

# 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:** I John 2:1-6 “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”

**Quote:** The unbelieving Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “*Your actions speak so loudly, I can not hear what you are saying.*” Christians need to heed this common sense truth to be an effective witness for Christ.

**T**he Apostle John makes it very clear that a person’s actions deny or verify what he claims to be. “If you know that (Christ) is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.”<sup>1</sup> “And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: *Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*”<sup>2</sup> John is not speaking of sinless perfection when he says that he who “has been born of God does not sin,” or “cannot sin.” He is saying that a person’s pattern of living reveals the true condition of his heart. An individual whose faith is in the Person and work of Christ cannot abide in darkness and cannot practice sin without an

overwhelming sense of hypocrisy and of betrayal.<sup>3</sup>

Any Christian who has a sincere desire to testify of God’s saving grace knows of the intense struggle with his or her flesh that can only be won with the help of the Holy Spirit and not by self-effort. Paul wrote, “Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish...”<sup>4</sup> We are commanded “to keep on walking” in the Spirit, by obeying the dictates of God’s Word. The resulting benefit of doing so is stated in a double-negative for emphasis— We will “not at all by any means” fulfill the lust of the flesh in outward actions. The problem lies in the sad truth that we all fail at times to walk in the Spirit and we succumb to the lusts of our flesh to varying degrees, wretched souls that we are! We know by experience both the “thrill of victory” and the “agony of defeat.” We can relate to the words of Robert Robinson who wrote, “O to grace how great a debtor Daily I’m

## Model the Message of the Gospel

constrained to be! Let Thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee. *Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love; Here’s my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.*”

By God’s grace, we must labor to win conflicts at the heart level so that we might not commit sins at the habit level. Paul wrote that “those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.... For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*”<sup>5</sup> *In light of Who God is and what He has done for us may we guide and guard our words and actions to convey one-and-the-same message!*

1 | John 2:29 2 | 3:3-10 3 | John 5:3-5 4 | Galatians 5:16-17 5 | Romans 8:5,6,13,14