

Generosity

"In My Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?" John 14:2.

It's interesting that we're more likely to believe a stranger on the street who demands, *Give me all your money* than we are to believe a stranger who says, *I'm going to give you a million dollars*. We know the procedure: *Give me all your money* means a robbery and *I'm going to give you a million dollars* means a practical joke or insanity. We quickly accept and believe hostility. We expect it and to an extent understand it. Generosity, on the other hand, is more confusing. It's no wonder, then, that Jesus had to remind His apostles He spoke the truth after such a generous statement as, *In My Father's house are many rooms*.

It's not easy to believe the words of Jesus here and elsewhere. A good exercise for Bible readers is to remind ourselves that Jesus spoke the truth because the words of Jesus don't always sound true. In fact, the words of Jesus often sound a little too good to be true. Take what Jesus said in this verse. Jesus said that in His Father's house are many rooms, assuring Peter and the others that there is a place for them in the house of God. And yet Jesus just told Peter that Peter would deny Jesus three times. It sounds a little too good to be true, doesn't it, that someone could deny Jesus not once or twice but *three* times and still be assured of an eternal home with God? So why is it that it sounds too good to be true? Why is it that if Jesus had said, *There are only a few rooms in My Father's house, so be prepared to fight against the others in the Arena*, we might be more inclined to believe Him? Because we don't really expect Jesus or the Father to give so generously.

The generosity of God is one of God's regularly demonstrated attributes, and yet it's one of the more difficult ones for us to believe to be true. It's easier to have the impression that God looks for reasons to keep people out of His home, though what's demonstrated in Scripture is that God looks for reasons to help people in. If Jesus had said, *In My Father's house are only a couple of rooms*, the second sentence would have been unnecessary. It's the generosity that confused them and confuses us. It's the generosity that made it necessary for Jesus to remind the apostles that He spoke the truth. If we find ourselves having trouble believing the generosity of Jesus – or any of His words for that matter – we should meditate on His words here: *If it were not so, would I have told you ...?*

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