

## **Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – June 13, 2010**

### **What Does It Cost?**

**“But Peter said to him, ‘Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart might be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.’ Then Simon answered and said, ‘Pray to the Lord for me, that none of these things which you have spoken may come upon me.’” Acts 8:20-24**

The apostle Philip had come to the city of Samaria to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. During his time there the preaching of God’s Word was accompanied by miracles of healing and the casting out of demons. As one might expect the people were amazed and overjoyed at the great things God was doing through His called servant.

In that same city there was a man named Simon who had previously practiced sorcery. He, by the power of the devil, had done many stupendous things which astonished the people. Simon used these works to make himself great among the people because they thought he had the power of God. The Scriptures tell us that Simon heard the Gospel, believed, and was baptized. Praise God! Another victory in Christ Jesus as Simon truly became a child of God.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard of the great work God was doing in Samaria they sent Peter and John to visit. It was on this visit that the gift of the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of hands. Simon was impressed. His old self-glorifying profit making spirit kicked in. How much would it cost to buy this power? How much should he pay to get the gifts of God? He could really prosper by its use!

God’s gifts cannot be bought. It cost Him dearly to redeem the world; a price only He could pay. Christ’s obedient life and sacrificial death are not

for sale....neither can the blessings and gifts of the Spirit be purchased. These blessings are just as they are described---gifts! God gives them freely to us out of mercy and love. We cannot merit them. We cannot purchase them. They are to be used for His glory and the welfare of our neighbor...not for self-glorification or worldly gain. The prosperity preachers of our day have the old spirit of Simon. Use God for worldly gain and greatness---they teach that He wants you to have these things. It will cost however, but if you are willing to sacrifice and you are willing to pay...all this can be, yes will be yours!

Forgiveness is free. Life eternal is free. The gifts of the Spirit are poured out by God freely where and when He wants. Our tithes and offerings cannot purchase His grace. They are responses of thanksgiving from God's people who have been saved from sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. So whatever became of Simon? The Bible doesn't tell us. Apart from his request that Peter pray for him we hear nothing more. We can be certain however that God's forgiveness and promise of life remained His free gift for Simon, just as it is for us, and if Simon repented and believed the Gospel we shall see him in heaven with all those who have believed, for Christ paid the cost that all who believe might freely enter in.

- Remember: Your offerings help to bring the message of God's grace to others. Someone gave time, talents, and treasure so you could hear about Christ...shall we not do the same so others may learn of God's grace for them?

How blessed we are to be the people of God. He has chosen us to be in this place. He has prepared us for this time. He has equipped us for service to Him. **Don't wait for someone else to do it. If you wait on someone else to do it...it will never get done!** God bless you in the growth of your faith and in service to Him and His people, for your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

Pastor Jacobs

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