

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: Philippians 2:13 “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”

QUOTE: You are now becoming who you will one day be.

Over the years I have made that statement to my Bible students to emphasize the impact that one particular decision can have on countless other decisions “down the road.” Recently this came home to me in a different light. The fact that I am where I am in life at age sixty-seven was greatly influenced by one decision that I made at eighteen. *In the providence of God*, a kid who had rarely been more than fifty miles from home attended a Christian university eight hundred miles to the south! My academic background in high school was not strong. My naive thoughts that going off to school to major in art would be “a piece of cake” were soon smashed by reality. It was hard. Very hard. There were private tears and feeling overwhelmed and alone and sometimes just plain stupid! College was one of several crucibles¹ that God used to change me. That one decision to attend Bob Jones University impacted who I married, what I am doing with my life today and where I am doing it.

BJU had a strong intramural sports program. I had never played soccer, but I thought that I would give it a try and played for four years. After college, I got married in August of 1973, and took a job teaching art at Elkton Christian School in Maryland. Prior to the first day of school, the principal asked me if I would consider coaching junior varsity soccer. I told him that I would. After all, how hard could it be to coach junior high kids? What I did not realize was that he had asked another teacher, who had never played soccer, to coach the varsity. It took barely two days for my co-worker to raise the white flag. I was asked to switch teams with him. *During all of these years, I have been in the process of becoming the coach that I am today.*

Now for the “new light” on “*You are now becoming who you will one day be.*” Recently I read an article entitled “Four Questions Coaches Should Ask Themselves.” “Why do I coach?” “Why do I coach the way that I do?” “How does it feel to be coached by me?” “How do I

determine success?” The third question hit me the hardest. “How does it feel to be coached by me?” The sobering truth is that the answer would vary with each individual that I coached as well as when I coached him or her. I am not the same person who began coaching at twenty-two that I am at sixty-seven. Depending upon their age at the time of answering the question, my former players are not the same people that they were “back then” either. Some past players are in their sixties! Current ones are in their teens. *Several of them would answer the question differently than their sons whom I also coached!* In one sense, they played for the same person! In another sense, *thank the Lord*, they did not! By God’s grace, the coach that I was has grown as a Christian, and has changed each season.

God’s A Honor Roll, Advancement

The decisions that we make now, the things that we do now and the things that we say now can cross decades. Many of my players from bygone days do not know me as I am now. Their memories are colored by who we were then. Like me, each of them is not the same person that he or she was back then. There are lessons that I have learned on the journey. I am sure that they could say the same.

This same reality of growth and change could be applied to any position that we hold and any interactions that we have over the span of our lives. It would behoove us all to answer these same questions. “Why do I do what I do?” “Why do I do what I do in the way that I do it?” “How does it feel to work for me or with me?” “How do I determine success?” For some of us, our answers may necessitate changes.² No matter what our current age is, we all will continue to become who we will one day be one decision at a time. God alone knows His ordained finish line for us!³ May we carefully invest each day, knowing that the memories others have of us will continue to impact them long after we are gone! By His grace and for His glory, may we continue to grow and change!

¹ “A place or situation in which forces interact to cause or influence change or development.” ² Acts 9:1-31 with Acts 22:1-15; 1 Tim.1:12-17 ³ Psalm 139:16; Job 14:5