



RIVER VALLEY HS
FCA CLIPBOARD



VOLUME 7

MARCH 2006

ISSUE 9

SEVEN FREE GIFTS

I believe that all of us have God-given abilities. Each of us have talents that the Lord expects us to use. Olympic gold medalist Mary Lou Retton said, "As simple as it sounds, we all must try to be the best person we can: by making the best choices, by making the most of the talents we've been given." Make the most of the gifts we've been given by making right choices . . . I agree.

James 1 says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father" (vs. 17). Gifts are not only great to receive but I've also learned that they're great to give because they are free. I think that there are 7 gifts that each of us can give.

The gift of *PRAISE* - giving someone a sense of their own worth through a sincere compliment.

The gift of *UNDERSTANDING* - giving a compassionate response to a friend that's hurting.

The gift of *CONCESSION* - giving others the right to be right. Sometimes you win by not winning.

The gift of *GRATITUDE* - giving a "thank you" that those who have made a difference in your life.



The gift of *ATTENTION* - giving your undivided time and attention, no matter what the may be the distraction.

The gift of *INSPIRATION* - giving positive input that lifts up, stirs up and builds up a teammate.

The gift of *PERSONAL PRESENCE* - giving yourself to be with someone in need.

Giving these gifts opens you to a marvelous reality . . . you begin to see that God is doing the same thing for you that you're doing for others.



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RIGHT THINKING & BELIEVING

I think there are two major problems in our world today . . . No, it's not war and terrorism . . . I'm convinced that our two greatest problems are our thinking and our believing. If our thinking is wrong, then our whole life is wrong. If our believing is wrong, then we've dealt God totally out of our lives. Don't think that what your thoughts and faith dwell on doesn't matter. Your thoughts and faith are making you. We need to think right and believe right.

First, we need right thinking about God. So many have the wrong idea about the nature of God. Some only see Him as a God of judgment but His true nature is loving and giving. He's a good God who wants to bring wholeness into your life. In Malachi 3, He says, "I am the Lord, I change not" (vs. 6) - the Lord hasn't changed, He's always been a good God. It's you and I that need to change our thinking about Him and stop blaming Him for the bad things that come our way.

Next, we need right thinking about Jesus. So many think He only did the miraculous way back then. But He's still willing and able to do the same today . . . in the here and now . . . in your life! Hebrews 13:8 says that He hasn't changed, He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. We need to believe beyond our doubts that Jesus is for us not against us and that He wants to meet our needs.

Finally, you and I need right thinking about faith. So many think faith is something they have to get. But according to Romans 12:3 God has already given each of us a measure of faith. You and I don't have to get faith; we have all the faith we need. We've got to learn to use our faith and trust the Lord for our needs.

If we'll think right and believe right about God, Jesus and faith, they'll no longer be our two greatest problems. They'll be our two greatest blessings!



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