Forget Not All His Benefits

Chris Staples 5 March 2020



Let me take a moment of your day. If you're a follower of Jesus, this is an encouragement and reminder of some important truths. If you're not yet a follower of Jesus, I pray this short article might stimulate you to go to church or to a Christian friend and ask the big questions. We rarely stop in our busy lives and tell our souls again why King David said,

'Praise the Lord, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits' (Psalm 103:1-2)

Christian Benefits

So, here goes with 6 reasons why being a Christian is awesome.

1.

My Sin is Obliterated

When it comes to offenses against a Holy God (i.e. sin), I have a long charge sheet against me and, sorry, but so do you. In fact, it is a written legal debt that we owe and cannot pay back. How amazing, then, that the death this deserves has been changed in Christ to forgiveness and a public exoneration. The gospel requires a decision and a response. The evangelist's question of "if you died tonight where will you be?" is literally a matter of life or death. Sin is the separator. Remove sin and eternal life is real, and that comes as a free gift only through Jesus.

'When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.' (Colossians 2:13-15)

'You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.' (Micah 7:19)

1.

I Get Family & Friends

'He gives families to the lonely, and releases prisoners from jail, singing with joy! But for rebels there is famine and distress.' (Psalm 68:6)

At school I was overly competitive, awkward and unappealing as a friend. At the age of 16 I gave my life to Jesus and things immediately changed. A move of God brought a group of guys into the church and He gave me friends I still love today, 30 years later. The church is founded on relationships. In Acts 2:42-44 the new believers were devoted to fellowship (a deep relational commitment) and 'All the believers were together and had everything in common.' As part of an apostolic partnership of churches, we have friends around the globe. The church is the most deeply caring and relational family in the world.

'Ask me for the nations, and every nation on earth will belong to you.' (Psalm 2:8, CEV)

1.

I'm a New Person

'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!' (2

Corinthians 5:17)

This is an often-underestimated benefit of becoming a follower of Jesus. It's not a sci-fi regeneration but an actual spiritual transformation that continues until we die. Our old self was a prisoner to sinful inclinations and without power. When we become a follower of Jesus, God gives us His very presence through His Holy Spirit in us and with us. The most awesome thing about this is that we are given the exact same power that took a corpse, breathed life into it and smashed open a sealed grave. Get your head around that if you can!

'The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.' (Romans 8:11, NLT)

1.

I Get Super-Powers

Ok, not really! What every Christian does receive, however, is spiritual gifts directly from God. 'Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.' (1 Corinthians 12:7) There are many different spiritual gifts. From those used in the public forum, like prophecy, leadership and interpretation of tongues, through to the very practical which are so essential for serving and building the church, such as administration, music and pastoral care. We get to explore these gifts as we serve one another and as part of a Holy Spirit-led team.

'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.' (1 Peter 4:10)

1.

The Impossible is Possible

'Jesus replied, 'What is impossible with man is possible with God." (Luke 18:27)

Recently in church we have witnessed healings (medically confirmed) where crutches are thrown away and brain defects have disappeared. It does not always happen, but that's cool too because God's ways aren't ours. Life is a wild journey into the unknown for us, but we know that God does know! Impossible things can happen with God and it's not just healings. Over our many years in the church, we've seen jobs secured against overwhelming odds, finance raised way

beyond available means, people set free from demonic spirits and everyday miracles that can only be explained by “that has to be God!”

1.

I Don’t Need to Worry about the Future

‘But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ’ (Philippians 3:20)

If you are facing a tough time, the good news is that it will end. The destiny for those that know Jesus as Lord and Saviour is no more tears, sickness, sorrow or death. We are aliens and foreigners on earth with our real citizenship in heaven. Jesus told His disciples who had seen miracles and demons fleeing before them that these were good but the real cause for celebration was their names were written in the Book of Life. ‘However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven’ (Luke 10:20). How amazing to know that death is just a shadow and the beginning of an eternity with Jesus.

There’s no doubt about it when you stop and think – being a Christian, a true follower of Jesus, is absolutely awesome in every sense of the word.