

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 Timothy 4:7-8 “But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and *exercise yourself toward godliness*. For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.”

II Peter 1:3 “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....”

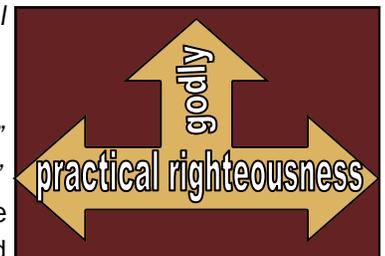
Quote: “Our first problem is that our attitude towards sin is more self-centered than God-centered. We are more concerned about our own ‘victory’ over sin than we are about the fact that our sin grieves the heart of God.” Jerry Bridges

Those who are trusting entirely and exclusively in the Lord Jesus Christ take seriously the command to be holy. They “flee youthful lusts; and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”¹ No Christians are as godly as they ought to be, but those who see themselves as debtors to grace gratefully exercise themselves unto godliness by consistently obeying the Scriptures and applying them to life. They seek to be instruments of practical righteousness. They are Romans-7-type people who *long* to *do right* even when they do not always manage to do so. They have “holy longings, holy aspirations and holy affections.”²

In the context of rejoicing in the confident expectation of what awaited them in heaven, Peter encouraged those Christians who were scattered by persecution to rest in the “keeping power” of God. He challenged them to pursue holiness— “Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but *as He who called you is holy*, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’”³ Commentator, Kenneth Wuest, writes, “Those who at one time were wholly controlled by their evil cravings, 64

had through salvation entered into a new state of being, that of inward holiness, by virtue of the residence in them of the Holy Spirit, and now they were to see to it that that *inward holiness found outward expression* in their lives. The word ‘holy’ in Greek means literally, ‘set apart.’ Thus, a holy person is one set apart from sin to righteousness. It has in it the idea of separation. Thus it is a separated life of which Peter is speaking. The word ‘saint’ is the translation of the same word. Furthermore, they were not to cover up their characters as Christians by outwardly assuming a masquerade costume patterned after their former worldly garments. *They were to become holy ones in their personal experience.*”

Those who are “banking” solely upon a “decision” made sometime in the past, or upon scattered “religious experiences,” but who are not pursuing holy



living for the glory of God, have little cause for assurance that they are truly in good standing before Him. They have no growing sense of fellowship with God. They possess no real “kindred spirit” with those whose lives demonstrate *an agonizing struggle* to be like Christ in thought, word and deed. Our bent—what we *are* as revealed by our thoughts, speech and actions—says everything about us.⁴ John warns believers, “Let no one deceive you. *He who practices righteousness is righteous*, just as (Christ) is righteous.”⁵ Do your own thoughts, speech and actions indicate an understanding that those who are “in Christ” are the temple of the Holy Spirit?⁶ Do you demonstrate an understanding that true Christians are to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God?”⁷ Does your life show that you are consistently exercising yourself unto godliness from a grateful heart?

The godliness of a grateful heart

1 II Timothy 2:22 2 Romans 6:13; Ephesians 5:1, 8-16. Also Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-23; Colossians 3; II Peter 1 3 | Peter 1:13-16 4 Proverbs 23:7; Luke 6:45; Mark 7:21-23 5 | John 3:7 6 | Corinthians 6:19-20 7