



CHRIST THE KING

LUTHERAN CHURCH

October 28, 2016

You received without paying; give without pay. Matthew 10:8 (ESV).

A few years ago, I was upset to learn that the LCMS had adopted the ESV translation for our Study Bible. Today, the ESV wording of Matthew 10:8 has opened my eyes!! In the NIV the last sentence reads: ***"You received freely, freely give"*** which seems straightforward. **But, what does it mean to "give without pay?"**

I know what it means to give without pay, because I grew up watching my big sisters live the concept...

My family was "modest," my mom used to tell us we were "lower-middle class" (I always wondered why she said it so proudly). Hidden in our kitchen was a clear glass jar we called "the bank." It always held a few bills and coins. I am sure most of the families in our neighborhood had something similar. I am also sure that most of the "banks" in our neighborhood did not have the number of "depositors" ours had. We all delivered the Shoppers News, and Jetta had a paper route that I helped with. All the money from all the routes went into "the bank." When the two oldest turned 16, they both got jobs and, for years, both put the lion's share of their earnings into the bank, without being asked. Once the money hit the jar, their earnings were no longer theirs, they belonged to "the family."

In the spring of 1975, while my mom fought cancer, my sisters and I spent untold hours as part of the world's most inefficient assembly line, snapping together plastic pieces of **Décor-Eggers**. We were paid by the piece, and the seven of us churned out a lot of pieces. By Easter, we had a large pot of money to divvy-up. I knew, to the penny, how much I had earned. So, when my big sisters and my Dad handed me a \$10 bill, I was pretty steamed. They told me that they had taken enough from each share to buy us a TV, (ours had been dead for at least a year). That calmed me down a little, but I still had more coming to me than \$10. When I asked where the rest was, they showed me a picture of a La-Z-Boy recliner they'd bought mom, so she could sit in the living room and watch TV with us when she got home from the hospital. It would take a pretty rotten person to complain after that...and I was pretty rotten. After listening to me complain for an hour or so, my sisters offered me *their* \$10 bills. To this day, I can't believe I was going to take them...until dad stepped in.

So, what's the point? This: I had to be shown how to love, and had to be forced to give, until I felt love and *wanted* to give. My sister's example of giving without pay: giving what they could to support the family with no expectations, fanfare, or remorse, taught me how to "rightly" give an offering. By cheerfully and faithfully combining a percentage of the monetary blessings God has given us, we create a vehicle through which our church family can support our missions and each other. And, just like with my sister's tips, the moment we dedicate our offering to God, it becomes the family's, to be put where it can have the greatest impact on our collective mission.

I had a lesson to learn about the blessing of giving without pay, and maybe you do as well. *We give so that others learn how to give:* like Confession, tithing is less an obligation than it is an opportunity to experience true joy and blessing. If we don't show that to our children, we fail them, and our CTK, "Family of the Forgiven". Please join me at the altar November 20th to show and teach our families and each other that we understand His grace and our place in sharing it with the whole family of God.

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REV. CHARLES NEUGEBAUER

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As God's forgiven family, we grow in faith through Word and Sacrament to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ

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