

Freely Receiving from the Spirit: Walking Free from Legalism

I. FREELY RECEIVING THE ANOINTING OF THE SPIRIT

- A. Jesus called His disciples to three truths that were unprecedented at that time: to operate in supernatural ministry, to freely receive the anointing for it and to give it to others without charge.
⁸ ***Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. (Mt. 10:8)***
- B. ***A simple definition of legalism***: engaging in spiritual activities to earn favor from God. The way that we enter and live in the kingdom is based on having confidence in God's commitments to us. Some have more confidence in their commitment to God than in His commitment to them.
- C. God's righteousness, blessing, and favor are given freely to those who have faith or confidence in Jesus' work on the cross and His deep love for His people.
¹⁷ ***If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new...***²¹ ***For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:17-21)***
- D. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can walk with confidence without any condemnation.
¹ ***There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus... (Rom. 8:1)***
- E. We set our eyes on Jesus instead of being preoccupied with measuring our dedication, calling, and relationship with the Spirit and comparing it to others. Focusing on ourselves hinders us from connecting with Jesus because we are distracted with so much internal "emotional traffic."
² ***Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. (Heb. 12:2)***
- F. God releases His power by faith. Faith is ***confident agreement*** with the Spirit and the Word. Many find it easy to believe that their initial salvation is a free gift, but then believe that God listens to them, desires, and uses them based on how well they are doing in their spiritual life.
² ***I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law [earning it], or by the hearing of faith?***³ ***Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh [earning it]?...***⁵ ***He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*** (Gal. 3:2-5)
²⁹ ***He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." (Mt. 9:29)***
- G. The psalmist sought to repay God for all the benefits that he received from God. The Lord revealed that God's desire was that he "take and say thank you" for all that God gave him.
¹² ***What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits toward me? 13 I will take up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD...***¹⁷ ***I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD. (Ps. 116:12-17)***

II. BE AS CHILDREN: FREELY RECEIVE WITH HUMILITY

- A. Jesus called us to receive from God with the humility of a child who is confident of receiving blessing and favor. Children have no confidence in their ability to earn blessing. They boldly ask their parents for things, even in their immaturity, because they trust their parents' love.
- ⁴ *Whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom... (Mt. 18:4)*
- B. There are two different expressions of pride that tempt God's people: the pride that seeks to gain man's praise and the pride that seeks to earn God's favor.
- ⁶ *He gives more grace...God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. (Jas. 4:6)*
- C. Abraham did not deserve his high calling, but received it by faith or confidence in God. Abraham was justified or given right standing with God by faith.
- ¹ *What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found...? ³ What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted [put on his account] to him for righteousness."*
- ⁴ *Now to him who works [earns it], the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. ⁵ But to him who does not work [earn it] but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, ⁶ just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness [favor and acceptance] apart from works [earning it]: ⁷ "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered..." (Rom. 4:1-7)*
- D. The Gentiles were ungodly and undeserving of God's blessing, yet they received it as a free gift when it was offered to them. They repented quickly when God's love was offered to them freely. This was a stumbling block to the dedicated Pharisees.
- ³⁰ *Gentiles [ungodly and undeserving], who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness [favor with God], even the righteousness of faith; ³¹ but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. ³² Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law [earning God's favor]. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone [favor given freely]... (Rom. 9:30-32)*
- E. God's righteousness, blessing, and favor are freely given to those who have faith, or confidence, in Jesus' work on the cross and in His deep love for His people. Israel sought to earn God's blessing.
- ² *They [Jewish people] have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. (Rom. 10:2-3)*
- F. When we have revelation of God's deep desire for us, it fills us with gratitude. We do not trust in our obedience and spiritual discipline, but neither do we neglect it. We obey Jesus because we have freely received God's love and blessing. Our dedication flows out of gratitude.
- ⁴ *Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4)*
- ⁴⁷ *Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. (Lk. 7:47)*