

DON'T FORGET THE ONE WHO GAVE THE GIFT

Luke 17:11-19 John 6:25-27 James 1:27 2 Timothy 4:9-18

Introduction: Have you ever helped someone who really needed your help and was totally unable to repay you? Have you ever been "used" by someone? How did you feel? Did you help that person again? There was this little old man who visited this church once every month for a "hand-out." Then there was a man who brought his son who was in a wheelchair asking for financial help, but upon calling another pastor, it was discovered that the man had been to every church in town asking for money. Usually it would be a woman and children who would come in asking for help while the husband/father stayed outside in the old car. If help was denied often they would shout while leaving "churches are supposed to help people..." Almost everyone the church helped said they would pay back what was given, but only one ever did. Many churches can tell similar stories about people coming by for help with the same stories and returning over and over again.

1. There are people who seem to always be in some sort of need:

- Groceries - phone bill - water bill - electricity bill - gasoline bill - auto repair bill - rent
- Need a ride to somewhere - need someone to keep their kids for just a little while (hours).
- It's always the same people who always need help.
- They never attempt to repay in any way or try to be of help to anyone else.
- It hurts to be used by someone just to get what they want with no thought of ever repaying.

2. There are some people who want only friendship, company:

- Thankfully, there are people who just want to be with us, to love us, expecting nothing in return.
- These people are called "friends."
- They are the ones we look forward to being with and sharing what we have with.

3. Which kind of person are you? Do you use others for your gain? Do you expect something back when you have been "friendly" to them?

- Most of us have at one time or other used others to gain what we wanted.
 - Business deals, an introduction to someone, a friendly recommendation, get it wholesale for us, get a position for us or a family member?
- Sometimes our conscience bothered us, but we worked through that or it didn't bother us at all.

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5. Why do YOU "follow" Jesus?

- For what you can get from Him or because you are in love with Him?
- Do you go to Him full of "wants?"
- Do you go to Him only when you want something?
- It's not wrong to ask from Jesus, He encourages us to, but how do you react when you don't get what you want from Him?
- Do you ever go to Him just to talk? Just to have fellowship? Just to spend time with Him?

- 6. What if God never gave you another thing. Would you still want to go to Him? Would you still call upon Him? Would you still want to spend time with Him?**
- There's no doubt about it, being used by another person really hurts.
 - Did you ever wonder how God feels when we "use" Him?
 - God wants our fellowship, that's why we were created in the first place.
 - If we go to God only when we want this or that, is that fellowship?
- 7. We are to love the Giver first with all our heart, soul and mind and to first seek fellowship with Him, then all that we need or even desire will be given, even without our asking.**
- Think about it. Haven't we been using God more than fellowshiping with Him?
 - Let us go to God with our praise, thanksgiving, worship and then our supplications.
 - Remember what it feels like to be "used" by those who just want something and who don't really care anything about you in the first place.

CONCLUSION:

- 1.** Face it! All of us are guilty of doing to God what others have done to us - use us for their own personal, private, selfish thing.
- 2.** God loves us and will give to us whatsoever we ask as long as what we ask is what He has in mind for us, which is best for us.
- 3.** Let us be mindful of our attitude in how and why we ask of God and be gracious and thankful in some verbal, visible way for His giving and caring for us as He does.