

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 Timothy 3:10-14 “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them...”

Quote: “Therefore, I bind these lies and slanderous accusations to my person as an ornament; it belongs to my Christian profession to be vilified, slandered, reproached and reviled, and since all this is nothing but that, as God and my conscience testify, I rejoice in being reproached for Christ's sake.” John Bunyan-

When Christ warned the disciples in Gethsemane, “Watch and pray, lest you fall into temptation,” they fell asleep! As we know, Peter was one of those disciples! Just prior to coming to Gethsemane, “Jesus said to them, ‘All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.’ Peter said to Him, ‘*Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not be.*’ Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.’ But he spoke more vehemently, ‘If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’ And they all said likewise.”¹ Peter’s attempt to defend Christ when the mob came for Him, gives evidence of his sincerity, but he and all the rest did as Jesus foretold. He fled, denied the Lord and then wept bitterly over his betrayal.

Many years later, as a veteran of spiritual warfare, he knew the danger of carelessness in enemy territory. In II Peter chapter one, his warning to be on guard was given to established soldiers who had suffered for Christ’s sake. He knew that martyrdom was near. He

wrote, “Therefore, brethren, *be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure*, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.”

The disciples were not novices, or “raw recruits.” The words “stir you up” give the idea of continually waking someone up or rousing them up from weariness and sleep. No matter what our “rank” is, we need to be reminded that the Christian life is spiritual warfare. We must stay focused upon specific truths that direct us and protect us as we contend for the faith.

Though sons of earth would buffet me, and try my soul to tears, I'll bask within that Blessed Light that scatters darkest fears. When fleshly hosts may gather 'round, and wars against me rise, I'll rest with confidence in God, and claim peace as my prize.

Dear Lord, make clear faith's wistful³ eyes. Thy beauty I would see. I tremble at the purging touch that draws Thine own to Thee. Yet, sheltered in protective grace, I'll worship all my days. While heart and breath shall hold life fast, I'll joyfully sing praise!

Oh, Abba, Father, hear my cry! Thy blessed mercy shed. When Thou didst bid me seek Thy 'face,' 'twas to Thine 'arms' I fled. If love from earth's frail ties forsakes, be Thou my help and stay. Lord lead me in Thy path so plain, my hand in 'Thine' always.

Though oft I faint from life's long toil towards death's awaiting door, fresh hope I've found believing in the goodness of my Lord. Unlike blind scorners of this world—grim strangers to God's grace— I'll wait secure within Thy bonds for strength to run life's race.⁴

¹ Matthew 26 ² II Peter 1:10-15 ³ “Full of yearning or desire tinged with melancholy” ⁴ From Psalm 27