

It's Great To Be A Christian

Introduction. Too many, for too long, have had the idea that following the gospel is a somber, morose, and doleful exercise. They treat it as if it is only for the elderly and children, but this picture is just the opposite of what is in the scriptures. Those Christians over 1,900 years ago was made up of young and old, male and female, and they were happy and joyous.

Philip preached to the Ethiopian nobleman about the Lord in Acts 8:35-39. When this man had heard the preaching, believed it, confessed Christ as Lord, and was baptized, we are told that "he went on his way rejoicing." Paul and Silas, even in jail, were singing praises unto God, and they also preached Christ to their jailer (Acts 16:25-34; cp. James 5:13). After the jailer was baptized into Christ, he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Even when they were persecuted, Christians "rejoiced, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Acts 5:41).

Of all that live on the earth, Christians have more and better reasons to be happy than others. Why? This lesson will examine several good reasons.

I. Because God Loves Us And Wants Us To Be Saved

- A. In spite of our mistakes, and the knowledge that we cannot save ourselves, God cares for us (Psalm 46:1; 2 Peter 3:9).
- B. And even though we all have sinned and come short of God's glory (Romans 3:23), He loves us (John 3:16). Even before His birth, it was announced that Christ was "God with us" (Matthew 1:23).
- C. Why shouldn't we be happy and confident? God cares for us, and therefore no one can be against us (Romans 8:31-32).

II. Because Christ Died On The Cross To Save Us From Our Sins

- A. What is the greatest degree of love a man can demonstrate? Jesus answers in John 15:13-14. And He did just that, and not because we were good and righteous (Romans 5:8).
- B. Because we all have sinned, we must die (Romans 6:23). So, this is our cause to rejoice! Not because we are sinners, but because Christ died for us (Titus 2:11; Hebrews 2:14).
- C. We often sing, "What can take away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus." And this is right (Hebrews 9:22; 10:19-20). While in bondage to sin (Romans 6:16; Hebrews 2:15), Christ redeemed us (1 Peter 1:18-19).

III. Because Christ Is Our Great High Priest

- A. As a sinner, we cannot come before God and plead our case alone. But Jesus can and does (1 John 2:1).
- B. He is our High Priest, offering His own blood for the cleansing of our sins (Hebrews 2:17; 4:15). The high priest in the Old Testament was the only one who could stand before man and God (Leviticus 16:1-28). In the New Testament age, Christ is likewise the only way to God (John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5).

- C. His enemies thought that by putting Him to death, His work would be ended. But, He was raised from the dead! Now, He lives to make intercession for us (Hebrews 7:25).

IV. Because Of The Purpose And Meaning Of Life

- A. Philosophers, through the ages, have sought an answer to the question, “What is the purpose of life?” Man can never supply the answer in and of himself (Jeremiah 10:23), but God can and does (Ecclesiastes 12:13).
- B. The aimlessness that is obvious in our society today is traceable to a loss of faith in God and in Christ. When man turns from God, he loses his purpose for living! To sum up the meaning of man's existence, Paul preached, “... that they should seek the Lord ...” (Acts 17:27).
- C. Jesus pointed this out in His own life on the earth (John 4:34; 6:38). The Lord fulfilled that purpose (John 17:4). And only when we “glorify God” in our lives, can we say we have fulfilled His purpose in giving us life (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

V. Because Of The Fellowship With Other Christians

- A. Someone has said, “No man is an island” and that is true (Romans 14:7). We depend on one another.
- B. But the very heart of the gospel is that we are one in Christ (1 Corinthians 1:10; 12:25-26). Christians in Jerusalem, over 1,900 years ago, felt and lived that way (Acts 4:32).
- C. We need the strength, encouragement, and wisdom of one another — especially in times of sorrow and grief (Psalm 133:1; Philippians 1:27).
- D. By myself, I might not be able to stand, but with other Christians I can (Ephesians 4:16). We can collectively go to the Bible and have comfort and edification (1 Thessalonians 4:18; 5:11).

VI. Because Of The Peace It Brings

- A. In our world of turmoil, anger, and strife, peace is a coveted treasure. But only the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6) can bring true peace to our lives. It is only in Christ that “we have peace with God” (Romans 5:1).
- B. His sacrifice makes that peace possible (Colossians 1:20). When Paul speaks of our being at peace with God, note what he says about Christ (Ephesians 2:14-16). So, in Christ, we have peace with God and with each other.
- C. The Lord discusses another kind of peace that is vital to Christians (Matthew 6:34). But how can we avoid worry and life's anxieties (Matthew 6:33)? This is the only way to true peace of mind.
- D. When we put our trust in Him, live in loving obedience to His will, then we can rejoice in the Lord (Philippians 4:4-7).

VII. Because Of The Assurance Of Heaven

- A. Life here, with all its problems, temptations, and turmoil, is tolerable because of the hope we have in the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:19).
- B. He has gone to prepare us a place (John 14:1-3). It is great to be a Christian because our hope is not centered here, but in Heaven.

- C. As a child anticipates the joys of a birthday party, so the faithful and righteous Christian lives with hope of eternity in Heaven (1 Peter 1:3-4; Revelation 2:10).
- D. But what assurance can we have that we will really go to Heaven? The Bible give us the assurance of our hope. That is why we can sing, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine."

Conclusion. Yes, it is great to be a Christian because of the joy and happiness of serving Him, the help given by the Lord and our brethren, and the anticipation of eternity with God in Heaven.

These all make the toils of the road to seem nothing. It is great to be a Christian, because life without Christ would not be worth living. Are you a Christian? If not, respond today and be baptized into Jesus Christ.