

BENEFITS OF BEING A CHRISTIAN – A TRIUMPHANT FRAME OF MIND

Ephesians 4:17-24

## INTRODUCTION

- A. In a wonderfully practical way, all of the blessings and benefits of becoming a Christian come together to produce a new way of thinking, a new perspective on the whole of life.
- B. To accept fully this new outlook — and radiate its goodness to others — is one of the pleasant challenges of life in Jesus Christ.

## DISCUSSION

## I. CLARIFYING THE CHRISTIAN'S NEW OUTLOOK

- A. A new perspective justified and exemplified.
  - 1. The new frame of mind possible for the Christian is grounded in the character of God: His power, wisdom, goodness, etc.
    - a. God is “the God of hope” who can “fill [us] with all joy and peace in believing” – RO 15:13; Cf. Job 34:29; PS 4:8.
    - b. Faith is “the victory that has overcome the world”- 1 JN 5:4, 5.
  - 2. What can happen is illustrated in the dramatic change in the apostles’ outlook between the Lord’s crucifixion and Pentecost — from doubt, despair, dejection, and despondency they had hope, courage, and joy - JN 16:22. Cf. Acts 2:46, 47; 8:8, 39; etc.
- B. A new perspective identified and clarified.
  - 1. The mental refreshment and invigoration of the Christian results from a new “mind” attuned to spiritual realities. RO 8:6; Cf. GA 5:22-23; RO 12:2; CO 3:1-2.
  - 2. The Christian’s joyous way of looking at things does not mean that he must no longer cope with pain, sorrow, and difficulty — it is rather that he can look beyond these things and rise above them.
    - a. Jesus Himself is the supreme example - HE 12:2. Cf. LK 12:50; 22:41-44.
    - b. Jesus’ prayer for His apostles is instructive: JN 17:15.
    - c. In spite of trouble, the Christian can “greatly rejoice” – 1 PE 1:6-8.

## II. DESCRIBING THE CHRISTIAN'S NEW OUTLOOK

- A. Paul wrote, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind” – RO 12:2.
- B. This “renewal” and “transformation” shows up in many specific ways:
  - 1. A more grateful outlook toward God - JN 3:16; 2 CO 9:15; EP 2:8.
  - 2. A more patient outlook toward people - 2 TI 2:24-26; JA 1:19, 20.
  - 3. A more realistic outlook toward self - RO 12:3; 1 CO 15:10.
  - 4. A more pragmatic outlook toward problems - MT 6:33, 34; PH 4:13.
    - a. The spiritually renewed person can accept unpleasant facts, whatever their source, as concrete situations to be handled rather than hated.
    - b. “A problem is only an opportunity in work clothes.”
  - 5. A more courageous outlook toward perils - JN 16:33; 1 JN 4:4.
    - a. “Serenity comes not alone by removing the outward causes and occasions of fear, but by the discovery of inward reservoirs to draw upon” (Rufus M. Jones).
    - b. 2 KI 6:16.
  - 6. A more comforting outlook towards sorrows - 1 TH 4:13, 18.
  - 7. A more contented outlook toward wants - PH 4:11, 12.
    - a. “We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life, when all that we need to make us really happy is something to be enthusiastic about” (Charles Kingsley).

- b. MT 6:33.
- 8. A more enthusiastic outlook toward work - EC 9:10; CO 3:23.
- 9. A more confident outlook toward responsibilities - 2 CO 3:5.
- 10. A more joyous outlook toward life - PH 4:4; 1 PE 1:6.
- 11. A more optimistic outlook toward the future - PH 1:19-26; JO 1:7-9.
- 12. A more fervent outlook toward eternity - JN 14:1-4; PH 3:20, 21; HE 13:14; 2 PE. 3:10-13.
- 13. A more peaceful outlook toward all things - JN 14:27; PH 4:6, 7.

### III. ACCEPTING THE CHRISTIAN'S NEW OUTLOOK

- A. The Christian is challenged to accept his new outlook not only in principle, but in practice - PH 4:4; 1 TH 5:16.
  - 1. "There are basically two types of human beings: those who think of life as a privilege and those who think of it as a problem" (Arthur Gordon).
  - 2. The Christian has every reason to think of life as a God-given privilege.
- B. Those outside of Christ ought to be able to sense the qualitative difference in the Christian's frame of mind.
- C. And the Christian ought to be able to say to his neighbor what Paul said to Agrippa: Acts 26:29.

### CONCLUSION

- A. The Christian's new outlook on all things is a manifestation of the fact that he is, indeed, 2 CO 5:17.
  - 1. He experiences the glorious joy of the forgiveness of sins: PS 32:1.
  - 2. He thanks God for a new hope: 1 PE 1:3.
  - 3. He rejoices in the fellowship of God and His people: 1 JN 1:3-4.
  - 4. He thrills to newfound freedom in Christ: JN 8:32, 36.
  - 5. He gladly accepts a new way of life: 1 JN 5:3.
  - 6. He happily explores the potential of his usefulness in the Lord: 1 CO 15:58.
  - 7. He values the new self-image that he is privileged to have: 1 CO 6:20.
  - 8. He triumphantly enjoys a refreshing outlook on life and eternity: RO 8:31-39.
- B. EP 1:3.