

Fellowship Bible Church

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Our Blog



ABOUT THIS BLOG...

I would encourage you to check back in on our web site as most weeks I will be reviewing highlights from our Sunday message with encouragements and challenges to go a little deeper in the text of God's word.

Blessings,

Pastor Shawn

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30 The Gift of a Russian Czar - Hebrews 10 JANUARY 30, 2013

In a recent sermon just prior to Christmas I talked about memorable Christmas presents that we received in the past. My story went back a lot of years ago when I was 6 or 7 years old and I received a Buddy L Wild Animals Circus truck (you can actually find one like it on google images!!!). I have received a lot of nice presents over the years (in fact this year I received a Standard Schnauzer puppy), but the present I received way back then really stuck in my mind.

Of course, with my discussion around "special gifts" and Christmas you have probably guessed where this blog is going... BUT WAIT... please take a moment to read a true story originally told by the late Bible commentator Harry Ironside about an incredible gift given to a Russian soldier back in the day. "There was a young man who was a soldier in the Russian army and because the young man's father was friend of Czar Nicholas I, the young man had been given a rather responsible post. He was the paymaster in one of the barracks for the Russian army, and it was his responsibility to see that the right amount of money was distributed each month to the soldiers.

The young man meant well, but his character was not up to his responsibility. He took to gambling and eventually had gambled away a great deal of the government's money as well as all his own.

In due course the young man received notice that a representative of the Czar was coming to check the accounts, and he knew that he was in trouble. That evening he got out the books and totaled up the funds owed. Then he went to the safe and got out his own pitifully small amount of money. As he sat there and looked at the two he was overwhelmed at the astronomical debt versus his own small change. He was ruined! He knew he would be disgraced.

At last the young man determined to take his life. He pulled out his revolver, placed it on the table before him, and wrote a summation of his misdeeds. At the bottom of the ledger, where he had totaled up his illegal borrowings, he wrote: "A great debt! Who can pay?" He decided that at the stroke of midnight he would die. As the evening wore on the young soldier grew drowsy and eventually fell asleep.

That night Czar Nicolas I, as was sometimes his custom, was making the rounds of this particular barracks. Seeing a light, he stopped, looked in, and saw the young man asleep. He recognized him immediately and, looking over his shoulder, saw the ledger book and realized all that had taken place.

He was about to awaken him and put him under arrest when his eye fastened on the young man's message: "A great debt! who can pay?" Suddenly, with a surge of magnanimity he reached over, wrote one word at the bottom of the ledger, and slipped out. The young man was sleeping fitfully.

He awoke suddenly in the middle of the night, glanced at the clock and, realizing that it was long after midnight, reached for his revolver to shoot himself. But, as he did so his eye fell upon the ledger. He saw something that he had not seen before.

There was his writing: "A great debt! Who can pay? But, underneath it was the word the czar had written: "Nicholas." He was dumbfounded. He did not understand how it could have gotten there. There must be some mistake. He went to the safe where

material that bore the signature of the czar was on file. It was the czar's signature. He said to himself "The czar must have come by when I was asleep. He has seen the book, he knows all, still he is willing to forgive me.

The young soldier then rested on the word of the czar, and the next morning a messenger came from the palace with exactly the amount needed to meet the deficit.

Only the czar could pay, and czar did pay" (James Montgomery Boice, "The Christ of Christmas")

Well, that is a powerful illustration about a gift that really saved this soldiers life. It's an illustration that helps us better understand our desperate need for a Saviour who is able to wipe away a debt we can't possibly pay. Why don't you take time to read Hebrews 10:1-7 and give thanks to Jesus for coming to do the will of the Father.

If you are reading this and you aren't sure why Jesus came to earth... why don't you drop me a note... I'd love to share about this gift given to us!.

Pastor Shawn
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