

The New Testament "Gamble"

"What if I tell them who they are? What if I take away any element of fear in condemnation, judgment or rejection?"

What if I tell them I love them, will always love them? That I love them right now, no matter what they've done, as much as I love my only Son? That there's nothing they can do to make my love go away?

"What if I tell them there are no lists? What if I tell them I don't keep a log of past offenses, of how little they pray, how often they've let me down, made promises that they don't keep?"

What if I tell them they are righteous, with my righteousness, right now?

What if I tell them they can stop beating themselves up? That they can stop being so formal, stiff and jumpy around me?

What if I tell them I'm **crazy** about them? What if I tell them, even if they run to the ends of the earth and do the most horrible, unthinkable things, that when they come back, I'd receive them with tears and a party?

"What if I tell them that if I am their Savior, they're going to heaven no matter what—it's a done deal? What if I tell them they have a new nature—saints, not saved sinners who should now 'buck up and be better if they were any kind of Christians, after all He's done for you!"

What if I tell them that I actually live in them now? That I've put my love, power, and nature inside of them, at their disposal?

What if I tell them that they don't have to put on a mask? That it is OK to be who they are at this moment, with all their junk. That they don't need to pretend about how close we are, how much they pray or don't, how much Bible they read or don't?

What if they knew they don't have to look over their shoulder for fear if things get too good, the other shoe's gonna drop?

"What if they knew I will never, ever use the word "punish" in relation to them?"

What if they knew that when they mess up, I will never "get back at them?"

What if they were convinced that bad circumstances aren't my way of evening the score for taking advantage of me?

What if they knew the basis of our friendship isn't how little they sin, but how much they let me love them?

What if I tell them they can hurt my heart, but that I never hurt theirs?

What if I tell them I like Eric Clapton's music too?

What if I tell them I never really liked the Christmas handbell deal with the white gloves?

What if I tell them they can open their eyes when they pray and still go to heaven?

What if I tell them there is no secret agenda, no trapdoor?

What if I tell them it isn't about their self-effort, but about allowing me to live my life through them?"

*Adapted from TrueFaced: Trust God and others with who you really are, Experience Edition, copyright 2004 Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol, John Lynch.
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