

Accepting Joyfully the Loss of Precious Things

Hebrews 10:32-35

Hebrews was written to early followers of Christ, most of whom were Jewish, to encourage and support them while facing intense persecution because of their faith in Christ. There is an interesting phrase used by the writer of Hebrews, who had been acquainted with the Hebrew believers and how they lived their lives after coming to know Christ – “(you) accepted joyfully the seizure of your property” (v. 34).

1. They didn't fight for their rights, they “accepted” the seizure of their property.
2. They didn't accept their loss with bitterness and sadness, they accepted their loss with “joy.”
3. They didn't accept with joy the loss of other peoples' property, it was the loss of their own property.

I. Your life as a follower of Christ will be filled with losses of one kind or another.

These Hebrews were followers of Christ. By all accounts they were serious about their faith in the Savior. God's grace was theirs. However, notice the things they endured “*after being enlightened.*”

A. A great conflict of sufferings ...

This word “conflict” is the word *athlesin* from which we get our word “athlete.” In the game of life, in which you are a participant, there will be numerous sufferings, some of which are caused by your faith. “*Brethren, do not think it strange when you face fiery trials in this life*” (I Peter 4:12).

B. A public spectacle of reproach ...

These Hebrew followers of Christ were in the minority of their culture. They were rejected by even their own family members because they became disciples of this “Jesus of Nazareth.”

C. A joint sharing of tribulation ...

“*You suffered reproaches ... and by becoming sharers with those who were so treated*” (v. 33).

Some of the greatest losses in your life will be those suffered by other people and not yourself.

II. You can accept with joy your losses by knowing you have for yourself a better possession.

“*You accepted joyfully ... knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.*”

What is that possession? “We have this treasure in earthen vessels ...” (II Cor. 4:7). The Kingdom of God in me is the personal reign of Christ in my heart. “*Seek you first the kingdom of God ...*”

When the love of Christ becomes my primary source of love, then my life is not threatened by the absence or withdrawal of another person's love. When the significance I feel in life comes from knowing how much Christ values me, then I don't need to manipulate my circumstances or control my environment to ensure other people value me. When I begin to understand that what makes me honorable as a person is the honor I have in God coming and dying for me, then I don't worry too much whether or not people around me see me as honorable. When I begin to see that my reputation is all about what He thinks of me (and what He thinks of me must be pretty doggone good to do what He's done for me), then I don't care what others think of me. When He is my Source, I don't panic at the lack of alternative sources. I joyfully accept the seizure of my property.

III. It is this knowledge of Christ in you which is your only hope of eternal significance.

My Father loves me and came for me. My Father has adopted me into his family. All my dysfunctions in life revolve around not knowing who I am in Christ and seeking my worth and identity elsewhere.

A. Therefore, do not throw away your confidence ... (see Heb. 10:19 for the confidence intended).

Take your need to God and He will do for you immeasurably more than you can ask or think.

B. There is great reward with that confidence ... (the unending joy of Christ in the midst of loss).