

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The Dichotomy of the Christian

(Jerry Fite)

In a series of contrasts Paul writes, “...by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known...as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things” (2 Corinthians 6:10).

The first four dichotomies stand out for Christian today. It seems that followers of Christ are receiving more dishonor in our 24/7 media coverage than honor; and those who would portray Christians as deceivers seem to have a louder voice. Regardless, the Christian speaks and lives according to the truth of God’s word (Ephesians 4:25, 2 John 1-2, 4).

Today, if Christianity is portrayed upon television and in movies, it will be probably be Catholicism. It will be “father-so-and-so giving counsel, or hearing a private confession. Do many know there are members of the Lord’s body, who honor the Lord by wearing only the name “Christian”, and call no man their spiritual father, reserving that for only

the Father in heaven, just as Jesus commanded (Matthew 23:9)? God knows. He knows His own. Upon this foundation, the Christian can stand strong. “Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness” (2 Timothy 2:19).

The Christian can sorrow when death separates him or her from loved ones. Living as Christians, when a fellow Christian dies, we can rejoice with them, for they have gained the comforting presence of the Lord. “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21); therefore for Paul, he sees things differently: “But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ for it is very far better” (Philippians 1:23). Yes we sorrow, but do so in hope of the resurrection and Heaven with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

The Christian can have nothing of this world’s treasures, but offer true riches to everyone

they meet. It does not take much money to share the riches of God grace to sinners. Taking the Bible in hand, and a little time, one can open eyes to the light of gospel (Acts 26:17-18). One can learn that their soul is their richest possession. Hearers can save themselves from this crooked and perverse generation (Acts 2:40). Understanding the enduring spiritual life over this short time on earth, can one grasp and cherish the dichotomy of being poor, but making many rich. This should motivate us to ever be busy in seeking the lost.

The Christian can have nothing in this world, but have everything. How? He or she is walking daily with the Creator of all things. “Wherefore let no one glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: and ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s” (1 Corinthians 3:21-23). May we manifest these dichotomies, and cherish them. They are true, rich and rewarding!