

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: Proverbs 22:1 “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold.”

Quote: All-knowing God, Your searching eye looks past my habits to my heart where weaknesses and strengths lie bare before Your piercing, holy stare. With sov'reign gaze, You loath all sham and know me as I truly am. Help me to captivate each thought, that loyal, loving I might be—faithful and true to Christ alone, exalting Him on my heart's throne. Make this my passion and my plea—that Christ be all-in-all to me. BLT

Who are you? This question cannot really be answered by simply replying with your name or your occupation. The question probes into that area that the Bible calls “the heart.” In your “essential self,” in your character, in your core values and non-negotiable convictions, *who are you?* What is the driving force behind your moral life, your emotions, your will and your reason? What makes you “tick?”

When people hear your name, what they know of your reputation comes to their mind, but reputations are not always a clear reflection of character. They can be cleverly fashioned with the selfish intent of getting all that can be gotten out of relationships and circumstances. Reputations can be manufactured veils that cover the true character of hypocrites. The impressions that we seek to make upon others can be far from what we really are, far from “the thoughts and intents of our heart,” far from what we might actually do if we knew that we would not be “found out.” The New Testament word for hypocrite means “an actor under an assumed character or a stage-player.” Far from being complimentary, the word implies that the person whom you see before you is not what he or she professes to be. Judas Iscariot is perhaps one of the best examples of this. His name has become synonymous with “one who betrays under the guise of friendship.” People like him are often labeled “two-faced” or “not honest or sincere:

saying different things to different people in order to get their approval.”

Esse Quam Videri is the Latin motto on the great seal of North Carolina. It is taken from Cicero’s “On Friendship” and means “To be rather than to seem.” The entire sentence that inspired this phrase has been translated, “Fewer possess virtue, than those who wish us to *believe* that they possess it.” The dictionary meaning of virtue is “moral excellence and righteousness; goodness.” Cicero correctly concluded that more individuals will put on a cloak of morality when it is to their advantage than will actually make it a consistent part of their life. When the potential profit dictates, they will lay aside their principles to get what is to their advantage. In doing so, they reveal their character.

You are more than your name....

With every passing day, each of us continues to formulate and refine how we see a world that is growing increasingly hostile to much of what Christians believe. Paul cautioned the Colossians to guard their hearts against the empty deceit of worldly philosophies. In order for Christians to remain steadfast in our faith, we must always remember that our minds are a battle field. Throughout each day, we are bombarded by the ideas, values and beliefs of others. There will be people who will seek to intimidate us, or try to seduce us with worldly wisdom if we fail to guard our heart and grow in our understanding of God’s Word. Paul warned that self-confident and influential people will try to deceive us with persuasive words. They may be college professors, or cultural icons that seem “larger than life.” They may be co-workers, business associates or fellow students who lure us into “loosening up” in the name of being liberated from what they see as outdated values that were “forced” upon us by others in our past. They may even be religious leaders who do not “rightly divide the Word of truth” and who preach “another gospel” through what they teach or sing. Beware! Measure all that you hear and read by the standard of the inspired, inerrant, all-sufficient Word of the true and living God!