

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; in *all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **longsuffering**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

Colossians 3:12-13 “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, *longsuffering*; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another.”

**Quote:** If you knew ahead of time the specific offences that someone was going to commit against you after you already forgave them several times, how longsuffering would you be? *Praise God for His longsuffering!*

**L**ongsuffering is a mindset that is willing to “bear injuries patiently, and to forgive them readily.”<sup>1</sup> “Longsuffering is an attitude of self-restraint that does not quickly retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger, and is associated with mercy.”<sup>2</sup> It “is opposed to passionate expressions and thoughts, and to irritability” when insulted or injured.<sup>3</sup> Christ said to use adversity as an opportunity to display godliness. “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, *that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.*”<sup>4</sup> Friend, that is the essence of living as a Christian and of truly following the example of Christ. Paul, the killer of Christians, was transformed by the grace of God Who is long-suffering. Of his conversion, he wrote, “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason, I

## The Spirit’s fruit, longsuffering

obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.”<sup>5</sup>

Longsuffering and patience are closely related. Patience matures our Christian character. James wrote, “My brethren, count it all joy *when you fall into various trials*, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect (maturing) work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”<sup>6</sup> The work of patience necessitates our choosing to profit from trials as ordained tools of God. This involves refusing to react rashly to adversity. “My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and *patience*. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and *seen the end intended by the Lord*—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.”<sup>7</sup> The word “patience” in this verse is the same Greek word for “longsuffering.” Christians can be encouraged by how God used every aspect of Job’s ordeal to develop his understanding and trust for the purpose of placing him on display for millions who would read about his extraordinary example. Although the details are different, we can rest assured that everything that God brings into our own lives is there by design for the same purpose—to glorify Him and to grow us into more effective reflectors of His Son. Like Paul, who endured his own persecution and trials, we can also embrace the truth “that *all things work together for good to those who love God*, to those who are the called *according to His purpose*. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? *If God is for us, who can be against us?*”<sup>8</sup> What a challenge to persevere during trials and to show forth longsuffering in the midst of His divine design for our lives! [See [Nehemiah 9](#) for God’s longsuffering.]

1 W. Burkitt 2 Vine’s 3 A. Barnes 4 Matthew 5:44 5 1 Timothy 1:15-16 6 James 1:2-4 7 James 5:10-11 8 Romans 8:28-31