

BEFORE COMING TO CHRIST

BY KEITH GREER

“But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?” {Galatians 4:8,9} In the context of these passages, we see that those who had practiced idolatry changed greatly when they began serving the true and living God. An overwhelming change occurs when a sinner leaves the paths of sin and turns his life over to God. The two articles in today’s bulletin paint for our minds the **BEFORE** and **AFTER** pictures of one who comes to Christ. We begin with the BEFORE picture...

Out of Christ. *“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands--that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” {Ephesians 2:11-13}* The sinner has no hope or spiritual direction in his life; he is hopelessly lost. Nothing is worse than a life without hope.

An Old Man of Sin. *“Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.” {Romans 6:6}* Living in bodies of sin, we are slaves to sin. One cannot be saved while conducting his life in a body of sin.

Without Forgiveness. *“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” {Hebrews 9:22}* Until one contacts Christ’s blood he remains in sin. Only through contact with His blood can we obtain forgiveness of our sins.

Not a New Creature. *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”*

{Ephesians 2:10} Sinners need to be created in the image of Christ and conformed to His teachings.

No Spiritual Blessings. *“That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”*
{Galatians 3:14} Not one spiritual blessing exists outside of Christ.

In the Kingdom of Darkness—Satan’s Realm. *“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.”*
{Colossians 1:13} Non-Christians, though they may not know or acknowledge it, are in Satan’s kingdom. This kingdom receives no blessings.

Children of the Devil. *“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”* *{John 8:44}* No one claims to belong to the devil, but those who walk in the ways of the world do belong to him. Being a part of Satan’s family brings no benefit here or in eternity!

In the next article” **After Coming to Christ**”, we discuss the other side of the story. This side presents a picture of doom and gloom, but we don’t need to remain in this condition—there’s a way out. Next, we look at the CHANGE that occurs when a person comes to Christ. ***