

## FIVE MINUTES WITH TOM MOOTY

### "What's In It for Me?"

In the seemingly never-ending supply of reality shows on television; this oft-repeated expression is oft-repeated: "What's in it for me?"

Oh I know, it is written in many different forms: "What do I get?", "When is my payback?", and on and on it goes; but it is just the same idea dressed up in different clothes - "What's in it for me?"

That seems to be rapidly becoming the good-ole-American way of doing business: "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours".

I think that is one of the main reasons so many people do not understand the Christian faith - they just cannot "scope in" (to borrow a term from my good friend Charles McNabb) - they cannot understand the principle of God's Unconditional Love for us; and to a much smaller scale, the principle of Christians' trying to help people without a price tag or even a suggestion of "What's in it for me?"

Several years ago, Miss 'Nita's parents' little get-a-way home in Lockhart, South Carolina experienced a flash flooding from a bad rainstorm; and since they couldn't go for some reason, Miss 'Nita and I went down to survey the damage.

It truly was a mess, with floors buckled, papers sogging down into the saturated carpets, stuff and things floating around like they owned the place; and mud, mud, mud everywhere. Water does that, you know, it brings it's kinfolks inside when it comes to visit.

Just take a look around you where ever you are right now; and imagine everything dripping wet!

So we were overjoyed when we got a knock on the door and some nice people were standing there with mops and buckets ready to go to work to help with the cleanup. Of course, we welcomed them with open arms.

Several weeks later, "Daddy Bill and Mimi" (Anita's parents) told us they got a letter with a "suggested" donation for the cleanup work; and later, they got a personal visit. I don't know if they sent them anything or not; it was certainly worth it to me, but that seemed to be a "mop of a different color".

We are bombarded with advertisements for "free" stuff - even the call is free - and when you call the free number for the free stuff; but there are strings attached, questions to answer, follow-ups to follow up, stuff and things to do.

You know; all that "What's in it for me?" concept.

And who is that person under that rock that has not gotten the infamous e-mail from the Nigerian prince (or his wife, just to add a little different flavor) that wants to "park" gazillions of green dollars

in your account so he won't lose it to his bureaucracy - and it's all free!  
Yeah, right!

Pull up Snopes.com and just see what scams usually make the top ten list - people wanting to get something for nothing! Or better yet; pull up Common sense.com (not a real .com as far as I know, but it should be. God knows we need it) and see if these things pass the "smell test".

Like the call I keep getting to check by Wal-Mart to pick up "my package I ordered" (which I never ordered); or I could just "click" on that link up there and they will take of it for me. Yeah, right! And how about all the extended warrantee calls for my car because "my warrantee is about to expire". Just click up there and they will get back to me. Yeah, right!

It's all free; that is; until we get the letter or the knock on the door: "What's in it for me?"

Again I say; that's why so many cannot understand the Christian life. I have heard first-hand that Christianity is a scam because of the high pressure offerings that are taken in the services (and granted, some "churches" go overboard on this). By the way, we don't "take" the offering, we "receive" it! If we "took" it, we would have the biggest, ugliest, meanest, most intimidating ushers available. Come to think of it ... (no, I won't go there). Actually, most preachers I know contribute a tithe and more - even while they are living off the tithes of others! That's makes no sense at all to the unsaved world!

Until the Holy Spirit touches your heart; you will never understand the Christian life either. It is way too far beyond your natural worldly pay scale; but it is there all the while - and the "fringe benefits" are "out of this world".

Don't know how to accept Jesus Christ? I do; and I will share!

*Tom Mooty has served Newport's West End Baptist Church as its Supply Pastor, Interim Pastor, Guest Pastor, Pastor, Senior Pastor, and very, very, very Senior Pastor for a total of thirty three cumulative years; and writes this column for The Newport Plain Talk's Wednesday and Weekend Editions. Please let the "Plain Talk" know your comments concerning this column.*