

# Becky Combee Ministries, Inc.

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## God's Gifts

I used to tease our children when they were young by suggesting that we only celebrate Christmas every five years. They always objected. Kids love Christmas gifts! Faithfully, every year Wayne and I pocketed their lists and stretched our pocketbooks to provide their heart's desire. We shopped without reluctance because we loved them. It was a joy to see their faces explode in happiness.

God SO LOVED the world that He also provided gifts for His children. The apostle Peter declared that God's divine power has given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness."<sup>1</sup> Paul writes that we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. The Weymouth translation of this verse explains that God has "CROWNED us with every spiritual blessing." The profound witness of the Norlie translation says blessings "that heaven itself enjoys." What a glorious bounty God has given us!

The foundation of God's generosity toward us is Jesus' sacrifice. Through His death and victorious resurrection God "freely

give[s] us all things."<sup>3</sup> Did you notice the word "freely?" What does it mean that God's gifts are "freely given?" For many of us, this is a strange concept. We expect to "pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps," to merit every reward because of our unceasing effort. In children's scouting programs, badges are earned. The success of most students reflect



many hours of study. Increased salary and praise profits a diligent, untiring employee. A dog conforms to his owner's standards when he is continually drilled. The beauty of a magnificent garden is not only someone's "green thumb," but their persistent care. Is anything really "freely given?"



I work continuously praying and studying to teach God's Word. At night, I often lay awake pondering a lesson or petitioning God, my Father, for understanding. If I fail to bounce out of bed in the morning, Wayne will ask, "Do you need to get up and review today's lesson or did you go over it during the night?" He knows. The work of God simply is not 8:00 to 5:00. It is continual; it is laborious; and it can be stressful – if one has not learned to rest in the Lord. But oh what great rewards when truth is received, when souls are set free, when bodies are healthy, when minds are filled with peace! Every moment, every effort, is forgotten!

Yet, I did not set them free. God did! I did not write truth on their heart. God did! I did not sacrifice my son for them. God did! He rescued man. He fulfilled the plan of salvation through His Son. It was not my plan. It was God's plan.

Gloriously, the Scripture declares, "God was not slack concerning His promise."<sup>4</sup> He is longsuffering, not willing that any perish. His Word is forever settled and every word comes to pass. Am I patient and longsuffering? Sometimes! Do I fulfill every

promise? No, sometimes I fail. My promises are not always accomplished. My intentions are honorable, but sometimes my effort is bombarded with human frailties. It certainly isn't my work that has saved you. Our great salvation is the work of God.

GOD crucified His Son. GOD sent the Holy Spirit to earth. GOD provides eternal life. GOD recreates the spirit of man. GOD works in us to accomplish His will. GOD answers prayer. GOD performs His Word. GOD meets all our needs. GOD is our healer. Every benefit and blessing is from GOD, and they are "freely given." Our effort, our labor, and our diligence is to transport this message to you.

God, the Word, was made flesh. I doubt that He was born on December 25th, but I know He

## Merry Christmas!

came. He came to "freely give." Together, the blessed Trinity worked so that all who believe could receive the fullness of heaven. As we worship this Christmas season, we celebrate this great plan before the manger in Bethlehem. But we also kneel at the foot of the old rugged cross, stand at the threshold of the empty tomb, and sit saturated by God's Spirit in the upper room. From there we are commissioned to go into all the world. Jesus said, "Freely you have received, freely give."<sup>5</sup>

With the prophet Isaiah we say, "Here am I; send me." Is 6:8.

*Becky*

<sup>1</sup> 2Pe 1:3 <sup>2</sup> Eph 1:2 <sup>3</sup> Ro 8:32 <sup>4</sup> 2 Peter 3:9 <sup>5</sup> Mt 10:8