

there's no free lunch

"for even when we were with you, we commanded you this: if anyone will not work, neither shall he eat." 2 thess 3:10

wow, one might say. that doesn't sound very christian. the truth is, paul gives us explicit instructions about charitable works of the church which i believe apply to individual members as well. there are too many demanding their "fair share," not even realizing what that fair share might mean. i cannot speak for others but i shudder in terror to even think of what my fair share would be; what i am deserving of. i'll take grace over fair everyday.

people feel "entitled" in today's world and indeed, that is what our government calls them - entitlements. our entire generation have become obsessed with pleasure seeking, laziness, expecting and even demanding what they did not earn. paul goes on to tell us in 1 timothy 5:6 that the one who lives in pleasure is dead while they live.

i say this ashamedly, but even many christians remain reluctant to hand out a "thank you" for a gift or gesture. their attitude is that it is God doing the providing. while that may be essentially true, it also means He is using that person to do it with. should they not even get a little credit? not glory, but recognition. i am always prepared with a grateful "thank you" for even the most routine actions of people.

paul taught us that christians should take care of their own rather than have them become a burden to others. even the ones who must seek assistance from the church have burdensome restrictions laid on them; what one might call burdensome in today's mindset anyway. just read the whole of 1 timothy chapter 5.

now i realize these are requirements laid upon those calling themselves christians, but does that mean we should be any less discerning about unbelievers. is our well-meaning charity only contributing to their further downfall? i know there are many (christian and non-believers) who find themselves in dire need; some genuine and others imagined. for these, we need discernment from the Holy Spirit.

i read one time where someone was struggling with a desire to help others; wanting to help out and not knowing when or even if they should. after prayer, they said, "i felt the Holy Spirit was saying, you be obedient. I'll be merciful." that requires listening to the Holy Spirit. we definitely should be wanting to give our all to and for God - to and for others will definitely require discernment for a correct action on our part.

is satisfying someone's hunger contributing to their laziness or persuading them decide to get a job. it's kind of the same with those practicing lawlessness. if there are no consequences to their actions, why would they curtail them? "he who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly." prov 13:24 that's the scripture behind the saying, "spare the rod, spoil the child." (just a side note

here. i guess the Lord must really love me because i feel his chastening hand each time my lusts are more worldly directed.)

likewise i heard someone say the other day, "if you truly love someone, you will tell them the truth. if you don't care, you will tell them what they want to hear." some will never seek forgiveness or repentance until they feel pain enough to them cry out for it; until they suffer the rod of correction. that's what jail was meant for; a consequence for wrong doing.

this will drive some to learn while others are so steeped in their sin only the great tribulation will make them know the error of their ways and realization of just how far they have fallen from God's intended. people today though aren't seeking debate in search of truth, but instead a shutting down of all dissenting views contrary to their truth. augustine once said, "if you believe what you like in the gospel, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself."

romans chapter 1 says there is a time when God will give them over to uncleanness and vile passions. their hardened heart can no longer hear the gentle wooing of the Holy Spirit. as scripture says, "for the hearts of this people have grown dull. their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them." matt 13:15 there has to be a turning for a healing; a seeing and hearing before an understanding. without an ability to feel

conviction from the Holy Spirit, that is impossible.

i used to drive by a dry cleaners that had a sign prominently displayed: "cleanliness is next to godliness." that's not actually scripture my friend, even though it's a good idea. there is another saying i have heard expressed: "God takes care of those who take care of themselves." once again, not scriptural.

does that mean someone doesn't prepare even though they know a storm coming? i believe in a pre-tribulation rapture but that doesn't mean i'm just going to sit around and "trust God" to take care of everything for me. we don't know how much man-made tribulation will precede our departure.

God is not just going to supernaturally pay someone's bills when they refuse to work. God may want to use us to meet someone's need. we should be prepared to help in troubled times and not needing to look to others for aid. in a situation like that we will definitely need the Holy Spirit guidance. hunger and need show no preferential treatment. there is a storm coming and i don't believe any will be exempt.

this has not been an easy daily for me to write and deliver. many will deny the veracity of what i am saying. others will simply disagree with certain things. of course we must always be ready with charitable needs, but in a great time of lack we will all need guidance beyond our own understanding.

i claim no special revelation about anything. i read and interpret the scripture as the Holy Spirit leads

me. if someone's conscience convicts them otherwise, follow that. if it is wrong in their heart, then it is sin to them. all "perceived" wrong doing is sin because it is an act of willful disobedience. (see rom 14 and 1 cor chapters 8 and 10.)

if anyone is clutching to some hidden sin, if they are living in denial - know there will be repercussions; if not in this life then certainly of rewards in the next life. truth stands alone and is the only thing that can set us free. i'm sorry i went so long and i pray for understanding and compassion for what i am trying to say here. "and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" phil 4:7 no. there's no free lunch, but there is free grace enough to get us in His presence and that is more than enough!