

# CHRISTIAN - OPTIMIST OR PESSIMIST?

## INTRODUCTION:

- A. Begin by defining terms: Pessimism and Optimism
- B. Pessimism: Webster's Collegiate Dictionary
  1. The doctrine or opinion that reality is essentially evil
  2. The doctrine that the evils of life overbalance the happiness it affords
  3. An inclination to put the least favorable construction upon actions and happenings
- C. Optimism: Webster's Dictionary (online)
  1. A doctrine that the world is the best possible world
  2. An inclination to put most favorable construction upon actions and events or to anticipate best possible outcome
  3. An optimist believes reality is essentially good and that the good of life overbalances the pain and evil of it
- D. Is the glass half full or half empty

## DISCUSSION:

### I. RESULTS OF PESSIMISM

- A. Needless anxiety
  1. This is against the teaching of Jesus Matt 6:31-32
  2. Worry destroys the value of the Word Matt 13:22
  3. This should be eliminated Phil 4:6
  4. Cast all your care on Christ 1Peter 5:7
- B. Pessimism destroys health and happiness and causes us the loss of friends
  1. Who wants to be around a worry wart
  2. Who wants to be around one always seeing the bad
- C. Even good things become evil in eyes of the pessimist
- D. Pessimism leads one to deny that God is living and mindful of man - he doubts that God cares for him and loves him

### II. WHY BE OPTIMISTIC

- A. Christians are secure Rom 8:31-39
  1. Christ died for man's redemption from sin
  2. Christ arose for our justification Rom 4:25
  3. Christ rules at the right hand of God Acts 2:33-36
  4. Christ is our intercessor 1Tim 2:5
- B. The Christian is the conqueror Rom 8:37
  1. Because he can do all things through Christ Phil 4:13
  2. Because he is a good soldier Eph 6:10-12; 2Tim 2:3
  3. Because all things work together for good Rom 8:28  
(Rom 8:28 does not mean everything that happens to us is good within itself, but that God can through his providence ultimately overrule bad for our good)  
(See explanation top of next page.)

(Robert Turner in Plain Talk: With Whiteside, it seems to me the "all things" of Rom. 8:28 refers particularly to the things of the context: Christ our answer, His promises, our hope, God's all-encompassing eye and ear, etc. Verse 29 begins "For" from h<sub>o</sub>t<sub>i</sub>, "so that". The connection is clearly to explain the "called" of vs. 28, and I think one would not be amiss to say that the "all things" were summed up in the planning, appointment, calling, justification and glorification next mentioned. "Them that love—" and "the called" are one and the same, so whatever the promise, it is to true saints only.)

### III. OPTIMISM IN HOPE AND FAITH

- A. Hope Rom 8:24
  1. Hope causes us to overlook present evil or distress and keep alive the spark or ray of love and security
  2. Without hope one becomes bitter and all is dark and meaningless and evil
  3. Hope keeps one on guard against sin - keeps us pure 1Jhn 3:1-3
  4. Hope acts as an anchor to the soul Heb 6:18-19
- B. Faith
  1. We accomplish difficult goals through faith 1Jhn 5:4
  2. We have the promise of help 1Jhn 5:14-15
  3. Examples of optimistic persons: Joseph Gen 45:4,5; Joshua and Caleb Num 14:6-9 ; Daniel Dan 1:8
- C. The optimist does not have a defeatist attitude - "Can't be done" is never said Phil 4:13

## CONCLUSION:

- A. Have faith in God and put our trust in Him for we know He will do what He has said Heb 13:5
- B. Realize that sin is in the world but also realize that we must overcome sin 1Jhn 4:4

(from James Dunigan - revised by JLH)