

Poor Decisions

The late author William S. Porter, Who wrote under the name O. Henry, penned a short story entitled “The Gift of the Magi”. [In this short story, a young couple was portrayed as being enthusiastically in love. They were also portrayed as having very little in terms of their earthly possessions. The young man, it is told, possessed only a beautiful pocket watch of which he was very proud, and justifiably so, since this watch was truly a masterpiece of artistic craftsmanship. The young bride had only her fabulously long and thick hair as her most treasured possession. She cared for her hair by daily brushing and regularly washing and caring for it. She was also justified in her pride of her hair because of its length, thickness, and quality of color. The young couple was very much in love, and wished to find a Christmas gift for their spouses which reflected this commitment. Having nothing else but their love, they had resigned themselves to having a meager and austere Christmas.

One afternoon the young man got an idea. He had seen a beautiful set of decorative combs for his young bride’s hair, but they were frightfully expensive so he had dismissed the idea up until this day. He went into the hair salon where these combs were being displayed and, after selling his prize watch, he purchased these combs for his wife. While he was sorry to have parted with his watch his love for his wife prevailed. It would be well worth it to see her put these combs into her hair. He could almost see her face in his mind’s eye as she put the combs into her long beautiful hair.

He went into the door to their tenement flat and presented his wife with his gift to her. Her reaction was over and above what he had even expected. Through her tears, she then gave him his gift from her. You see, she had cut her hair to purchase a fob for his prize watch.][1]

Sometimes we come up with some interesting and less than helpful solutions to problems which come up in life. God knows our needs and is able to fulfill them if we are obedient to His word. We forget that the God Who created the Heavens and the Earth and brought all that is into perfect harmony[2] is the same God Who, although banishing Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, upon hearing their acknowledgement of sin[3], subsequently made garments of skin to clothe them[4]. When faithless Israel made idols to worship[5] after being led out of Egypt by the Miraculous Hand of God[6] saw their sin and repented God the renewed the broken covenant with them[7]. This same God, when the old covenant failed brought about a new covenant which would for once and all forgive the sin of man[8].

Upon comparison of the secular example with the scriptures, one clear message to me is that following God is the best solutions to life’s problems. I think that learning to listen to God’s leading and praying for direction is the best solution. When sinners repent of their sin the problems of life they had gotten into start to be resolved and healing can begin. Proverbs 14:12 says “there is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death”. It is always best to check with God in grateful prayer before we make any rash decisions and create more problems in the end than we had to start off with.

[1] Paraphrase of O. Henry’s short story “The Gift of the Magi”

[2] Genesis Chapters 1-3; Job Chapters 38-41; John 1: 1-3

[3] Genesis 3:23-24

[4] Genesis 3: 21.

[5] Genesis Chapter 32

[6] Genesis Chapters 5-15

[7] Genesis Chapters 33-34

[8] John 3: 16-17