

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## The Simplicity In Christ

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**P**aul reminded the saints in Corinth that they could be “*corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ*” (2 Corinthians 11:3).

Two points from this passage demands the attention of the Christian. First, the Christian, who starts serving the Lord can be corrupted from his or her noble path. Then, there is something connected with Christ that is simple. What is this “simplicity”?

Some would emphasize the fact that God’s plan for man to be saved is not difficult to understand. The common man can hear the saving gospel of Christ, understand it and respond in obedience. In other words, Christianity is “simple”. When examining the Book of Acts we observe men and women *hearing* the message of Christ, *believing, confessing* Jesus to be the Son of God, *repenting* of one’s sins, *being baptized* into Christ, and then as a new creature, *serving faithfully* the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2, 8, 9 and 16). Yes, knowing what to do to come to God in Christ is not complicated, It is simple. But Paul has another thought in mind when he speaks of the simplicity that is toward Christ.

The Greek word translated “simplicity” denotes something that is “single” in contrast to “double”. This word used in the New Testament helps us understand two characteristics of the Christian.

The Christian’s eye must be focused on Christ without wavering in distraction. Jesus, in the context of serving the Lord or mammon, commends the “single eye”. One has a choice. He or she can focus on the Lord or earthly riches. But one cannot see “double” and try to serve both. Such an “eye” is “evil.” It will not work. Jesus says one has to make up one’s mind. “*You cannot serve God and mammon*” (Matthew 6:24).

This singleness or simplicity is being understood in Paul’s statement in 2 Corinthians 11:3. It goes along with “the purity” that is toward Christ. The Christian is “set apart” from the mindset of this world, and is to serve the Lord without distraction or in “simplicity.” Paul was warning fellow Christians to be aware of Satan’s tactics to distract us from our total focus upon the Lord. Paul reminds us of Satan’s past accomplishments: The serpent

attracted Eve’s eye with the forbidden fruit which distracted her from God’s demands and led her to consequent sin (2 Corinthians 11:3, Genesis 3:6). His agenda is still the same. Christian beware of being corrupted from the single mindedness of your heart.

The simplicity that is toward Christ leads to another characteristic of the Christian: *liberal giving*. Paul, in speaking of the giving among the churches of Macedonia, writes, “*how that in much proof of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality*” (2 Corinthians 8:2). The word translated “liberality” is the same Greek word translated “simplicity” in other places. The context of abundant giving demands translating the word, “liberality.” Think about how such giving can be accomplished. It demands a heart that is totally focused on the Lord and is not wavering. Notice Paul gets to the bottom of such “liberal” giving in the context of “poverty”: “*but first they gave themselves to the Lord...*” (2 Corinthians 11:5).

May we continue to serve the Lord with the single heart!