

The Undeserved Love

It's the middle of the night, your phone clicks. You drowsily look at a text and you see a typical message that you've won KSh100,000 from a mysterious competition you haven't participated in. The message has a number you need to contact to claim your prize. You sit up and say something that is not so Christian- reason being it has happened before, from a different number and a different time. And it was a hoax. You pick up your phone and text back;

Get a life or go to hell!

And you think that's being courteous. You go back to sleep satisfied that you have done the world a favor by your actions. I have done worse in response to such texts bearing news of a supposed windfall or a single American NGO female worker in northern Kenya looking for love and good time. The latter always vexed me. I always wondered why they always texted with a different number and politely requested you to contact them through a different number-and they sign off as Patricia Sykes. So I would harshly reply and get into war of words with them only to realize the writing is not even American and the conversation draining.

Wonder why I am giving you these stories? Like me, most if not all of us have received such texts informing you of such winnings- and our reactions have been especially wanting as believers. We have rebuked them and wrote words that are unprintable to them not knowing that we might just have closed the door to show love to someone, cause them to turn their lives around and be productive members of society. Most of us would rather look like we were the ones personally given the tablets of Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai by God than admit that like the people sending the bogus texts, we are just sinners as well.

Currently, we are running a safari embrace one in all Christ is the answer assemblies;-which calls us to bond, live and show love to others in society. A congregant took matters in her own hands and showed us in her testimony that knowing the truth cannot set you free but applying the truth can. It just so happened that she was a recipient of a similar bogus text. She had 'won' cash in a competition she hadn't participated in. She, like not many of us saw an opportunity to show love to 'Robert' (not his real name of course) trying to scam her.

She called the number she had been given in the text and a conversation ensued. She had an agenda. Robert, thinking she was bait started to explain to her how she would collect her 'supposed winnings' and of course that would involve her parting with some money for 'processing' the loot. She calmly rebuked him in love and told him he would die if he continued in that path. She broached the subject of Jesus Christ, who came and died for us because God loved us while we were all sinners. Robert by surprise was a young man because he kept referring to her *mathe*, (which means mum). He was very receptive because I suppose, someone took time and treated him well. He heard her-out and he agreed to pray with her that God would give him something to do and he would go to church if not he would perish.

She began praying mentioning his made-up name. Realizing that his blessing would go to the name 'Robert', he interjected offering his real name. After the prayer she wished him well and had him promise to attend church henceforth.

Her encounter with the would-be scammer was an eye opener to all of us, because we tend to write off such persons as 'goners'. She exemplified the highest form of love (agape) which is love to someone who was totally a stranger and meant her harm. She didn't need to extend an olive branch to 'Robert', but she did showing that we as Christians are the light of the world. Jesus himself came and sacrificed his own life for us while we were still sinners- he loved us and laid his life for our eternity.

Paul in his letter to the Corinthians wrote that love has time for everyone- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Love doesn't write off a person too quickly, knowing that God is at work in people's lives. Her actions made me and I hope all of us realize that *love is not rude*. That realization made me reflect on the many instances I acted crudely to such texts and to other situations that would otherwise demand from me to demonstrate acts of random kindness (ARK) - because this situations are most of the times the best entry points in getting new converts and winning souls for Christ.

Bearing this in mind, and acknowledging my weakness, she demonstrated herself a better Christian than most of us, I resolved that by God's grace, I would and so should all of us be alive to the fact that we are all work in progress and God helping us we would banish anger toward deficiencies of our fellow men as we progressively aim toward accommodating all people-which is a sign of spiritual maturity. It is evident that when we look at the mirror or through the lenses of our private struggles, that we are all sinners, and only the love of Christ demonstrated by the cross should educate us to embrace one another.

As we go through the safari embrace one, let us keep in mind that knowing what to do and doing what we know would go a long way in bridging the gap between getting the best results which is populating the kingdom and repulsing others. It is doing as Christ commands us to-love our neighbors as we love ourselves that will cause us to have efficacy in our walk with our Christianity. Christ himself did so much for those whom did not deserve such love: he fed them, healed them, forgave their sins, dined with them, set them free from demons, taught them, raised them from death and ultimately they repaid him by crucifying him. Knowing he is the same yesterday, today and forever we too can emulate him by loving others with agape love even they least deserve.