

Do We Realize What We Have?

Andy McClish

One of the greatest advantages that a person can be given in life is to be trained from birth as a child of God. Surely those of us who have been a part of the church from childhood don't need to be reminded that, in Christ, we are blessed with "every spiritual blessing" (Eph. 1:3). Surely we realize that we are "free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2), that we have been "sanctified" and "justified" in the name of the Lord (1 Cor. 6:11), and that, as we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus continually cleanses us from sin (1 John 1:7). Surely we are ever conscious of the enormous debt which has been paid on our behalf, because of our sin (Isa 53:5; Rom. 5:8; Heb. 10:10-12;). Surely those of us who are lifelong Christians don't need to be taught again that God's way is always the best way (Pro. 3:5-6; 14:12; Ecc. 12:13) and that an incorruptible inheritance is "reserved in Heaven" for the faithful child of God (1 Pet. 1:4). Surely we realize everything we have as a result of our relationship with God, through Christ, don't we?

The more I observe members of the church (myself included), the more I am convinced that, in one sense, those who have only been Christians for a small part of their lives have an advantage over those of us who have been "brought up" in the church. Obviously, there are some clear disadvantages to being without Christ for most of one's life. All the lost time and opportunities for growth and service (to say nothing of the hopeless feeling of being "without God," Eph. 2:12) would have to be placed in this category. Ironically, however, the memory of these disadvantages of the past can and often does serve as a powerful motivating force for the present (undoubtedly this was the case in the life of the apostle Paul). The person who has converted from a worldly life (of many years) to the Christian life doesn't usually need to be reminded of how much he has gained in Christ. He has a clear memory of the burden of sin and of a life which had no meaning or purpose. As a result, this person is acutely aware of the debt he owes and is excited about Christianity, anxious to please God in every way, and eager to teach the Gospel to others. Surely all of us who are Christians (whatever our "age" in Christ may be) need to consider every day just how much we have and just how much we owe.

[**Note:** Andy McClish wrote this article for, and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, August 31, 1989, of which Dub McClish was editor.]

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