

Graceful Generosity

Published to help you grow as a steward of God's grace.

What Have I Done for Him?

Lent is a season in the church year during which we particularly focus on the sacrifice Jesus made for us to pay the debt we owed for our sin. We know there is no way we can pay the debt ourselves. Only the sinless Son of God could do that. We have access to heaven only by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.

While we cannot repay Jesus for what he has done for us, his love does require a response. Paul, speaking of our ministry of reconciliation, wrote, "*For Christ's love compels us . . .*" (2 Corinthians 5:14). We remain on earth to carry out the tasks which Christ left for us to do: to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the prisoner, (Matthew 25:31-46). James admonished us that "*. . . faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead*" (James 2:17). We provide the funds that support our pastors, teachers, and missionaries. Again, we can quote Paul writing in 1 Corinthians 9:11-12. "*If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?*" Certainly each of us is addressed by the Great Commission: "*Go and make disciples of all nations . . .*" (Matthew 28:19). The following words from Frances Ridley Havergal are a poignant reminder that Christ's love and sacrifice for us require a response:

Thy life was given for me, thy blood, O Lord, was shed

That I might be ransomed by, and quickened from the dead.

Thy life was given for me, what have I given for thee?

And thou hast brought to me down from thy home above

Salvation full and free, thy pardon and thy love.

Great gifts thou broughtest me, what have I brought to thee?



We are saved by grace through faith for works. Let us pray for the desire to be good stewards of the gifts of salvation, health and wealth, and time and opportunity which God has given us that we might have a part in the furthering of God's kingdom.

Second Fiddles Are Needed Too

The conductor of a great symphony orchestra on tour was being interviewed by a young reporter from the high school paper. She was a charming girl with a great ambition to succeed and no experience whatever with great artists.

"My paper would like to know," she began, with an evident effort to appear professional, "what instrument in the orchestra is the hardest to play." Without a second's hesitation the great musician replied, "A second fiddle! And it's that way with life,

too. It is always easy to find those who want to play the solos. It is something else to find those who are willing to provide the harmony and the accompaniment.” (Roy Smith)

Meditate on Christ’s Sacrifice

Genesis tells us about the creation of the world. “*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good*” (Genesis 1:31). It wasn’t long, unfortunately, before our perfect world was destroyed when Adam and Eve rebelled against God even though they knew that such an act would lead to death (Genesis 2:17). A just and holy God would have to carry out that sentence, but a merciful and forgiving God would also offer a solution to our sin problem: Enter Jesus, our Savior. This Lenten season, meditate on his sacrifice and thank him for his grace.



The Nature of a Servant . . .

Poor Peter. He was so flustered. They had all met for the Passover, and no one had taken

the initiative to perform the lowly task of washing the feet of the disciples. Now, here was Jesus, with the towel around his waist, coming toward him. How embarrassing! “*Lord, are you going to wash my feet?*” Jesus must have known how Peter felt, for he said Peter would understand later.

But this was now, and Peter demurred. *No, you shall never wash my feet.*” Jesus insisted. “*Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.*” And Peter’s feet were washed.

No one but Jesus knew exactly what lay ahead. Although he had brought up the subject of his death more than once, the disciples didn’t comprehend the words. Maybe if they had, they would have acted differently.

s that what we say when we miss opportunities to be servants? “Well, if I had known . . .” We do know, though. We have the benefit of hindsight, which, we have heard, is 20/20. We know we have a Savior who has conquered death and Satan, and so we take Jesus’ command to his disciples as a command to us as well. “*Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet*” (John 13:14).

We Pray:

Lord, I am like those disciples – looking around to see who will serve me instead of whom I can serve. Forgive my stubbornness and pride. Teach me to love and serve as you did that others might see you through me. For Jesus’ sake. Amen.



Blessings on Your Stewardship Journey!