

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: Ephesians 6:10-13 “Finally, **my brethren**, be strong in the Lord and in the **power of His might**. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**.”

Quote: “Soldiers of Christ arise, and put your armor on, strong in the strength which God supplies through His eternal Son.” Charles Wesley

Biblical Christianity isn't for sissies! Paul warned Timothy, “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, *longsuffering*, love, *perseverance*, *persecutions*, *afflictions*, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what *persecutions* I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and *all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.”¹

Being a Christian is a free gift of God provided *by grace alone through faith alone* in the death and resurrection of His Son. And yet, biblical Christianity brings with it a “price tag” that takes various forms for all who confess Jesus as Lord. For most, the price does not remotely approach what it cost Paul to be faithful to his calling, but there is a price to be paid none-the-less. *Paul stands as an example of God's power enabling perseverance in the face of intense battles*. Comparing himself with the deceivers of his day, he wrote, “in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness,

in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.”² Paul stood fast, and did not falter!

Paul had already reminded the believers at Corinth, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”³ Spiritual warfare is a reality for every true Christian; it is against the values of the world, the lust of our own flesh and the wiles of our adversary, the devil. Paul used the word “stand” because the battle will come to those who are committed to Christ, and who “confess Him before men” as Savior and Lord.

Take Your Stand!

Apparently “wine-women-and-song life-styles,” drug/alcohol issues or brushes with the law can be “marginalized” if you're good enough at entertaining, or at playing games! But, whatever you do, don't be too Christian! Biblical Christianity is viewed through different lenses by the world, judged by different standards by the media and ridiculed as “out of touch” with reality. There is coming a day when every individual will know reality! All will be judged by Him who knows the thoughts and intents of every heart. May we who are in Christ never lose sight that “ours is the greatest mission, the greatest message, the greatest Master the world knows anything about. Our mission is the Great Commission. Our message is the saving Gospel of our Lord and Savior. Our master, Jesus Christ Himself, has told us we ought to take the gospel to every creature on earth. Yet many Christians are sinning against this command. They're committing what [Adrian Rogers calls] “the sin of silence.”⁴ May God give us the courage and compassion to stand strong for the gospel, full knowing that opposition will come!

1 II Tim.3:10-13 2 II Cor.11:23-29 3 II Cor.10:4-5 4 Not a blanket endorsement of all that A.R. taught; Mt 10:33; Lu 9:26; 12:9; Ro 1:16; 2Ti 1:8