

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: Romans 12:17-18 “Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Quote: “You can never learn that Christ is all you need, until Christ is all you have.” “Jesus did not promise to change the circumstances around us. He promised great peace and pure joy to those who would learn to believe that God actually controls all things.” Corrie Ten Boom

Although her sister, Betsie, died in the German’s Ravensbruck Concentration Camp, Corrie Ten Boom survived in the providence of God. “Just days before her death, Betsie said these words to Corrie, ‘There is no pit so deep that He is not deeper still. *They will listen to us Corrie, because we have been here.*’ Twelve days later, Corrie was miraculously released from prison due to a ‘clerical error.’ A week after her release, all of the female prisoners from her age group were killed.”¹ After sharing her testimony years later, Corrie was approached by a man who had been a guard at the concentration camp. He told her that he had become a Christian, and then asked her to forgive him. Struggling with her flesh, recalling God’s mercy in sparing her, and looking to Him for grace, she forgave this man who played a part in the affliction that she suffered at Ravensbruck.

When people wrong us, we are not to repay them with harm. “Have regard for good things” means that we are to think of a good response *ahead of time* so that we react in ways that honor God. If we simply react to wrong when it occurs, we may respond in the flesh and do much harm to our testimony. Whenever we can, we must live peaceably with others. In the midst of conflict, we are not to have a spirit of revenge. “Do not

rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; lest the LORD see it, and *it displease Him*, and He turn away His wrath from him. Do not say, ‘I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.’”² *Instead of taking things into your own hands, let God deal with the wrong-doer as He deems fit.*

Mean-spirited people expect you to react in anger and revenge. They have no answer when you react with kindness, self-control, patience, truth and love. A godly response will prick their conscience; it may be used of God to cause them shame for their sin against you.³ During conflict, seek to follow the example of Christ Who taught believers how to honor God in the midst of affliction. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, *love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do*

God’s A Honor Roll, Affliction

good to those who hate you, and *pray* for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”³ That kind of response is radical Christianity! It does not come naturally; however, through the enabling of the Holy Spirit, it glorifies God in a way that non-Christians cannot understand.

Jesus practiced what He preached! After the wrongs done to Him at Gabbatha, He prayed from the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do!” Like our Lord, we may be hard pressed by physical pain and emotional grief that often accompanies affliction at the hands of others. “All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus *will suffer persecution.*”⁵ May these be moments of deep devotion as we bow the knee to the truth that God at times uses evil instruments to accomplish His purpose for our lives.⁶ Our pain is a means to magnify His grace. The deeper our pain, the greater His grace. The greater His grace, the greater His glory.

1 crosswalk.com 2 Prov. 24:17-18, 29 3 Rom.12:17, 19; Prov.25:21-22
4 Matt.5:43-45 5 II Tim.3 6 Matt.27:28-31; Luke 22:22; Acts 3:13-15; 5:30