

GOOD >> BETTER >> BEST: (Part-one of a three-part study)

As Christians we have experienced the ultimate transition from bad to good. Our conversion to Christ has changed our eternal destiny. Prior to faith in Jesus, we were under God's condemnation, headed for a certain eternal punishment in hell. But now, we are recipients of a justification before God that not only provides us with complete forgiveness, but which also makes us children of God, headed for an eternity with Him in heaven. If you are reading this article and haven't yet undergone this incredible change for the better, I encourage you to visit our website and view the video series in our archive entitled "God's Plan of Salvation."

But for those of us who have experienced this transition from bad to good, we must be aware of the challenge that faces each of us as Christians. It is so easy for spiritual inertia to take over in our lives, so that we don't seek after the better things that God has for us and ultimately miss out on His very best. Instead of pursuing the better and very best things God has for each of us, we settle for living the rest of our Christian lives in the realm of that which is good and no more. Why? Because good is not bad! Which in turn kills our motivation for something better. And there is no greater source of motivation for a Christian than the example of our Lord and how He lived His life here on earth. Our Savior's personal testimony of how He pursued God's very best for His life is recorded for us in Mark 10:45 –

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

In the above declaration, we have the transition which Christ pursued from good to better to best. Jesus left heaven and came to earth in order to take upon Himself a sinless humanity, without relinquishing His Deity (Philippians 2:5-7). That was certainly good. His exemplary sinless life established a standard to which we can aspire, but never attain, here and now. As good as His coming to earth was, it had to be followed up by something better. We see that occurring during the course of His earthly ministry where He taught, healed and provided for the needs of others, as Peter reminds us in Acts 10:38. But we also can't overlook what enabled that transition to take place. First, we are told in the gospel accounts that Jesus submitted to the baptism of John in order to identify with the people He came to save (Matthew 3:13-17). Then, he fasted for forty days and nights, followed by a time of temptation from the devil (Matthew 4:1-11). Having successfully fulfilled these important prerequisites, He moved into His three-year period of ministry.

What was true for our Savior, will also be required of us. This doesn't mean fasting for forty days and nights in some wilderness setting. But our transition from good to better will demand significant and successful spiritual growth.