

TRUTH THAT IS HARD TO ACCEPT

Matthew 10:5-8

Introduction: If a man gives his wife a gift for no reason at all, what is generally her reaction? A man had an abundance of fruit, more than he could use, so he put baskets of it on the church front steps with a sign that read, "free fruit." People stopped by, looked at the fruit, looked around, then put the fruit back down. Nobody took any of the free fruit. So the man put up a sign that read, "fruit, 10 cents each" with an empty coffee can beside the baskets of fruit. In no time at all the fruit was gone and there was money in the can. Most people are shy about taking something that is being given away absolutely free, they feel that there is some hidden reason for whatever it is being "free." "There's got to be a gimmick somewhere" is the general thinking.

Sadly, people also find it difficult to believe that God loves us for the sake of loving and that His gifts are that - gifts! Thus people deny God the privilege of truly demonstrating His love. "There's got to be a catch somewhere" is the thought, nobody loves just for the sake of loving.

Even Christians find it difficult to believe that God is really the God of GRACE and freely bestows salvation upon all who come to Him through His Son, Jesus, so some have "added on" to God's freeness by making some of their own rules and guidelines making people think that they have to do this or that in order to receive and keep God's salvation. God's truth is just hard to accept for it is just too good to be true.

I. GOD IS A TRUE GIVER

1. God never deals with people on the basis of their worth.
 - Salvation is not dependent upon what a person does.
 - God demonstrated His greatness of love for man via the cross. *"...He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall he not with Him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32*

II. FREELY HAVE YOU RECEIVED

1. What have people received from God? Spiritual gifts!
 - People attach a price to everything: labor, parts, time, etc.
 - Everything people are associated with has a value of some sort, therefore a price.
 - God does not sit behind a counter, offering various blessing for sale.
 - God gives freely!
2. Jesus did not/does not charge for what He did!
 - Jesus came freely.
 - Jesus healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, made the crippled whole, raised the dead to life, gave hope and cheer to the depressed and all out of LOVE.
3. Jesus puts people's sins away and brings them to God, FREELY!
 - Jesus suffered on the cross, tasted death, came forth from the grave, and all without cost to a single person.

4. Forgiveness of sin is FREE!
 - Forgiveness cannot be purchased!
 - Removal of guilt cannot be deserved or earned.
 - Forgiveness is free to all who come to Jesus Christ.
5. Eternal life is FREE!
 - Life without end cannot be bought or stolen.
 - Eternal life comes only as a GIFT from God.
6. The Peace of God is FREE to all who choose to come to Jesus!
7. The gift of the Holy Spirit is just that: A GIFT! FREE!
8. Heaven awaits the end of the road of this life for all who have come to Jesus and IT IS FREE!

III. FREELY RECEIVED, THEREFORE, FREELY GIVE

1. *Matthew 25:14-30* is about a selfish steward who was in charge of caring for the things of his master in his absence but he did nothing for his absent master.
2. The only proper response a Christian can have in light of all that he/she has received freely from God is to FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE and freely give back.
3. "*..It is more blessed to give than to receive...*" is not talking about only money but Jesus is talking about a way of life.
4. Jesus came to earth for the sole purpose of GIVING.
5. Experience shows that the people who are TRULY happy are those who find that success is not in terms of what can be gotten, but WHAT CAN BE GIVEN.
6. There is more joy, more satisfaction, more adventure, more achievement, for those who choose to be GIVERS.

CONCLUSION:

1. Strange, but true, God gives freely, a truth that is hard, if not impossible to understand.
2. Therefore, for those who are Christians, "*...freely you have received, freely give!*"
3. Give to God your life and give to others, that which they need the most, the Lord Jesus.