

Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

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Hearts of Love is a non-profit ministry, dedicated to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ whenever and wherever we find open doors. Our first priority is to glorify God and lead whomever possible to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Please pray for us faithfully. We need your prayer, and we appreciate it more than we could ever say. Please consider us an extension of your ministry in this world, and support us with your prayer as such.

***May God richly
bless you!***

Tom & Debbie

Dueling Gifters

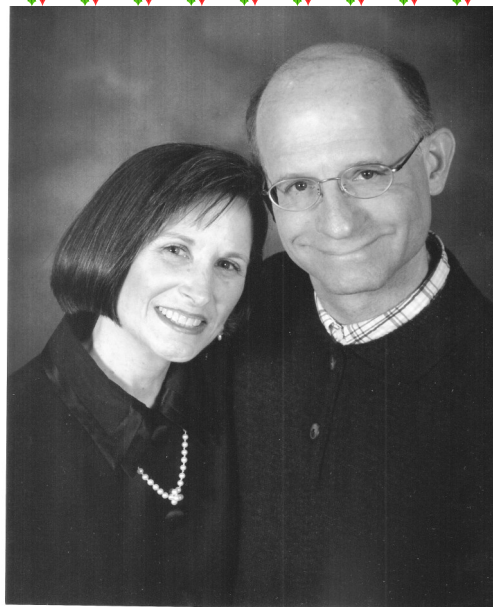
Christmas is known as a time for giving gifts to others and especially to those we love. For some, the planning, shopping, wrapping and giving of gifts is a real joy; for others, it's a chore. Some are truly grateful for whatever they receive; they cherish each gift, no matter how seemingly small or insignificant, showing genuine gratitude. Others are never grateful or satisfied; being selfish and self centered, they despise every gift and soon throw them away or re-gift them to others.

The first gift associated with Christmas is, of course, God's gift of His Son to a world that would eventually despise and discard His precious, carefully planned gift.

Beyond God's great gifts to humans over the centuries, there's been another gift giving drama happening behind the scenes for a very long time. God, the Father and the Son, have been creating gifts for each other, each working to outdo the other, for thousands of years.

First, the Father created for His Son a ball, a huge, beautiful ball just floating and spinning in space and He called the ball, Earth. His Son said, 'Wow! Cool, Dad... thanks... but watch this! Suddenly the ball was covered with lakes and rivers, forests and grassy plains. His Father said, 'Not bad, Son... I like it! Thanks... but watch this! In a flash, the waters were filled with fishes and the forests were filled with animals of every kind. 'Nice going, Dad! Here's one for You...' **Poof!**... the very first *White Elephant!* They both laughed at that one... and they've been sending it back and forth ever since.

Then the Father decided it was time to really get down to business; He created a genuine live Man and His Son cried, 'Woh! That's the best yet! Let's make a bunch of those that we can keep with us forever!' But sadly, the Man, many of them in fact, turned out to be evil, duplicitous creatures, who had no character at all and yet, both the



God's Greatest Gift

*He has committed to
us the word of
Reconciliation.
Therefore, we are
Ambassadors for Christ.*

2 Corinthians 5:19,20

Father and the Son chose some of them to love and cherish anyway.

Since all of the Men were sinful, it was quite impossible to allow any of them to bring their infectious evil up into God's glorious home, so until God, the Father and the Son, worked out their plan about what to do with the Men they were going to keep for themselves, they created a place to store them. They called the place *Sheol, the place of the dead* and they put it down under the surface of the Great Ball which they had called Earth. They created Sheol with two separated compartments; one side they called *Hades* where all the evil unbelieving Men have been warehoused for the past 6000 years. The other side which they called *Paradise*, was made for the Men who believed the Word of God that some day the Father would send His Son to open a special door so that they could all eventually go into God's glorious home to live with Him forever.

Paradise was a pleasant place, Hades... not so much.

The main problem with the gifting competition between the Father and the Son is that neither of them is ever surprised... they always know what's

coming and they always know what the other is going to do because they both already planned it out a long, long time ago. One the other hand, they always get exactly what they want because they both planned and helped each other to make it.

Long before they ever created anything, they planned everything out and chose for themselves which Men they would eventually take home... and they weren't planning to just put them on a shelf when they got them home; they were planning to develop each one to be very important parts of the family business... running the Universe.

The first thing they created was a flock of angels, one of their chiefs being a guy called Lucifer. As the Father and Son were divvying up the many different Men they would create, Lucifer was astounded that they kept choosing for themselves many who were weak or ugly, even lame, blind or simple minded ones. Whenever they would pass over a beautiful, strong, brilliant one, Lucifer would cry out, 'I want that one!' and he'd pitch a fit until they gave in, letting him think he had really won a

prize while giving each other knowing looks as if to say, 'If he only knew what a pack of losers he's gathering and where they'll all spend eternity together.' tsk tsk

Anyway... back before the Son emptied out Paradise, His plan was to go down there, pay the deposit for all of the Men they had stashed there on layaway and then take them back with Him as the best gift yet for His Father... it's as if He was hiding them all in the closet until Christmas. So... what the Son did... and again... they planned it all together... He went down to the Earth to be born into a human body as one of the Men... imagine that! Then He actually allowed *them to unknowingly* crucify Him as a sacrifice for *their own sin* even though He had never committed any sin at all... whoever heard of such a thing! It was quite an astounding plan, really, when you think about it.

And the best part is... the secret to the plan was that once the Son had died on the Cross, once He had allowed Lucifer to instigate His crucifixion... then **He also went down to Paradise** like every other Old Testament believer. Lucifer expected that He would be kept retrained there indefinitely like all the others, but since He had kept every bit of the Law perfectly and had never sinned, not even once... He didn't have to stay there, unable to enter into God's presence; He was able to gather them all up and take them back with Him to the Father's house; **He Himself became the special door** that opened the way for all of them to leave Paradise and enter into God's glorious home in Heaven.

What a shock that must have been for *poor old Lucifer*... always feeling like he was getting the short end of the stick... not only was he getting stuck with all of the rotten humans, now he was even going to see that he was responsible for freeing all of the not-so-rotten ones from their long house-arrest in Paradise. Hardy Har Har! What a stooge!! You can't even make this stuff up!

It's as if the Son went to on a shopping spree to His Father's favorite store and bought out everything; nothing was left

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on any of the shelves... just dust.
When He got back up to His Father's house, He opened the door (only he could open the door to Heaven) and said, 'Close your eyes, Dad; have I got the best gift yet for You!' Then He flung the door open wide and all these thousands of joyous 'children' flooded the Throne Room, jumping up and down, crawling all over the Father's lap, hugging, kissing, clapping and squealing with delight! And the Father said, 'You got me Son... this is great! This is the very best yet! I've been waiting 4000 years for this... but just wait till you see what I'm cooking up next for You!'

Then the Two of them began creating a brand new thing... a special body for the Son... a group of people who would be drawn from every tribe and tongue, from every nation and family.

What the Son had done really was quite something. He and the Father had developed the Old Covenant with priests and sacrifices but it was always insufficient; it never made anyone holy or acceptable to come into God's presence; it was never meant to be permanent; it only pointed to the time when the Son would come into the World to be the sacrifice for sin that would allow a totally new people to be created. He had taken all the Old Testament Saints back to the Father as His special gift, but even more

spectacular than that... God had now made it possible for those who would trust in the Son and His sacrifice to be actually made holy and righteous... that the absolute holiness and righteousness of the Son would be 'imputed' to each one. We could now be made completely pure in the Father's sight and He would actually adopt each one of us as His own dear children. No longer would we be strangers, acquaintances or even just friends of God... now we could be His Children... sons and daughters, royal princes and princesses... each and every one specifically chosen... hand picked by the Father with a special, individual purpose for which He would personally mold and fashion each one of us.

They decided that there would be no chance that any of the Men they chose would turn out to be defective or that any of us wouldn't work right. They planned to do whatever was necessary to form us into the exact persons They planned for each one of us to be so that we would each be perfectly suited and prepared for the special assignment God has in mind when we will be called upon to help the Son 'Rule and Reign over all the Earth and all the Universe' when He returns to the Earth to begin His Thousand Year Kingdom.

God's plan is to use various trials and hardships during our lifetimes in order to create in each of us the same love and patience that He has for each of us.

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The Father has one last special gift in mind for the Son. One day very soon, He will cause a trumpet blast to be heard throughout the Universe. At that moment, everyone of us they have chosen, from before they started their great plan, will be automatically picked up at the same time by UAS: United Angelic Shipping, and we will all be immediately drop-shipped to a special spot in the clouds where He will have told the Son to wait for His best surprise ever! Then we will all accompany the Son back to the Father's house where He will proudly show off the wonderful new homes He's been creating for us over the past 1985 years. Then **we** will be the ones who receive the **absolute best gifts ever since the Universe began**, while the Father and the Son smile and proudly look on as we open up each and every gift under the biggest Christmas Tree ever created.

Merry Christmas to us all forever!

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The Harvest is Great, but the laborers are few. Matt 9:38

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