

Does the World Love You?

~Other Speakers A-F: Eli Brayley:

I was recently talking with an elderly brother and sister in the Lord and the brother shared something very interesting that stuck with me. An old friend of his from before he was saved said to him: "I liked you better before you became a Christian." Now this got me thinking.

This brother, before he was born again, was the type of person who was the center of the party. Funny, animated, larger than life, living it up in the world... Everybody loved him. But then the cross of Jesus Christ exposed what was really in his heart: sin, pride, anger, selfishness, lust, love of pleasure, drunkenness... He was exposed as a sinner. The intervention of God in his life, by being born again, radically reconstructed who he was. He stopped his partying, his sin, his open lifestyle, and became obviously different in the eyes of his old friends.

This testimony rings so true in my own life, and after asking some others about this they also testified the same. Our old friends now find us repulsive, boring, unattractive, foolish. A Christian is no fun to the unbeliever. I want now to just examine the seemingly "boring" characteristic in the one who is born again. To the world this is so, but to the body of Christ, the exact opposite.

A person who is born again is a brand new person. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17) What then isn't made new?

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

The ones who are born again are given an entirely new perspective on life. They realize their position in Christ and their position in world. This new perspective causes them to act totally different than how they would have acted in their old way of thinking, or as Paul says: "...in the vanity of their mind." (Ephesians 4:17) Compare the unbeliever and the believer's state of mind:

- the unbeliever lives in the flesh, the believer lives in the Spirit
- the unbeliever loves the things of this world, the believer hates the things of this world
- the unbeliever is full of pride, the believer is full of humility
- the unbeliever is extravagant, the believer is meek
- the unbeliever seeks entertainment, the believer seeks to be empowered
- the unbeliever loves to play, the believer loves to pray
- the unbeliever is restless, the believer is resting
- the unbeliever puts on a show, the believer is transparent
- the unbeliever has much to boast in, the believer has nothing to boast in
- the unbeliever seeks man's approval, the believer seeks God's approval
- the unbeliever is unpeaceful and chases after lusts, the believer has the peace of Christ ruling in his heart

The list could go on. Those things that are wonderful to the Christian are foolishness to those who are perishing! What a bore to pray, to read the Bible, to deny entertainment, to be transparent! But the sad thing is that many Christians find these things boring as well. Ask yourself: Do I seek entertainment, play and fun, or do I seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness? Which is more desirable? Do you find some Christians boring? I wonder if it is those very Christians who are the ones seeking God and putting to the death the deeds of the flesh? If you are falling into this trap, I believe the diagnosis is worldliness. You love the flesh. You must be born again.

"But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:20-24)