

To Whom Much Is Given Much Is Required:

How often have we heard these words? But do we really understand or grasp their meaning. I think most people consider these in the realm of material goods or gifts and to some degree this is true, however as in all things of life I believe that temporal lessons are just windows of opportunity to glimpse eternal wisdom if we use them. As the Bible teaches “for those who have ears to ‘Hear’ and eyes to ‘See’ what the Spirit says”.

In this instance I believe we as believers have been given ‘Much’! Far more than we really understand. For God to have sent His Son to suffer and die for us while we were yet sinners and for Jesus who knew no sin to be ‘willing’ to give up His life for us to pay the ‘debt’ we owed so that we could have a restored relationship with God and for the Holy Spirit to willingly leave the fellowship of God and Jesus to be a Comforter for us here on earth amidst this sin ridden dying world goes beyond our human reason. Yet we know these things to be true.

So, we are a people, children of a living and loving God who have been given ‘Much’ and as such ‘Much’ is required. In order to walk in restored relationship with God we have to give up our ‘lives’ of death in exchange for a ‘new’ life filled with hope, peace, joy and love. As a part of this and most importantly we have to be willing to ‘forgive’ just as we were forgiven. I think this ‘truth’ spoken often of in passing is not given the ‘weight’ it truly deserves and so I think believers can walk around with a belief that they are ‘entitled’ to their ‘anger or bitterness’ toward another for a ‘wrong’ they suffered. I think this leads to a ‘pride’ they become oblivious to which leads to death because it is tied to their ‘old life’ that should be dead and gone. The one where our life was our ‘own’ so to speak and we were ‘entitled’ to **believe** and **feel** whatever we wanted. In our ‘new life’ God gives us direction on ‘how’ we should ‘feel’ as a **result** or ‘fruit’ of what we have been given.

For example, if someone gave you a million dollars, how would you feel? Some might feel **entitled** like ‘I’ve worked my whole life for this ... I deserve it, or it should have been mine all along, I deserve it as much as the next person, etc.’. Others might feel **overjoyed** “I just can’t believe it!” Still others would feel **undeserving** “Why me?”. The list of possibilities goes on but the outcome is evident and that is they all are birthed out of a limited understanding of the deeper truth. All provision comes from God whether we ‘recognize’ it or not and as such

we should be 'grateful' for it from the air we breathe to the food we eat and so on for every aspect of our life whether it includes a million dollars or not. But just as we can easily slip on a different pair of shoes we can tend to 'switch' from our 'new life' in God to our 'old life' just as quickly and before we know it are walking in our old 'mindset'.

Mary Magdalene was the perfect story of 'how' we should **all** 'feel' and walk in our 'new' life. She was so **grateful** for the 'forgiveness, love and acceptance' of Jesus that there was nothing she wouldn't do or sacrifice for Him. She was a tremendous example of 'how' our hearts, minds and lives **should** be transformed in our encounter with Jesus and even more importantly Mary never went back to her 'old life' because there was no 'old life' to 'fall back on'. I think sometimes believers can have that mentality as well 'I can try this out but if it doesn't work out, I can always go back to the way it was before'. Unfortunately, that won't work out well either because they then have to contend with 'guilt' because they **know** the choices, they are making are **wrong** yet they are either to ashamed or to prideful at that point to make things 'right with God'.

The truth is that we have been forgiven by God long before we even existed for **all** the 'sins' we would ever commit and as such we also not only **must** 'forgive' others but if we have really experienced that forgiveness we should also **want** others to 'know' that amazing **feeling** as well. You see at the deepest core of our being if we have been truly **transformed** then we should be the opposite of all we once were 'dead' now 'living', 'self' purpose/goals to 'God' purpose/goals, etc. It is **pride** that tells us 'we 'aren't as bad as ... or I would never do that ...' and so when we 'fall' into the enemies **trap** of believing this then we have immediately done 2 things: a) Passed judgment on the situation/person and b) We have elevated or put ourselves 'above' that situation/person. Unfortunately, any pedestal no matter how little or big is a position we 'are not entitled to be on' and eventually will fall from because only statues can stay on pedestals for any length of time. Remember the old adage 'Pride cometh before the fall'.

In reality we should be a 'humble', 'thankful', 'grateful' people full of love, joy, peace, patience, etc. We should walk in the understanding that 'but for the grace

of God so go I' and that to have committed

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sin in God's eyes is as if we committed them all since 'any' sin is death causing eternal separation from God. Because 'all' have sinned and fall 'short' of the glory of God ... we 'all' start in the same condition of dying and separated from God.

No one starts off 'better or higher' than anyone else. God created us each uniquely and beautifully to fulfill a purpose only He knows and can reveal to us as we grow in our relationship with Him. It is important to keep everything that hinders that relationship crucified and dead so that nothing stands between us and Him. Pride and being unwilling to forgive have no place in God's kingdom or our lives if we want to be a part of His kingdom in eternity. There is no 'choice' because that was made when we chose to become 'Christians' and took on Christ's name because He set the example and asked the Father to 'forgive' us so we can do no less. If we can't 'forgive' then we reject God's forgiveness of us.

It is important to examine our life each day to ensure we are not harboring any lingering 'pride' or areas we haven't forgiven or asked for forgiveness of. All cause separation from God and any separation from God's presence leaves us vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy who is watching for an opportunity to 'devour, lie, steal, destroy' us because his only pleasure is in bringing 'pain' to the Father by hurting us whom God loves. The choice is ours ... 'choose this day whom you will serve' can you add with me 'but as for me and my house we **will** serve the Lord'? I truly hope so for there is no **greater** love, joy, peace or happiness in the world that **compares** to serving God.