

# 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 under-  
standing; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** II Timothy 2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

**Quote:** “Many Christians estimate difficulty in the light of their own resources, and thus they attempt very little and they always fail. All giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on His power and presence to be with them.” James Hudson Taylor, Missionary to China

**T**he Honor Roll in grade school and high school recognizes commendable academic achievement. The President’s List (no grade below A-), The Dean’s List (no grade below B-), *cum laude* (graduating with distinction), *magna cum laude* (graduating with great distinction), *summa cum laude* (graduating with highest distinction) all recognize academic excellence in college. All of these achievements are highly commendable, but are no guarantee of future success. Some who excelled in college washed out in life! Others with average grades had a work ethic in “the real world” that caused them to excel. Still others had deficiencies that had to be made up in order to be accepted into college, or to secure a job that required specific training.

In order even to be eligible to receive awards or secure employment, people must first meet the entrance standards, address any deficiencies, and pay any fees. They then must achieve the level of excellence required for that particular award or position by the school or business of their choice. The same is true of God’s rewards. There is one non-negotiable prerequisite—righteousness. There is one non-negotiable entrance fee—atonement for sin. In both areas, all people have deficiencies beyond their ability to satisfy. Righteousness and atonement for sin can only be secured by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.<sup>1</sup> All must personally entrust the welfare of their eternal soul into the safe-keeping of the Almighty.<sup>2</sup> Then and only then can they have the hope of “presenting themselves approved unto God.” The “summa cum laude” of true spiritual achievement is illustrated in the parable

of the talents. There is no greater honor than hearing the Lord say, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”<sup>3</sup> “The parable of the talents illustrates the tragedy of wasted opportunity. The man who goes on the journey represents Christ, and the servants represent professing believers given different levels of responsibility. *Faithfulness* is what he demands of them, but the parable suggests that *all who are faithful will be fruitful to some degree*. The fruitless person is unmasked as a hypocrite and utterly destroyed.”<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, the account of the widow’s mite clearly shows us that God evaluates our efforts by how we faithfully use what He has given to us for His glory. “Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two

## God’s A Honor Roll, An Introduction

mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them,

‘Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.’<sup>5</sup> There is a sense in which achieving “*God’s A Honor Roll*” is on a sliding scale that parallels our use of our God-given abilities and resources. You can never truly hope to receive His “Well done” without giving your best. Your best effort is always good enough when done for His glory. Your best effort is never good enough when it is done for self-glory. Compare Paul’s life before and after his salvation. Without Christ he was a Pharisee of the Pharisees in the pursuit of religious stardom. With Christ, he became a champion of the faith, who saw himself as the chief of sinners, but whose life has inspired millions. For Paul, life and its pursuits were all about Christ. Every Christian should often evaluate how and why he or she is pursuing excellence in his or her life and service.

1 John 10:24-33; John 17 2 Mark 1:15; Luke 24:45-47; Acts 20:21; 11:18 3 Matthew 25:14-29 4 MSB notes 5 Mark 12:41-44