

What Are You Saved For?

Written by Chris Tiegreen
Thursday, 29 August 2013 14:35 -

I know quite a few Christians with a brutal past—a pattern of bad decisions that took them into deep, dark places, or abuses done to them that created horrific wounds. All have experienced quite a bit of healing and are in a lifelong process of beautiful restoration. Like many of us, they have no trouble acknowledging what they were saved *from*.

But it bothers me that I don't know nearly as many Christians who realize what they were saved *for*.

Think about it. I can remember hearing tons of testimonies and singing tons of hymns with pretty specific language about living in futility, shame, rebellion, purposelessness, sin, and captivity. But when the same testimonies and hymns turn to the wonders of the new life, they get really general. They usually stop at, "Thank God I'm free!" It seems that we focus a lot on what we've come out of and not very much about what we're coming into. (One exception being churches that miss the boat on what we're coming into by emphasizing all the demands of the Christian life, which really doesn't sound very liberating and, in some ways, not much better than the futility and frustration we used to experience.)

I'm well aware of how human beings have fallen short of the glory we were created for. And I'm extremely grateful for being rescued by grace. But why do we act like our past is a bigger deal than our future?

A while back, I grew pretty tired of focusing on where I was stuck and decided to focus more on where I'm going. That means I no longer obsess about being "a sinner." It isn't that I'll ever forget the fallen nature we all inherited. But if the new nature isn't a whole lot bigger to me than the old one, I'll never get past the old one. Whatever picture we focus on tends to be the picture we live up to. A person who is always dwelling on overcoming his shortcomings will always struggle with them. Why? Because that's his focus.

The gospel of grace promises ever-increasing glory. Focus on that. A fact of human nature is that you'll grow in whatever direction you're looking. Or, as is often said, you become what you behold.

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So what are you becoming? What impact were you designed to make in this world? What dreams were divinely planted within you? Asking (and answering) those questions is a really big deal. You can't step into a vision you don't have. But when you cultivate the art of envisioning, you begin to realize what you were saved for. And you find yourself growing toward the vision.