



YOU DESERVE THE BEST!

By David H. Snyder

The world uses many different tactics to sell their products. Sometimes they tell us we desperately *need* a particular item—it is something that we just cannot live without. Other times we are told a certain gadget will provide us with protection or it will drastically improve our lifestyle. Another method often used promotes the idea that we “deserve” the item that

is available for purchase. There is a billboard along a busy highway in Chattanooga that says, “You deserve the best.” The advertisement is for a particular HVAC (Heating, ventilation, and Air Conditioning) system. Do I really *deserve* to have that particular unit in my house? Do I *deserve* to own *any* type of HVAC system? Indeed, do I *deserve* to have a house in which to install a HVAC unit?

It is sad to see the attitude of many today who have adopted the erroneous “I deserve it” philosophy. While the world tells us we deserve all the good things life has to offer, the Bible gives us a completely different picture. In fact, as is always the case, God’s Word teaches the exact opposite of what the world promotes. The only thing you and I really *deserve* is an eternity in hell. As believers, we are not on our way to heaven because we deserve salvation. It is only by God’s grace and mercy that we have been saved (Ephesians 2:8–9; Titus 3:5). Praise the Lord for His amazing grace and everlasting mercy!

Going beyond salvation, too many Christians have embraced the “I deserve it” attitude when it comes to their service for the Lord. This goes hand-in-hand with today’s “health and wealth prosperity gospel.” Those who have been deceived by this way of thinking are often not willing to consider giving their lives to missionary service. The assumption is they deserve to choose the occupation *they* desire. Their focus becomes a better house, better vocation, better attire, and better car—because they *deserve the best*.

The Word of God clearly states that in order to be Jesus’ disciple one must be willing to forsake everything and follow Him; otherwise, he simply cannot be His disciple (Luke 14:26–27, 33). In Matthew chapter 6, the Lord gives the proper attitude a believer should have concerning the material things of this life. Jesus said, “*Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:31–33).

If we are going to effectively obey the Great Commission, it is imperative that we focus on what we *owe* rather than what we feel we *deserve*. Paul understood himself to be a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the

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Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise (Romans 1:14). A reoccurring theme¹ in Paul’s writings was the obligation he felt because of the sacrifice Christ made for him. It was only sensible to Paul that since Jesus gave everything for him he should give everything back to God. Second Corinthians 5:14–15 are verses that express this conviction: *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again* (emphasis added). Two of the natural results of this type of thinking are soul winning and missionary service. This is emphasized by Paul a few verses later in 2 Corinthians 5 when he writes, *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as*

If people are motivated by what they feel they deserve rather than what they owe, the natural result will be a focus on self rather than others. *though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God* (2 Corinthians 5:18–20, emphasis added). So, if people are motivated by what they feel they deserve rather than what they owe, the natural result will be a focus on self rather than others.

Perhaps many Christians are missing God’s call to missions because they have been influenced by the billboards Satan has displayed along the busy highways of life: advertisements that declare, “You deserve the best HVAC (House, vocation, Attire and Car) the world’s system has to offer!” If we really want “the best,” we need to humbly follow the Lord’s will—whatever and wherever that may be. The Christian life is not about what we feel we deserve from God but about what the Bible says God deserves from us. Understanding the eternal debt we owe allows us to enjoy the very best God has for us. **W**

(Endnotes)

1. See also Romans 6:1–13; 12:1–2; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:8–10; 5:1–2; Titus 2:11–14.