

Having an “attitude of gratitude” does not require a response from us.

This is hard for us to grasp and totally against our “human nature” if in fact there was such a thing.

This is a wonderful thing, and something to latch hold of beloved, but you and I have been set free from all of the bondages of sin.

Sin has been separated from us – period

That not only includes the things that are yet in front of us (that we haven’t even gotten to as of yet) as well as everything we have gotten to in the past.

We are not only free from the sins of the past, but have been set free from the ravages that go along with our past mistakes.

We are “now” a new creation in Christ Jesus. The past (without Him) is no longer an active part of our lives. Further, we are now “new” creations in Christ Jesus. Irrespective of the pulling’s of the past and all of their trappings. Brand New - (along with the New Car smell).

Further, we are now forever “joined” to the creator of the universe – the Man Christ Jesus.

Any separation in our minds is in fact an illusion. Where you go He goes. What you do, He does. Forever a part of who you and I really are.

Feeling alone - He feels it. Feeling scared – He feels your feelings. If you let Him, He will comfort you in your time of need.

I hate going to the dentist. I know I need to go from time to time, but He knows that too. In addition, He is in the chair with me while they poke and pull and blast and suck. He is totally aware of my infirmities as well as my fears.

The more we understand of our “union” relationship with Him, the less you will feel helpless and alone irrespective of our situation.

He promises that His peace will be our peace. Peace is not the absence of conflict, but rather a person.

We tend to believe that peace is the absence of conflict, but it is not. Whatever your circumstance, you like the Apostle Paul, must learn that whatever state you find yourself, whatever situation you find yourself, you will be content once you understand your union relationship with Him.

Further, we are told that He changes not. Within Him there is no “shadow of turning” He remains faithful irrespective of our faithfulness. His faithfulness towards us is never changing.

He is not saying – “darn, I wish you hadn’t done that – oh well, I will see you later.” Call me when you get your life together. Nope – He is not like that.

Rather, He is there encouraging us to get yourself up, dust yourself off and get back into the game.

The challenge before us now is: What do we do with this new creation He has created/ If the truth be known, I might not believe that a change has taken place in my life, but that foolish thought has nothing to do with reality.

I did change. I am now a “new creation in Christ Jesus”. That is a fact. Once you gave your life to Him, you too became a new creation. Oh you might have a problem getting your mind around this fact, but it is true nonetheless.

Often times we think that the only thing that has changed is where you go when you die. For sure that has changed, but there has been another remarkable change taken within your life.

You have become separated from what you used to be. The activity of the “old man” has been separated from you forever.

But you say, I don’t feel any different. I still have all of these crazy thoughts and desires that surely are not a part of who I am now.

Without faith (belief) it is impossible to please God – His word declares.

He did the changing, my job is to believe it. Period.

Well you say: “seeing is believing’ and it is obvious for all to see that I am still the same as I used to be.

Cart before the horse beloved. Truth is that “believing is seeing”.

Ok, let’s assume you climb over that hurdle, what now?

The next trap set for you by the enemy I am sure, is for you to either feel as if you somehow didn’t deserve what has happened to you, or as bad – You did deserve it and don’t understand why others are not as deserving as you are.

In other words, you say to yourself, well I am glad I am not like that guy or this guy.

The subtlety of the Devil is always to either get you to see somehow you deserve what you have received, after all you really are a good guy or that you are unworthy of what you have received and must now set an example by your life style that shows your appreciation for what you have received thereby affirming His decision in the first place.

The devil has not changed his ways.

Further, you can't win this one beloved. The reason is because you are not in view. He is.

Paul said "I am what I am by the grace of God"

Ok then – what should my response be toward God once I fully understand not only what He has done for me, but the new change made in me as an overcomer?

Natural question huh?

Problem is that the answer is not at all what I expect.

If you believe as I do that Psalm 116 was penned by King David – In verse 12 he asks the question; "What shall I render to the Lord for all of His benefits towards me"

le. What can I give back to the Lord God for the bountiful life He has provided me, including forgiving my sin, making me a part of His family, giving me such wonderful men to serve with me etc.

The answer flies against our understanding of "fairness." The answer to his question defies logic. Surely there is something I can give in return for all your goodness toward me.

The answer to David's question is rather astounding.

"I will take the cup of salvation *and* call on the name of the Lord."

What you say - To show my appreciation, I am to TAKE more from you. After all you have given me, I am to take more from you?

His response – You got it- You have figured me out - You finally get it.

Not only are you to take more from me, but you are to call on me in a greater measure.

At this point in my life, I am looking for a reason for His benevolence. My natural thinking doesn't compute to this answer. To my reasoning, it makes no sense.

Zacchaeus was a tax collector in the city of Jericho. He was a small man in stature and had climbed up into a tree in order to see Jesus who was passing by.

Read about it in Luke 19: 1& following.

Jesus looking up in the tree saw Zacchaeus and said "make haste, come down from there for today I must stay at your house."

Wow, look at the response from this man – Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I will restore 4 fold.

The response from Jesus was wonderful. Not for what you could do for me, or even restore what you might have taken through ill-gotten gain, but because of who you are I

am going to be with you today. You my friend are a descendent of Abraham, and I have come to seek and save them that are lost.

Well beloved, you too are a descendent of Abraham because you believe.

The same truth applies to us today.

He gives to us today because of our heritage. He gives to us today out of His abundance. Not for us to repay Him for this, but rather a new way of thinking on our part.

Take, take, take, take, and continue to call on His name.

What will please Him? If you and I continue to take and call – if you and I can eat of His flesh and drink of His blood – if you and I can feed on Him, spend time with Him – pour out our alabaster jar of oil on Him.

As He told Martha in Luke 10:41 “you are so worried and troubled about so many things. There is only one thing needed and Mary has chosen that thing. She was pouring out her affection on Jesus and He loved it....

Selah – pause and think on this.