

# 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:** 2 Timothy 3:1-5 “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”

Only Jesus! Always Jesus! May my life reflect the Lord through the grace that God affords. Only Jesus! Always Jesus! I will glorify my Savior and my King.



In late 1776, “Thomas Paine published *The American Crisis* pamphlet series to inspire the Americans in their battles against the British army. He wrote, ‘These are the times that try men’s souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the

service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like Hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: *it is dearness only that gives every thing its value.*”<sup>1</sup> The “summer soldier” was a reference to those who deserted the army during harvest, or before the approaching hardship of winter. “Sunshine patriots” were those whose patriotism blossomed when it was “politically correct,” but wilted in the face of opposition. Paine’s inspiring message was read to Washington’s troops on Christmas day as they prepared to cross the Delaware River in a surprise attack against the British forces. They won the Battle of Trenton!

For those who are trusting in Christ, there is no absence without leave from the war with our flesh; it is

an unending, agonizing struggle waged mainly on the battlefield of our mind. In addition to this internal conflict, earlier IMPACT devotionals have noted the growing external hostility towards the Christian religion in general and towards biblical Christianity in particular. This is no surprise to those who read their Bible! Paul wrote, “All who desire to live *godly* in Christ Jesus *will suffer persecution.*” He went on to warn that “evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” In the context of spiritual warfare, Paul admonished young Timothy to “...endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, *that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.*”<sup>2</sup> The more we hold dear the price paid for our salvation, the greater will be our commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of temptation within and persecution without.

As attacks against true Christianity grow, “summer soldiers” and “sunshine patriots” who profess belief in Christ, but who do not possess the conviction that accompanies true saving faith, will not stand their ground. Christ’s words of warning ring true today! “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For *what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.*”<sup>3</sup>

**The reality of warfare within and without**

Where do you stand? Summer soldier? Sunshine Patriot? Soldier of Christ? Time will tell, maybe sooner than later!

1 winterpatriot.blogspot.com 2 II Timothy 2:3-4 3 Mark 8:34-38