

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: II Peter 1:1-4 “Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

Quote: “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.” C. S. Lewis

When it comes to God’s Word, people fall into one of four categories. 1) They **ridicule** the Word outright in animosity. 2) After “trying the Christian religion” as one option and finding it “unfulfilling,” they **reject** the Word and their profession of faith. 3) Buying into the self-deception of “carnal Christianity,” which claims that simply “making a decision for Christ” gets you a passport into heaven, they **relegate** the Word to an occasional resource to try to justify their life-style.¹ To varying degrees, these three groups have swallowed the notion that “You only ‘go around’ once, so get all the ‘gusto’ that you can out of life.”²

Solomon is an example of the “carnal Christian” category of people for whom I am burdened. Surely he came to possess genuine faith in the living God at some point. The Scriptures state that God loved him as an infant, and that, when he became king, his unselfish request for wisdom to guide God’s people pleased God.³ Solomon started out strong, but then something happened. Disobedience and negligence led to disaster. In the book of Ecclesiastes, he gave a thorough admission that there is nothing that can come close to fearing and obeying God in light of a future divine judgment that is certain, personal and permanent.⁴

Solomon likened the pursuit of pleasure, prosperity, peace and power to “grasping for the wind!” A haunting chorus throughout the book is “vanity of vanities, *all is vanity.*” His stunning admission in the early part of the book was, “Therefore *I hated life* because the work that was done under the sun was distressing to me, for *all is vanity and grasping for the wind.*”⁵ His sobering warning was, “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; *But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.* Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity.”⁵ His “glorious declaration at the end of the book was, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man’s all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.”⁵

The fourth category of people are those who are placing their trust entirely and exclusively in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. They acknowledge their weaknesses and the battle with their flesh as they faithfully pursue growth in the grace and knowledge of God by studying and **relying upon** His Word.

May we each examine our own lives to see where we “stack up” when it comes to our relationship with God. May we also benefit from the valuable lessons that Solomon learned the hard way. 1) Genuine happiness is not found in the things of this world. 2) Apart from saving faith in Christ, life is futile, empty, and without meaning. 3) The supreme accomplishment in life is found in *fearing God and keeping His commandments.* 4) Failure to grow in the grace and knowledge of God exposes believers to complacency, compromise and carnality.

The next IMPACT will begin a focus upon living with serious intention!

¹ Ephesians 2:8-10; I John 2:29; 3:7; James 1:13-16 ² Ecclesiastes 11:9; 1 Corinthians 15:32 ³ II Samuel 12:24-25; I Kings 3:5-15 ⁴ Hebrews 9:27 ⁵ Ecclesiastes 2:17; 11:9-10; 12:13-14