

The Best Things in Life Are Free

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Who says that nothing in this world is free? When we moved back from England we inherited a grill from Melanie's grandmother who had recently passed away. We cooked on that grill for several years. The burner was shot, the rack was rusty and the shell was caked with coagulated grease. I didn't want the hassle or expense of taking the thing to the dump, so I removed the propane tank, rolled it to the front yard and put a sign on it. It said: "*Free.*"

The grill was gone within two hours.

True, most of the things in this life advertised as free have costs hidden in the fine print ("Free – with payment of \$6.95 for shipping and handling."). But the greatest blessings that can be enjoyed in this world are *truly free*.

The Thoughts of God

"A penny for your thoughts" we might say to someone who appears distracted or troubled (a dangerous offer, by the way). If you want to know what Dr. Adkins thinks about losing weight, or what Bill O'Reilly thinks about the state of the world, they'll be glad to tell you – for the price of their best-selling book.

But the greatest thoughts of the greatest mind – the Creator Himself – are *free*: "*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God*" (1 Cor 2:12). (Yes, I know, the publisher charges, but God doesn't get any royalties.) God has revealed the most crucial information about the most important issues concerning the human being: our true identity, purpose, destiny. And to think what NASA spends to send a probe to a dead planet in search of mankind's origin!

But, yes, there's a catch. While the information from God is free, it doesn't come to us automatically. We must acquire it via reading, research, discussion; i.e., *work*. But what rich discoveries are there for the taking!

Speaking to God

If I want to communicate with family or friends who are not in my immediate presence, technology enables me to do that ... for a price. And forget about picking up the phone and dialing George Bush. George Bush nothing, just try getting a human being at the phone company. But think of it: God has given me *free access* to Him *anytime*. And there's no busy signal: "*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us*" (1 Jn 5:14).

The Gift of Salvation

The calving of glaciers in Alaska, the emerald waters of Tahiti, the Mediterranean cradle of Christianity – all can be yours through Princess Cruises for the low, low price of ... (double occupancy, of course). So, compared to these exotic ports of call, how much do you think it would cost to *live in heaven forever*?

"*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord ... Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!*" (Rom 6:23; 2 Cor 9:15).

So, where does the line form? What, no line you say?! Amazing, isn't it? The latest fad brings frenzied spending, but when it comes to the spiritual riches freely offered by God there are plenty of supplies. May we learn to value the things that really matter, and may we fulfill God's joy in giving by accepting that which He freely offers.