicting God's care, Peterson notes that verse 5 shifts to the image of a generous host preparing a table for His people even in the presence of enemies, highlighting God's abundant

provision. "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life..." (Psalm 23:5-6).

- **Old Testament Examples:** God's goodness is seen in leading Israel to the Promised Land (Psalm 68:10, Nehemiah 9:25) and is contrasted with the fleeting nature of human goodness (Isaiah 40:6-7).
- **New Testament Emphasis:** The "flower of God's goodness comes to full bloom in the New Testament." Believers are called to recognize God's kindness, restraint, and patience as leading to repentance (Romans 2:4), and they are saved by His kindness and love (Titus 3:4-5).
- **Provision and Trust:** Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:25-34) urge believers not to be anxious, as their heavenly Father knows their needs and will provide, drawing a parallel to His care for birds and wildflowers.
- **Reflection of God's Goodness:** Believers are called to reflect God's goodness by loving and praying for their enemies (Matthew 5:44) and by cultivating the fruit of the Spirit, which includes goodness (Galatians 5:22).

2. God is Patient (Longsuffering):

- **Definition:** Patience or longsuffering means that "God is slow to get angry and does not always immediately punish sin." Peterson also equates this with "forbearance." He acknowledges that "patience" can sound weak when applied to humans, making "long-suffering" and "forbearance" more descriptive of God's attribute.
- **Biblical Support: Exodus 34:6:** In revealing His name to Moses, God declares, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness." This foundational verse is repeatedly alluded to throughout the Old Testament.
- **Psalm 103:8:** Echoes Exodus 34:6, stating, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."
- **Psalm 86:15-16:** David prays to God as "a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and truth."
- **Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18:10-14):** The shepherd's patient search for the one lost sheep illustrates God's patient pursuit of those who stray.

- **Old Testament History:** God's patience is evident in His delaying judgment on a corrupt humanity before the flood (1 Peter 3:20 referencing Genesis 6) and in His forbearance with rebellious Israel despite Moses' pleas (Numbers 14:18).
- **Romans 2:4 (again):** Paul questions those who despise God's "kindness, restraint, and patience," emphasizing that these are intended to lead to repentance.
- **Romans 3:25:** God, in His restraint, "passed over former sins" through the Old Testament sacrificial system, demonstrating His patience before the full atonement in Christ.
- **Romans 9:22-23:** God endures "with much patience, vessels of wrath prepared for destruction" to make known His glory on the "vessels of mercy." This highlights God's patient delay of judgment to extend mercy.
- **Patience of Christ:** The New Testament ascribes patience to Christ. Paul thanks Jesus for entrusting him with ministry despite his past (1 Timothy 1:13) and sees Christ's extraordinary patience in his own conversion as an example for future believers (1 Timothy 1:16).
- **Waiting for Christ's Return:** Peter urges Christians to "regard the patience of our Lord as salvation" (2 Peter 3:15), and James exhorts believers to "be patient until the Lord's coming" (James 5:7), drawing an analogy to the farmer patiently waiting for the harvest.
- **Reflection of God's Patience:** Patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), and believers are called to be "slow to anger" (James 1:19), mirroring God's own attribute.

Quotes:

- "By good or generous we mean God cares about and cultivates the well-being of all his creatures. You heard me right. Not only believers and unbelievers, but God is good to all his creatures."
- "Every good and every perfect gift is from above." (James 1:17)
- "...he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." (Matthew 5:45)
- "The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing." (Psalm 145:15-16)
- "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life..." (Psalm 23:6)

- "The Lord, the Lord is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth." (Exodus 34:6)
- "...not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?" (Romans 2:4)
- "Regard the patience of our Lord as salvation." (2 Peter 3:15)
- "Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord." (James 5:7)
- "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." (James 1:19)

Conclusion:

Dr. Peterson's lecture provides a clear and biblically grounded understanding of God's goodness as active generosity towards all creation and His patience as a deliberate slowness to anger and judgment, rooted in His mercy and love. These communicable attributes are not only essential for comprehending God's character but also serve as a model for believers to emulate in their own lives, reflecting His goodness and practicing patience in their interactions with others. The lecture emphasizes the pervasive nature of these attributes throughout Scripture, highlighting their significance in both God's actions and His expectations for His people. The subsequent lecture will conclude the discussion on communicable attributes by focusing on God's glory.

4. Study Guide: Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 17, Communicable Attributes, Part 4, Good & Patient

Study Guide: God's Goodness and Patience

Key Concepts

- **Communicable Attributes:** Qualities of God that have some resemblance in humanity.
- **Goodness (Generosity):** God's inherent disposition to care for and cultivate the well-being of all creation, both believers and unbelievers, dealing benevolently and liberally.
- **General Revelation:** God's self-disclosure through creation, conscience, and providence, available to all people, everywhere, always, but is non-salvific.
- **Special Revelation:** God's self-disclosure to specific people, including saving revelation found in Scripture and ultimately in Jesus Christ.
- **Patience (Longsuffering/Forbearance):** God's slowness to anger and his withholding of immediate punishment for sin.
- **Propitiation:** Christ's sacrifice that satisfies God's righteousness by atoning for human sin.
- **Fruit of the Spirit:** Aspects of a believer's character produced by the Holy Spirit, including goodness and patience.

Quiz

1. How does the source define God's goodness, and to whom does God extend this attribute?
2. Provide two biblical images or metaphors used to illustrate God's goodness as described in the text.
3. According to the source, how is God's goodness revealed in both creation and redemption?
4. What is the distinction between general and special revelation, and how does God's goodness relate to general revelation?
5. Explain the meaning of God's patience or longsuffering as presented in the material.

6. Cite a specific Old Testament passage mentioned in the text that highlights God's patience.
7. According to the source, what was the purpose of God's patience in delaying judgment on those who rebel against him?
8. How is Christ presented as an example of divine patience in the New Testament?
9. In what ways should believers reflect God's goodness and patience in their own lives, according to the text?
10. How does the author connect the fruit of the Spirit to the attributes of God's goodness and patience?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The source defines God's goodness not merely as the opposite of bad, but as generosity, meaning God cares about and cultivates the well-being of all his creatures. This goodness extends to all of creation, including both believers and unbelievers.
2. Two biblical images used to illustrate God's goodness are a parent who provides for their children (as seen in Matthew 6 regarding feeding the birds) and a shepherd who cares for and provides for the needs of the flock (drawing from Psalm 23).
3. God's goodness is revealed in creation through the fact that after creating, God declared everything "very good" (Genesis 1:31). In redemption, God's goodness gleams forth as he satisfies his Old Testament people and offers salvation in the New Testament (Jeremiah 31:14, Titus 3:4-5).
4. General revelation is God's self-disclosure to all people through creation, conscience, and providence, and while it reveals God's attributes like goodness, it is not salvific. Special revelation is God's specific communication to some people, including the saving truths found in Scripture and Jesus Christ.
5. God's patience, or longsuffering/forbearance, means that God is slow to get angry and does not always immediately punish sin. It is a demonstration of his restraint and willingness to allow time for repentance.
6. Exodus 34:6 is a key Old Testament passage where God reveals his name to Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord is a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth."

7. According to the source, God withholds judgment and demonstrates much patience towards "objects of wrath prepared for destruction" in order to "make known the riches of his glory on objects of mercy that he prepared beforehand for glory" (Romans 9:22-23), allowing more time for people to hear the gospel and repent.
8. Christ is presented as an example of divine patience in the New Testament through Paul's testimony of receiving mercy despite being a former blasphemer and persecutor, so that Christ Jesus might demonstrate his extraordinary patience as an example to future believers (1 Timothy 1:13, 16).
9. Believers should reflect God's goodness by loving and praying for their enemies (Matthew 5:44) and by yielding the fruit of the Spirit, which includes goodness (Galatians 5:22). They should reflect God's patience by being slow to anger (James 1:19) and by patiently awaiting the Lord's coming (James 5:7).
10. The author explicitly states that patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and implies that believers reflect God's goodness as the Spirit produces goodness in their lives. This connection highlights that these divine attributes should be evident in the lives of those indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the interconnectedness of God's goodness and patience as presented in the source material, using biblical examples to illustrate your points.
2. Analyze the concept of general revelation as it relates to God's attribute of goodness, and explain why the author states that it is non-salvific.
3. Explore the ways in which the New Testament, particularly through the person and work of Jesus Christ, reveals the fullness of God's goodness and patience compared to the Old Testament.
4. Examine the practical implications of understanding God as both good and patient for the lives of believers, referencing specific exhortations and examples from the text.
5. Compare and contrast the human understanding of patience with the theological concept of God's longsuffering, as discussed in the provided excerpts.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Attribute (of God):** A characteristic or quality that describes the nature and being of God.
- **Benevolent:** Well-meaning and kindly.
- **Chiasm:** A literary structure in which parallel elements are presented in an ABCC'BA pattern, often with the central elements (CC) being the most significant.
- **Compassion:** Sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.
- **Consummation:** The final completion of God's plan for creation and redemption.
- **Doctrine of God (Theology Proper):** The systematic study of God's nature, attributes, and works.
- **Exhortation:** An address or communication emphatically urging someone to do something.
- **Forbearance:** Patient self-control; restraint and tolerance.
- **Iniquity:** Wickedness or sin.
- **Liberal (in the context of goodness):** Generous and open-handed in giving.
- **Metonymy:** A figure of speech in which a thing or concept is referred to by the name of something closely associated with it (e.g., "the table" referring to the food and drink on it).
- **Missiology:** The branch of Christian theology concerned with the mission of the church.
- **Providence:** God's foreknowledge, active involvement, and supreme rule in the universe.
- **Redemption:** The action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil.
- **Repentance:** Sincere regret or remorse about one's wrongdoing or sin and the desire to turn away from it.
- **Restraint (of God):** God's act of holding back or limiting his wrath or judgment.

5. FAQs on Peterson, Theology Proper: God, Session 17, Communicable Attributes, Part 4, Good & Patient, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: God's Goodness and Patience

1. What does it mean that God is good, according to this source? The goodness of God, as described here, is not merely the absence of badness but rather a generous and benevolent disposition. It means that God actively cares about and cultivates the well-being of all his creation, including both believers and unbelievers, and even animals. This goodness is seen in his provision of needs, such as sunshine and rain for all, and is a fundamental aspect of his character.

2. How is God's goodness demonstrated in the Bible? The Bible illustrates God's goodness through various images and accounts. He is portrayed as a loving parent and a caring shepherd who provides for his flock. Psalm 145 is highlighted as a passage rich with descriptions of God's generous provision for all living things. Furthermore, God's goodness is evident in creation itself, which was declared "very good" in Genesis, and supremely in redemption, where God satisfies his people with his goodness, as stated in Jeremiah. The New Testament further emphasizes God's goodness through the sending of Jesus Christ and the provision of all things necessary for life and godliness.

3. What is the relationship between God's goodness and his provision for humanity? God's goodness is intrinsically linked to his provision for humanity. The source emphasizes that God, as a heavenly Father, knows the needs of his children and provides for them, much like he feeds the birds and clothes the flowers. This is illustrated in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:25-34), where believers are encouraged not to be anxious about their basic needs because their good and generous Father will provide.

4. How should believers respond to God's goodness? Believers are called to respond to God's goodness with praise and trust. 2 Chronicles 7:3 highlights the importance of praising God because he is good and his faithful love endures forever. Romans 8:28 assures believers that even in the midst of suffering, God works all things together for their good. Furthermore, believers are encouraged to reflect God's goodness by loving their enemies and praying for those who persecute them, mirroring God's own impartiality in extending his goodness to all. The fruit of the Spirit, which includes goodness, should also be evident in the lives of believers.

5. What does it mean that God is patient or long-suffering? God's patience, or long-suffering, signifies that he is slow to anger and does not immediately punish sin. This attribute is also referred to as forbearance. It reveals God's restraint and his willingness to delay judgment, providing more time for repentance and salvation.

6. How is God's patience demonstrated in the Old and New Testaments? In the Old Testament, God's patience is evident in his dealings with the Israelites, particularly in the story of the flood where he waited patiently while Noah prepared the ark, and when Moses interceded for the rebellious people, reminding God of his character as "slow to anger." Exodus 34:6, which describes God as "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger," is a key verse highlighting this attribute. The New Testament also emphasizes God's patience, noting that Christ endured with much patience those who were objects of wrath, to make known the riches of his glory on those who were objects of mercy. Even the delay of Christ's return is presented as an act of God's patience, allowing more time for people to be saved (2 Peter 3:9, 15).

7. How does God's patience relate to salvation and repentance? God's patience is directly connected to his desire for salvation and his call to repentance. Romans 2:4 points out that God's kindness, restraint, and patience are intended to lead people to repentance. By delaying judgment, God provides opportunities for individuals to hear the gospel, turn away from their sins, and receive his mercy. The fact that Christ demonstrated extraordinary patience even towards the "worst of sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15-16) serves as an example of God's desire for all to come to know him.

8. How should believers reflect God's patience in their own lives? As those who have experienced God's patience, believers are called to be patient themselves. James 5:7-11 encourages believers to be patient until the Lord's coming, mirroring the steadfastness of the prophets and Job. Furthermore, patience is listed as a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), indicating that it should be a characteristic of those walking in the Spirit. James 1:19 also exhorts believers to be "quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger," highlighting the practical application of reflecting God's patient nature in interpersonal relationships.