

One of the Christian's Biggest Mistakes!

Since the early beginnings of the church, Christians have faced many challenges, mostly from outside attacks, but we face inner challenges also. When contemplating this we usually think of various types of temptations and their attendant struggles.

But there is another, usually unrecognized (and thus unaddressed struggle) that many Christians have. That struggle is to think, "It's all about me!" (Or perhaps, "It's *mostly* about me.") It is a very easy, perhaps natural, mistake to make. After all, Jesus came to seek and save the lost (that's us), Luke 19:10. And the cross was about saving *us!* And God's blessings and provision are about providing for *us.*

All of that is true. Jesus came to earth and died for *us*, for our salvation, for our eternal home in heaven with Him. He loves *us*, each and every one. But we often forget what Jesus planned for us while we are still on earth. When we focus on self, and getting what we want instead of what God wants for us in our daily life, we are simply **not** being like Jesus! How do we know?

-Jesus considered others more important than Himself, Phil. 2:1-5

-Jesus gave Himself up for *us*, John 3:16, Romans 10:1-10; 1 Tim. 2:6

-Jesus took our punishment for *us*, 1 Peter 2:21-25; Eph. 5:2, 25;

1 Tim. 2:6.

To be like Jesus, we have to focus on blessing other people.

Satan wants us to feel cheated. He wants us to believe that God is *holding out* on us, not blessing us as He promised. When we believe that somehow God is not holding up His end of the bargain (giving me what I want because I was converted), then Satan has a heyday with our daily life.

Conversely, when we bless God, when we praise Him daily and live in continual thanks (1 Thess. 5:18), live a lifestyle of blessing others (Luke 6:28; Rom. 12:14), take the focus off of ourselves and consider others more important than ourselves (Phil. 2:3), something wonderful happens. *We learn the precious, almost unspeakable wonder of this truth: Happiness (joy, peace, etc.) are a **byproduct** of being a blessing to others. Happiness simply cannot be obtained by focusing on and serving self.* (Caring for widows and orphans would be prime example, James 1:27).

If a Christian does these things just to *get a reward*, it doesn't work – that actually constitutes an attempt to manipulate God! But when we stop focusing on pleasing self and decide to please Jesus by blessing others, the buds of life blossom into greater joy than serving self ever could.

Who do **you** focus on? How do **you** bless God and His people? Think about it.

Ray Wallace