

“Big Deal – He Can Afford It!”

Many of the celebrities among us are very active in charitable work. They give to children’s hospitals and to colleges. They fund medical research. Athletes often endow clubs for boys and girls. Some give not only their money, but also a lot of their time and energy, to a host of worthy causes.

Of course, you don’t hear a lot about this. I used to think it was media bias that reported every bad thing they could find about popular people and ignored the good. But now I wonder if celebrities might deliberately keep a low profile when it comes to talking about the good works they’re involved in. I mean, every time it *is* mentioned, someone says, “Big deal—he can afford it. He wouldn’t miss it if he gave twice as much.”

Sour grapes. Why would anyone want to minimize the importance of anyone else doing something good in our world? Could be just a hateful, cynical attitude. Could be deep-seated resentment. Could be jealousy. Could be guilt. I’ll leave the psychodynamics of it to the psychologists. All I know for sure is that, in *any* case, it *couldn’t* be Christian – and it’s an embarrassment to our profession when God’s people do it.

But I wonder if this view of things could also keep us from really appreciating the gifts God gives to us. After all, it’s *His job* to take care of His own creation! And besides, what does the little bit of air I breathe cost Him? Why should He miss that tiny bit of space I occupy for such a short time on His big earth? If, as the Bible claims, “*The cattle on a thousand hills*” are His, why make a big deal of my quarter pound of ground round...even if it is on a sesame seed bun with special sauce?.

O, I know that He *also* gave it *all*. Sure, I’m grateful for salvation and heaven and all that. That really *cost* Him! But I’m not talking about things spiritual and eternal now. I’m just wondering if my lack of real gratitude for these “lesser” gifts is a reflection of my depreciation of God’s generosity...and if that may have something to do with my need to throw a wet blanket over the good works others are doing.

Maybe it’s because I believe they have more to be grateful for than I. And maybe I’d change my mind about that were God to withhold those “meager” blessings, which I routinely take for granted, from me!

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