

IMPACT

I Must **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: Luke 15:18-24 “I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’ And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ‘And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found....’”

Quote: “While there is breath, there is hope.” (Anon)

The above text is from the parable that Jesus told concerning the Prodigal son. Much could be said about the harvest that this young man reaped from wasting his inheritance on riotous living and the dishonor he showed to his father by his unusual request to receive his inheritance prior to his father’s death. Much could be said about his self-righteous older brother who also dishonored his father by resenting the grace shown to his younger brother who had returned home. In this IMPACT, we want to consider the attitude that the father must have had that gave this wayward son the hope that he could return home, even if it meant doing so with a servant’s status.

John said, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”¹ While he was speaking of those who came to Christ under his ministry, this surely is true of any godly parent when it comes to hearing that their own children are “walking in truth.” The opposite is also true! There is no greater sadness than to hear that one’s children are not “walking in truth,” and that they have journeyed into a “far country” spiritually. What is a parent to do when this happens? In sharing some insights, I presume that you have had your children exposed to the Word of God while they were young. “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”² If you failed in this area, then pray

fervently and faithfully that God will expose them to His Word. Make it clear to them that your love is unconditional, but your approval of their life-style must be filtered through their adherence to the moral principles of the Bible. Don’t make a profession of faith by them the bottom line pre-requisite to restored fellowship. You may drive them further away, or foster a false profession by them just to get into your good graces. Be reachable, but do not “enable them” to do wrong. Take hope in the truth that **Salvation is of the Lord**. Be encouraged by the ultimate illustration in the life of Saul the Christian killer who was transformed by God’s grace into Paul the Ambassador of Christ.³ Never forget that God alone prepares the soil of the heart to receive the Word of life!⁴

Hope During Rejection

There is no fortress of the mind, no dungeon of the heart so black, that light and life can be repelled, the call of Truth e’er be brushed back. Nor is there rebel bulwark made where Sovereign grace cannot invade—no ‘heartland’ distant, cold and dark where Love’s sure Word cannot persuade the arrogant or ignorant who will not, or who cannot see their desp’rate need of saving grace that beckons them to bow the knee.⁵

A soldier of the hosts of light, mine is the herald’s humble role. Christ leads me to engage the hosts of darkness that enslave the soul. I must not fail to press the fight, *full knowing it is God’s to win*. No matter that I doubt myself—to doubt my God is grievous sin! “*All souls are mine!*” Jehovah cries, and draws my focus to His pow’r that reassures my fainting heart amidst doubt’s dark, oppressive hour.

Though oft’ rebuffed, I persevere, and bravely lift God’s two-edged Sword. N’er trusting in my own resolve, I gain new hope through Christ the Lord. God hears the often wordless prayers⁶ that from my burdened heart ascend as love compels me to press on, and plead for grace time and again. Strengthen my faith, Almighty God, *as I recall that saving grace quickened my own dead heart to life, and drew me to Thy resting place.*⁷

1 III Jn.4 2 Rom.10:17 3 Acts 8:3; 9:1-21; 26:10-11; Gal.1:13; 1Tim.1:13; Jn 10:1-30; Jn 17. 4 Jn.1:1-13; Ezek.11:19; 36:26-27 5 I Cor.1:18; 2:14 6 Rom. 8:26-39 7 Eph.1 and 2: