

The Optimism Of Jesus

I. Optimism = The opinion or doctrine that everything in nature is ordered (by God) to produce the most good. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary.

A. Jesus was a man who in these confused and distracting times, can give us confidence and hope.

B. He was not a man who could shut his eyes to the sorrow or the heartbreak of the world.

1. He saw both sides, the bright side and the dark side, and having seen both sides, His face had light on it.

2. Jesus was optimistic in two primary ways.

a. The way that He saw circumstances.

b. The way that He saw people. *"be a good cheer."* Johns 16:33

II. Jesus was optimistic about the circumstances of Life.

A. "It was the worse of times and it was the best of times." This quote from the book "The Tale Of Two Cities," in my opinion best sums up the Christian experience.

1. Over the years I have discovered the worse of times and the best of times are eternally linked. God uses the worse of times to break you, mold you and shape you in order to bring you into the best of times.

a. Isaiah 45:3 states, *"And I will give you treasures hidden in the darkness,"* meaning that the Lord will use the dark times of your lives to bring you some of His greatest treasure.

b. Jeremiah 15:19 states, *"Before Me you will stand; And if you extract the precious from the worthless, You will become My spokesman,"* again you see **that in the midst of something that is seemingly worthless, God will help you find something precious.**

c. John 16:33 states, *"here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world."* Trials and sorrows will help you discover His overcoming power which will then bring cheer into your lives.

2. The point I am trying to make is that in midst of the worse of times God will help you find the best of times.

B. Hebrews 13:5 - Our lives should be characterized by contentment. Definition:

1. Rest or quietness of the mind in the present condition.

2. Satisfaction which holds the mind in peace, restraining complaint, opposition, or future desire

C. To be content with what you have, you need to fully grasp what is it that you have.

1. **We have Jesus, and Jesus is, and has, everything we need. “Jesus Is Enough”**

2. “Content” = “arkeo” - to be possessed of unfailing strength, to have enough, to be satisfied.

3. **Amplified translations says, “be satisfied with your present circumstances.”**

4. We can satisfied in our present circumstances because the presence of God will never leave us nor forsake us.

a. **Leave = (an-ee'-ay-mee), means He won't relax His grip or loosen His hold.**

1) It doesn't mean He is going to take you out of your circumstances, it means he won't leave you while you are in the midst of them.

2) **He's got a hold of you in your circumstances.**

3) He will hold you while the circumstances mold you.

b. **Forsake = (eng-kat-al-I'-po) means He won't leave you behind in some place.**

1) Once the circumstances have done their work, God won't abandon you to them.

2) **Once they put something in, God will take you out.**

3) Once the circumstances have changed you, then God changes your circumstanc

c. **1 Timothy 6:6 - “Godliness with contentment is great gain” or “contentment with the things that produce godliness will yield great gain.” Berean**

C. Phil 4:11-13 - This statement is powerful because of where he is at when he is writing this. (Paul understood that the Lord would never leave or forsake him)

1. **Contentment is a learned attribute. (2 treasures - writing and winning)**

a. The KJV says “everywhere and in all things I am instructed”

b. **The Greek word for instructed or learned is “mueo” which means:**

1) to initiate into the mysteries

2) **to give one an intimate acquaintance with a thing**

2. Until instruction takes place, provision or deliverance won't take place.

a. **Mark 4:38-39 - The stilling of the storm was the result of no faith**

b. Matthew 14:22-32 - This time one of the disciples (Peter was instructed by the storm) instead of being delivered from it he decided to learn how to walk on it.

1) **Once he passed the test, the storm was stilled automatically.**

2) The best way to still a storm is to learn to walk on it (be instructed by it)

III Jesus was optimistic where people were concerned.

A. Along with unswerving trust in God, there went an unshakable confidence that men could change.

1. He saw the possibilities and capacities of the human heart.

a. He saw men's littleness, frailties, vices and sins, but underneath all these He saw a soul created in God's image.

b. He had hope for publicans and sinners. He knew that Zaccheus could repent and that Matthew could become a preacher.

B. John 4:35-43, "*Lift up your eyes and look*" *theaomai* {*theh-ah'-om-ah-ee*} "which means to view attentively, to learn by looking, to see with the eyes, to perceive.

1. It means to see the sag in the shoulders, to see the pain in the eyes, or the desperation in their actions.

2. Jesus is admonishing His disciples to see the harvest differently. He saw it as bring ripe for the picking.

a. What Jesus saw drew Him, what the pharisees saw repulsed them.

b. What others saw as closed hearts, Jesus saw as opened hearts.

3. This statement comes after He successfully harvests a soul that everyone else would have missed.

4. She was an outcast of outcasts and the most insignificant person in that region.

C. **Not only was it amazing that someone like her was open to the gospel. But that Jesus was able to detect it.**

1. Others would have seen a promiscuous samaritan woman - Jesus saw the first fruits of a great harvest.

a. Others would have only gave her criticism - Jesus gave her a chance.

b. Others saw her as she was - Jesus saw how she was intended to be.

c. Others saw only her promiscuity - Jesus saw her promise.

d. Others saw only her problems - Jesus saw her potential.

e. Others would have seen only trash - Jesus saw a treasure

2. He took a life that was drifting and gave it direction.

a. He took a life that no one could use and used it like no one can.

b. The Lord always brought the message to the worthless and then He always used the worthless to bring the message.

D. After converting her, He released her to go back and do the same for others.

1. He got her involved in mission

- a. No one was surprised when she told people she had met a man.
- b. She was the most strategic person in that city.**
- c. The Lord didn't take her out of her network of relationships.

2. God has always used the common for the spectacular.

- He took an ordinary rod stretched it and parted a sea
- **He took a common pebble flung it and slayed a giant**
- He took a peasant boys lunch blessed it and feed a multitude.
- **He took some dirt spit on it and healed a blind man.**
- He took a rejected promiscuous woman spoke kindly to her and brought revival to a whole city.

- **The Lord is able to turn a stick into a scepter, a stone into a missile, a sack lunch into a feast, some saliva and dirt into a balm for the blind, and a immoral woman into an evangelist.**

- If He can use sticks, stones, and dirt. He can use you

D. I Samuel 16:7 - a key phrase-For God see's not as man see's.

1. Where is God's focus. Is it on how people are or how they could be.

2. 2 Corinthians 5:16 - *"This means that our knowledge of men can no longer be based on their outward lives."* (J.B. Phillips)

- a. Judge a man by his clothes - ET
- b. Book by it's cover. - Wino**
- c. Contents by it's package. - Wolfman

3. We need to look past how people are and see what they could be.

- a. A lion carver
- b. My grandmother

4. It's not that the Lord doesn't care about their form or flesh.

- a. He just knows that if we can tap into who they really are - it will deal with who they think we are.
- b. Another way of saying it is "the only way to deal with what I see, is to help them become what God see's.**

In Conclusion: Tell the story of Little Annie.