

Some Blessings In Christ

INTRODUCTION :

A. Many Christians don't have joy in their lives.

1. Some have negative attitudes about life.
 - a. Their glass is always half empty or less.
 - b. Their glass isn't big enough or it's dirty, or its
2. They sometimes become confrontational and argumentative even about positive things.
3. They walk around looking like they've been sucking a lemon. (**baby illustration**)

B. How can this be ?

1. Of all people, Christians have the most reason to be joyous.
2. People around Christians should be envious of their :
 - a. of their joy, peace, contentment, confidence, etc.
 - b. They should be eager to get what we have.
3. When people see a Christian :
 - a. They should be able to recognize a positive difference from people in the world.
 - b. They should see that whatever we have is desirable to possess.
4. Instead, we're often the brunt of jokes ridiculing us.
 - a. They laugh because we are so uptight.
 - b. They accuse us of being the source of guilt and the poor self-images of others.

TRANSITION :

WHY ?? Could it be that we don't understand what we have in Christ. Let's look at just a few of the causes for the peace and joy that we have in Christ.

I. Christians have Free, Open, and Unlimited access to God.

A. Only Christians have this access.

1. **Eph 2:12** ... Those outside Christ have “no hope” and are “without God in the world.”
2. In the next verse the Apostle encourages Christians :
Eph. 2:13- **But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.**

B. Christians not only have access, they have bold and confident access.

1. **Eph 3: 12-** (Jesus) **in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.**
2. **Heb. 4:16-** **Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**
3. Compare ... **Heb. 10: 19-22**

C. Only the kings own children can enter the throne room uninvited.

1. Remember the story of Esther ? (Even the king's wife was afraid to enter.)
2. His child could set in King's presence, even on his lap.
3. Christians are the children of God. (known by God ... **John 10:27**)
 - a. **Gal. 3: 26-** **For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.**
 - b. **Rom. 8:16-** **The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,**

II. Christians receive God's love unconditionally.**A. Those who are not parents have great difficulty understanding the concept of unconditional love.**

1. This is why children can hurt the parents so easily and deeply
2. Parents love their children ... regardless of the child's actions.
 - a. Even when the children are very unlovable, their parents love them.
 - b. By nature children are totally SELFISH and demanding, but loved anyway.
3. Likewise, God never stops loving His children.

B. God is the Christian's loving heavenly Father.

1. He loved us even while were rebelling against Him.
 - a. Children reach that age where they know it all and want to be in charge.
 - b. **Remember** the parable of the prodigal son. (*briefly summarize*)
 - c. We are that son whose father longed for his return.
2. **Read ... Rom. 5:5-10**
 - a. We were all rebels toward God. (**We all sin.**)
 - b. God made the ultimate sacrifice for us while we were in rebellion.
3. God's relationship with man is characterized by a father's love.
 - a. **Read ... Eph. 2: 1-9**
 - b. **Compare ... John 3: 16**

III. Christians have ongoing forgiveness of all their sins.

A. There is no sin for which a father will not forgive his child.

III. : **II Sam 13-19** ... David wanted his son Absalom spared though he tried to kill David.

- a- Absalom's revolt caused an embarrassing civil war which killed many.
- b- The king ordered mercy on Absalom.
- c- The king mourned the loss of his son, the rebel.

1. This is the kind of love God has for us and which we Christians must have for others.
2. You cannot commit a sin so big God will stop loving you.
3. You cannot commit a sin so big God will not forgive you if you repent.

B. God's forgiveness is total and absolute.

1. **Rom. 8: 1-** Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
2. **Eph. 1: 4-** just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.
3. Compare : **Eph. 5: 27** & **Col. 1: 22** (Church = individuals)

C. Forgiveness is an ongoing process.

1. **Read ... I John 1: 7-10**
2. How many sins does God forgive ?? ALL our sins.
3. What happens if we forget to confess one of our sins ? God forgives it.

D. It is sin that separates man from God.

1. **Rom. 6:23-** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 - a. Sin kills.
 - b. Death is separation.
2. Thus, no sin = nor death = no separation from God.
3. **Read ... I John 3:19-22**

IV. Christians are protected by God.

A. We are secure in Christ so long as we trust him.

1. **I Pet. 1: 3-5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

* *If one trusts in himself, he can never be secure.*

2. **II Pet. 2:9-** the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,

B. God limits Satan's power to tempt Christians.

1. **I Cor. 10:13-** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.
 - a. Satan is powerful, but God will not allow him to overwhelm a Christian.
 - b. Remember the story of Job.
2. **John 10:27-29** My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.
 - a. Satan cannot take anyone by force ... snatch them up.
 - b. A Christian can surrender and walk away, but he can never be dragged off.
3. When the storms of life rage, we must be steadfast in our faith. **FEAR NOT !!**

V. Christians live in anticipation of Heaven.

A. The Christians can face God (*death*) without fear.

1. **Rom. 8: 1-** Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
2. **Jude 24-** Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,
3. **I John 4: 18-** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. (*Fear reflects doubt, lack of faith.*)

B. The Apostle Paul is a good example of confidence for Christians.

1. He freely admitted that he was a sinner.
 - a. **I Tim. 1:15-** Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. (*Present tense ... not past*)
 - b. Compare ... **Rom. 7: 14 f** ... He had the same ongoing struggle we have.

2. Because of his faith, Paul knew that God would deliver him from his sins.
 - a. Once He committed his soul into the keeping of Christ, he had complete confidence.
 - b. **II Tim. 1:12-** For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.
3. The Apostle was faced death with total confidence in God's promises.
 - a. **II Tim. 4:7-8** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; ⁸ in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.
 - b. **II Tim. 4:18-** The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever.

C. Christians are completely saved so we have not reason for doubt or fear.

1. Christians live in anticipation of the day Jesus comes, NOT in fear of it.
2. Each Lord's Day we proclaim our faith in his return by partaking of the communion.

I Cor. 11:26- For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
3. We are instructed to encourage each other with the story of His return.
 - a. **I Thess. 4:13-18**
 - b. **"SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD"**

CONCLUSION :

A. Christians have many reasons to rejoice and to be happy.

1. We have unfettered access to God.
2. God's love for us is unconditional and unending.
3. We have ongoing forgiveness.
4. God protects us from Satan's power.
5. We live in anticipation of Heaven.

B. Life is filled with problems, but we must learn to dwell on God's blessings.

1. When a Christian realizes what he has in Christ, no one will be able to prevent him from telling others about it.
2. When a person realizes what he has in Christ, his life will change so that others will want what he has.