

# 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:** II Peter 1:2-6 "...But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness...."

**Quote:** "We must add to our faith brotherly kindness, a tender affection to all our fellow-Christians, who are children of the same Father, servants of the same Master, members of the same family, travelers to the same country, and heirs of the same inheritance, and therefore are to be loved with a pure heart fervently."<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry

If you had siblings during your childhood and teen years, surely you remember having "disagreements" that necessitated one or both parents "getting to the bottom" of the conflict. Perhaps you or your sibling stretched the truth to "pad your case." Perhaps you outright lied with little or no thought as to how your selfishness could hurt your relationship with others involved if you were found out. Perhaps you griped about how your parents handled the conflict. Would anything have changed if you knew that you were being monitored? What if your father told you that he had heard and seen the whole "episode," and was keenly aware of exactly what was said and how it was said? When it comes to conflict or criticism among spiritual siblings in the family of God, we do well to remember that "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good."<sup>2</sup> It gets worse. "O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; *You understand my thought afar off.* You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with *all my ways.* For there is *not a word on my tongue,* But behold, O LORD, You know it *altogether.*"<sup>3</sup> When "spiritual siblings" are at odds, their Father not only knows *what* was said and done, but the motive that prompted it! We are left without excuse for every unkind word and deed that we do against a brother or sister in Christ, as well as every kind word and deed

**Add brotherly kindness to your faith**

that we refuse to say or do when it is in our power and for their good.

God loves His own because He chooses to do so and not because of any merit on their part. Likewise, godly believers choose to love their Christian brothers and sisters in spite of their perceived or real weaknesses and offenses because this pleases their Father. Like God's love for us, our love for a fellow believer is to be unconditional; it is not to be based upon what the other person can do for us, or how he or she makes us feel. While brotherly love is not to have conditions or requirements, our approval of another Christian's words and deeds depends upon his or her obedience to the Word of God. True love will graciously confront a fellow Christian who is living in sin, or who has left fellowship with other believers in a local church where he or she can be encouraged and taught in the Word. True brotherly kindness acts with eternity's values in view.

Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica, "But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and *indeed you do so* toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, *that you increase more and more.*"<sup>4</sup> When we are tempted to be unkind, impatient, judgmental, and worn out with what we perceive to be failures and shortcomings in others, we would do well to remember Christ's words. "A new *commandment* I give to you, that you *love one another; as I have loved you,* that you also *love one another.* By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have *love for one another.*"<sup>5</sup>

Time grants no grace for paths not walked, For love not shown, for truth not taught. Once spent it's gone and ne'er regained. What might have been can't be reclaimed. Invest your time like treasure rare, For time is life; naught else compares. Years flee like minutes towards our end, And chances lost won't come again. Give of yourself to those held dear, For mem'ries shared will keep you near. Your words and deeds of love will grow In value through the time you sow.

<sup>1</sup> Psa.139:1-4 <sup>2</sup> Prov.15:3 <sup>3</sup> I Thess.4:9, 10 <sup>4</sup> John 13:34, 35