

The Mindset of the Believer: Avoiding Bitterness

Part 1

Grace Bible Conference - Summer 2015

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Glass Half empty / Glass half full

The optimist says the glass is half full.

The pessimist says the glass is half empty.

The project manager says the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

And the cynic... wonders who drank the other half.

The worrier frets that the remaining half will evaporate by next morning.

The engineer says the glass is over-designed for the quantity of water.

The physicist says that the glass is not empty at all - it is half-filled with water and half-filled with air - hence, fully filled on the whole!

Eeyore says (to Winnie-the-Pooh), "Well, at least you have a glass.."

The Socialist (Liberal) argues that the glass is half-empty, and that government needs to intervene to fill it up.

The millennial (John Magno) says: I cannot make an informed decision about whether the glass is half-full or half-empty before I have checked all the reviews on Yelp and Trip Advisor.

The stoic says: Keep calm and drink on.

The software engineer (John Magno) says: Clearly, we are dealing with a serious usability concern here. We need to improve our flawed algorithm creating this UX (user experience) discomfort and illusion.

The optimist says: "The glass is half-full." The pessimist says: "The glass is half-empty". And while they are arguing, the pragmatist takes the glass and drinks it.

The Believer's framing of the mind is of vital importance in experiencing victory in this life. It is a necessary part to Abiding in Christ. There are certain areas that will cause the believer unnecessary confusion, worry, fear, and will in some cases lead to despair or bitterness if not perceived properly.

- I. In order to experience the abundant life, the believer must perceive properly what God is doing in this time period, he must be able to communicate properly with Him, and he must be able to see his own role in what is going on.
 - A. What is God doing in this time period?
 1. God is calling out from the nations a people, and naming them. **Acts 15:14.**
 2. Paul and Timothy include themselves in this group. **2 Timothy 1:8-14**
 3. Paul further describes this group as losing ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. **Gal 3:24-29**
 4. Peter did not have a grasp on what was going on in his day and age, and Christ described his situation. **Mark 8:33** Peter framed his mind on things

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concerning men, not things concerning God. The man that Peter was concerned about was himself. Christ goes on to describe individuals that are self-centered.

5. Paul under inspiration tells us that a proper framing of the mind leads to maturity. **Phil. 3:8-16**
 6. Esau and Naomi struggled with perception and it led to bitterness.
- B. How do I communicate with God properly, discerning His Desirous Will?
1. Christ laid out in the Upper Room Discourse the change in how believers were to communicate with the Godhead. **John 16:23-28**
 2. Proper communication with the Godhead leads to stabilizing fruit. **Phil. 4:6-7, 1 Thess. 5:17-18, 1 Tim 2:1-2**
 3. Paul, in his communication with God, knew what was proper in his relationship with the Philippians. He had a proper understanding of their destination. He did not need to know God's immediate will for their every move, he was confident that God would bring them to completion. This enabled Paul to be an involved spectator in the lives of those he ministered to, without being grieved to despair or made to be bitter when they did not act the way he thought they should. **Phil 1:3-9**
- C. What is my role in what is going on here?
1. Paul directs the mindset of the believer towards heavenly things, recognizing Position. **Col. 3:2**
 2. The desired result on earth is a quiet and peaceable life. **1 Tim 2:1-2**
 3. Peter sets down a similar pattern to follow. Not being the aggressor, but preparing to be used and to share what we have been taught. **1 Peter 3:8-16**
 4. Paul cautions multiple times in this closing section of his letter to the Romans not to think of ourselves more highly than we should. Some believers believe that they are responsible for saving the soul of that last individual before the rapture. Some go so far as to say that the Kingdom will be ushered in if they are doing what they should. **Rom 12:3,16, 1 Cor 4:6 (puffed up) 2 Cor 13:11 (one mind)**
 5. Paul describes the mind of Christ as one who humbles himself to be exalted later, not one who draws attention to himself. What is so deafening in these verses is what is not asked of us to do. Many churches today are perpetuating an improper mindset. **Phil 2:5**
 6. The writer of Hebrews and the Apostle Peter describe the believer using the terms Stranger (guest or by-dweller) and Pilgrim (resident foreigner) **Heb 11:13, 1 Peter 2:11**

Conclusion: Many believers have incorrect answers to these three seemingly foundational questions. This leads them to reactions that will rob them of the ability to direct stabilizing fruit. This gives the enemies an inroad to be able to batter the believer, keeping him from living abundantly.