

**We Have  
Good News**

**That Is**

**GREAT**

**For Your**

**Relationships!**



# The Banker

## The Loan

Suppose I am a banker and you want to borrow \$100,000.<sup>00</sup> from my bank. I say, *“Today we have a special interest rate we are offering on loans. You may borrow the money at 21% interest.”* After asking me to repeat myself, you would leave my bank to borrow the money somewhere else.

Assuming you could borrow the \$100,000.<sup>00</sup> at any other bank at an interest rate of 7% or 8%, is it good news or bad news that I am attempting to loan you the money at 21% interest?

Let's assume that after refusing my initial offer, I continue to offer you two, three, four hundred thousand, even half a million dollars at 21% interest. Would this be increasingly better news or worse news?

You refuse to take the money because you will never be able to pay off the loan. I, then want to loan you more than you requested or need at 21%. While the interest rate never changes, your obligation increases because of what you accept from me. You would be far better off not accepting my money at all.

Persons who give like this banker are not trustworthy. They give the appearance that they are doing you a favor by giving themselves, but in fact they attach expectations to their offers that reduce your choices in life rather than increase your choices. When you don't or can't meet the other's expectations for repayment, the result is anger, frustration, and resentment from the other person.

This way of relating is based on mistrust. The giver covertly expects you to give something back. On the other hand, when you trust another person, you give freely and receive freely, allowing the other person the freedom to respond to you as he or she chooses.



## **The Gift**

Now suppose you want to borrow \$100,000.<sup>00</sup> from a different bank and the banker says, *“Today you are quite fortunate because I am independently wealthy. Because you have asked me for one hundred thousand dollars, it is my pleasure to give you one hundred thousand dollars. This is a free gift from me to you. Get out of my bank, have a good life, be responsible with it, there are no strings attached. It is your money.”* Is this good news or bad news?

## ***It is Good News!***

Did the second banker give the money freely? He said, *“This is a free gift from me to you. Get out of my bank, have a good life, be responsible with it, there are no strings attached. It is your money.”*

Yes, the banker’s intent is to give you the money freely. He wants you to have more choices as a result of receiving the money.

While you acknowledge this as good news, would you feel some obligation toward the banker? If you had an ongoing relationship with the banker at work, church, school, or in a social setting, would you feel obligated to him?

- Would you avoid him because of the obligation you feel?
- Would you need to repay the banker in some way?
- Would you refuse the money because of the obligation?
- Would you wonder what the banker really wants?
- Would you wonder about the “angle” or “catch” to this?

Suppose you decide to deposit the money into the generous banker's bank as a way of satisfying your feeling of obligation and indebtedness. This would allow his bank to use the money.

Now let's assume a brand new bank with more convenient hours and lifetime free checking and savings opens near your home. You move all of your other accounts to this new bank. After three months of leaving your money in the generous banker's bank, would you:

- 1) Move the money immediately from the generous banker's bank to the new bank?
- 2) Hesitate to move the money from the generous banker's bank to the new bank?
- 3) Leave the money in the generous banker's bank and never move the money?

After a year, can you see that you might begin to resent the banker because you are stuck, trapped and aren't free to move the money? You really can't move the money without feeling guilty or selfish and afraid that the banker may ask why you moved the money.

Let's say you leave the money in his bank because of your feelings of obligation, and you begin trying to repay the banker. As time goes by, you do several things for him, but he doesn't appreciate your efforts at repaying him. As you work to relieve your obligation, you realize you're not making progress, so you try harder to work off this obligation.

After years of trying to repay the banker, you get sick of trying to rid yourself of the obligation. Finally, out of frustration and anger you decide it's not worth it and give up on the relationship. Your efforts at being good enough and measuring up are never good enough, and you can't measure up to relieve your obligation.

Eventually you declare relationship bankruptcy and abandon the banker angry because nothing you did was ever good enough to eliminate the obligation you feel. You're hurt, disappointed and frustrated, feeling as though the banker never appreciated anything you did for him.

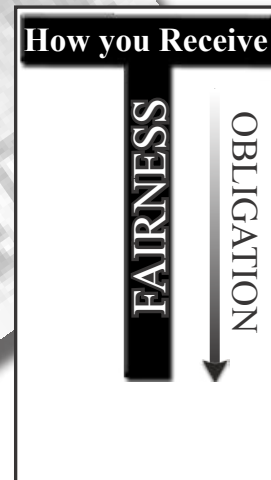
# Application to Relationships

Did the banker give the money freely? YES. Did you receive the money freely? NO. While you said this is good news (mentally), you feel obligated to the banker (emotionally). The way you receive the money results in fewer choices rather than more choices.

## Obligation

Is the way you received the money (obligation) because of the banker or because of you? **You!**

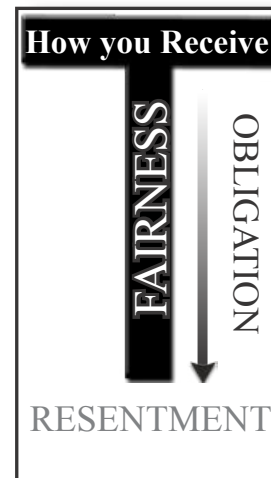
You feel obligated when you accept something from another. When receiving from another, you may feel that your partner deserves something from you in return. Your obligation to another is a natural reaction to keeping your relationship balanced between what you owe another and what another deserves from you. To prevent feeling selfish, you balance the ledger of fairness by repaying the "favor" even when you resent it.



## Resentment

Is the resentment you feel because of the banker or because of you? **You!**

Obligation results in resentment. You resent your partner because you feel indebted to him or her. When you feel resentment toward another, the other person does not cause your resentment. Your resentment is because of your dependence on what you think your partner will think of you. Working hard to repay your partner can create feelings of entitlement or thoughts that you deserve more from your partner than you are getting.



## Entitlement

Are your efforts at repaying the banker because of the banker or because of you? **You!**

Attempts to be good enough or measure up or repay your partner contribute to feelings of “entitlement.” You can claim that you have done so much for your partner, and he or she never appreciates anything you do “for” him. You believe you deserve better from your partner, yet no matter how much you do, it is never enough.



What would it be worth to the recipient to receive the money as freely as it was given so that he wouldn't feel the obligation, resentment, and entitlement? What would it be worth to you if there was a way to help you not feel so obligated and indebted to others?

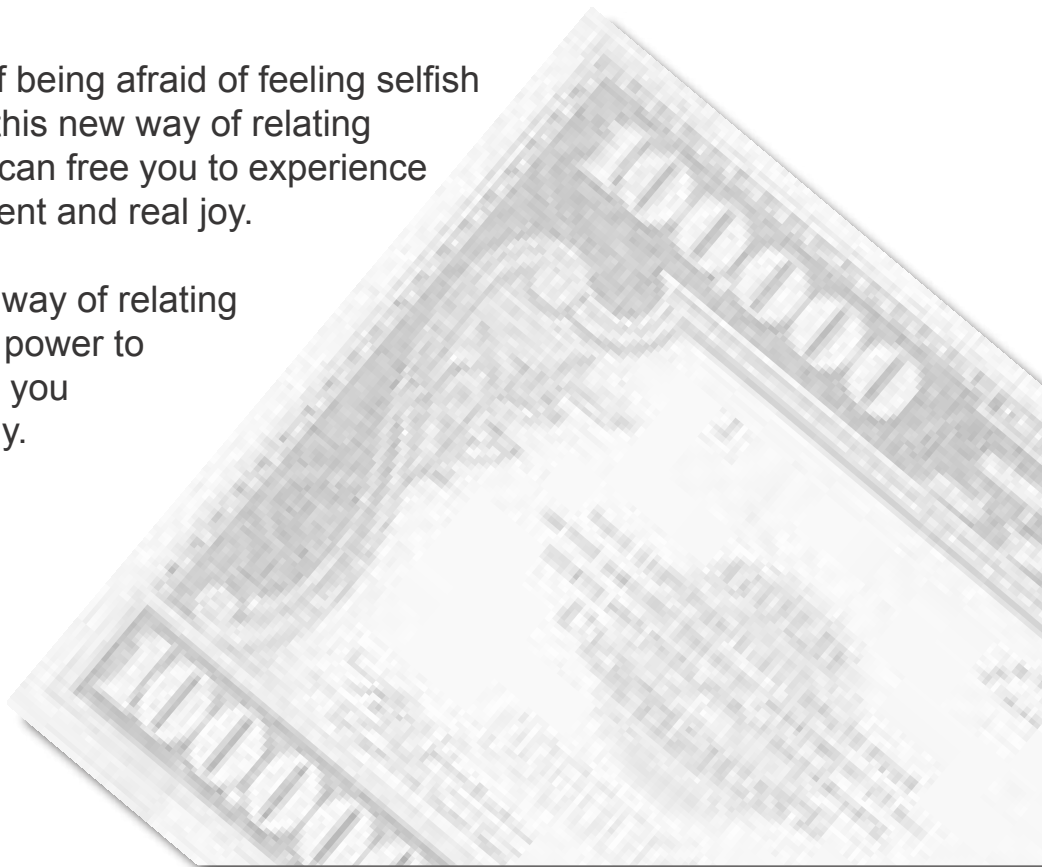
## ***Everything! ... There is another way!!!***

Instead of receiving from a framework of fairness, your entire relationship framework can be transformed, simply by receiving freely.

Instead of being afraid of feeling selfish or guilty, this new way of relating to others can free you to experience contentment and real joy.

This new way of relating holds the power to transform you completely.

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# The Good News

**Is life a Gift from God?      YES**  
**Is the Gospel Good News?    YES**  
**What do you “owe” God?    EVERYTHING**

If you agree with the answers to these questions ...  
**I have good news that is GREAT for your relationships!**

## ***Is life a gift from God? YES***

Life is a gift. You didn't do anything to deserve the life given to you at birth, nor did anyone owe it to you.

## ***Is the Gospel Good News? YES***

What is the gospel? The gospel or good news is that Jesus, God's one and only son, came to this earth, lived, died, was buried, and resurrected. He was the sinless Son of God, who did the measuring up and being good enough for you. He even accepted the consequences for your failures and sin.

Jesus, God's gift to humanity, frees you from the bondage of fairness' obligation and entitlement giving you a completely different way of relating. Because God is love, He wants you to have more choices in relationships and be able to experience intimacy, not only with others, but also with Him.

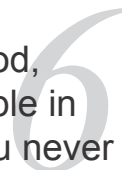
If you are exhausted from trying to measure up and be good enough for others in your life, Jesus turns obligation into

responsibility, resentment into gratitude, and entitlement into humility.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Matthew 5:17

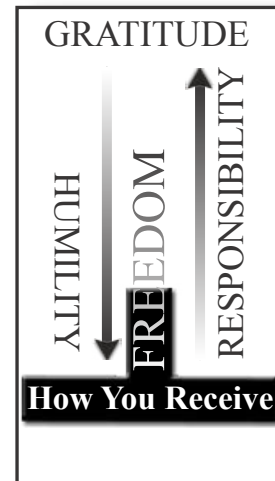
As you submit yourself to God, resurrection becomes possible in your relationship in ways you never expected!



## What do you owe God? **EVERYTHING?**

By suggesting that you “owe” God everything, you have turned the gospel into bad news. You know (mentally) you can never repay God for all that’s been given to you. But you feel like you “owe” God everything (emotionally).

Is God like the first banker, who appears generous by offering you increasingly more money, but at such a high interest rate you could never repay him? Is God like the second banker offering you the money unconditionally? Does a relationship with God free you or obligate you?



If your child was asked, “What do you owe your parents for all they have done for you?” What would you want your child’s answer to be? Everything or Nothing? I suspect nothing. You give freely and expect nothing in return. How much more don’t you think God’s answer is that we owe Him nothing?

Jesus gave himself freely so that you would “owe” him nothing and be free to give yourself as you choose. It’s that simple! Receive Jesus’ gift of “new life” freely by inviting Him into your life right now!

*“I am sorry for trying to measure up and be good enough. I have sinned trying to be someone I could never be. I accept Jesus as the Savior of my life and the Lord of my decisions and choices for the rest of my life. Thank you for coming into my life and saving me from myself. Show me how to love unconditionally as you have loved me. Thank you for loving me and forgiving me.”*

Congratulations! By receiving Him into your life you can give freely and receive freely. This transformation is both instant and gradual. You will be able to leave obligation for responsibility, resentment for gratitude, and entitlement for humility.

If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.  
Romans 10:9



# “GREAT” Relationships

Relationships occur on a continuum from freedom to fairness. You began your relationship choosing your partner. He chose you, and you chose him. You didn't do anything to deserve to be chosen, and you didn't owe it to your partner to choose him or her. You chose your partner because you were free to choose. This was a wonderful time in your relationship.

**If God's way of having a relationship with you is based on His choice, and it is the template for all other relationships in your life, then what do you owe others? What do you deserve from others?  
NOTHING!**

Clearly, as persons of worth and value, no one ever deserves to be abused or neglected. Beyond abuse or neglect you owe and deserve nothing from your partner. Choices require freedom to choose.

Silently remind yourself:  
“I owe and deserve nothing.”

Accepting yourself and your partner as a gift is disarming and freeing. When you let go of your rights (what you deserve and what your partner owes you) and die to fairness, a resurrection is possible in your relationship. Is your way of having a relationship working? Why not try God's way of having a relationship? It can set you free if you can receive it freely.

Expecting nothing and receiving everything is as wonderfully overwhelming as expecting everything and receiving nothing is disappointing and painful. Which would you choose?

...Freely you have  
received, freely give...  
Matthew 10:8



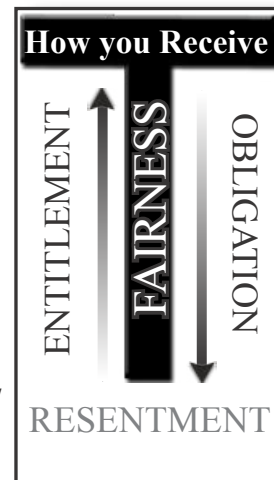
# Fairness

For several years John worked hard to please Mary. He believed he was going over and above the call of duty for his wife. He assumed responsibility for many household duties. He cleaned the toilets and tubs, swept and mopped the floors, vacuumed the carpets, ensured the clothes were always washed, dried and neatly put away.

His efforts would take pressure off her so that she would be able to give him more affection and physical touching. There was only one problem. Mary didn't give him the physical affection he felt like he deserved. John felt that Mary owed it to him to be more affectionate. He became increasingly resentful and angry.

John attempted three solutions:

- He pointed out how much work he'd done for her and how spending time with him was the least she could do for him.
- He tried not doing all the "extras" around the house for his wife, while still expressing his need for affection.
- Finally, he attempted berating her with how good he had been to her and threatening to leave her.



None of these approaches worked. John didn't know what else to do to get his wife to respond to him physically. He didn't want a divorce, but he didn't want to be in a dead end relationship either.

Mary felt obligated to John for all he did for her. She resented him for limiting her choices in their relationship. The more he tried to please her (obligation) the less interested she became in affection. Eventually, her feelings of obligation turned to resentment. While she initially attempted to meet his needs for affection, she could never give him enough attention or measure up to his demands for physical touch.

They were ready to give up on their relationship when they read *We Have Good News That Is Great For Your Relationship.*

# Freedom

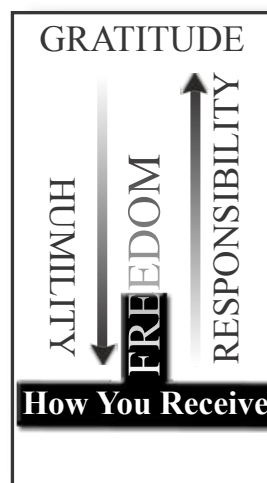
John realized he was more like the first banker--giving, from a framework of fairness. He was obligating Mary. He determined to give freely and invite her to receive freely. John told Mary he would assume full responsibility for the emotional side of their relationship. He promised to not approach her about sex or affection allowing her to take the initiative in those areas of their relationship completely. Naturally, Mary didn't believe him.

John continued to assume responsibility for the household chores, but for a different reason. His giving freed Mary to receive freely. He trusted her to give herself freely, but he had to give freely. The years of obligation, resentment and entitlement melted away as John continued to give Mary more choices in their relationship rather than limit her choices.

Mary was suspicious of everything John did for her. She suspected he would blow-up when she didn't respond to him sexually and was often surprised when he didn't react emotionally to her. Mary found former feelings of resentment and anger turning to gratitude and humility that John loved and accepted her so unconditionally.

Ten months later, Mary took a step in moving back toward John physically. This time she took the initiative -- and has ever since. John's faith in God sustained him through those difficult months. John continually reminded himself that because Jesus died to release him of his obligation and entitlement that he could in turn free her to love him. Mary was now free to give herself to John without obligation.

John and Mary's commitment to free each other from fairness turned their relationship around. John released fairness and embraced freedom. He crucified fairness as a way of relating to Mary and resurrection occurred as a result. The process didn't occur in his timing or in his way, but it happened nevertheless. Just as John and Mary will never be the same people, their relationship will never be the same after experiencing...



***Good News That Is GREAT For Your Relationship!***

You need to experience the freedom of receiving freely, and giving freely beyond yourself, marriage or family. This occurs in a community of believers who will pray for you and guide you, as you learn to listen, grow and open yourself to others. As you become stronger, you will find the ability to develop emotionally healthy relationships. Begin your journey today!

This booklet is freely given to you  
from the caring people at:

Your Church  
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City, Zip  
Phone Number

You are invited to join one of our small groups designed to help you continue experiencing the joy of giving and receiving freely. Begin your journey of a lifetime now!

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