*But That's Not All*

American society is inundated with enticements, lures, gimmicks, cons, and attractions all to encourage the consumer to endorse or purchase a particular product. My favorite advertisements, however, use the age-old phrase, "But that's not all!" For instance, the salesperson says: "Take a look at this knife. It cuts, slices, dices, minces and even sings. What would you pay? Well, today and today only, we'll give you this exquisitely rare knife for the low price of $19.95. But that's not all! If you buy today, we'll throw in this neat, handy carrying case! But that's not all! If you call within the next ten minutes, we'll add to this already unbelievable deal a second knife absolutely free. This knife cuts where no knife has ever cut before. But that's not all! If you call now and order our deluxe, super duper, not to be found anywhere on earth but here, sharper than a surgeon's scalpel knife, we'll send you on an all expenses paid tour of our knife manufacturing plant. …."

Get the picture? Unfortunately, this kind of gimmick has lured millions of naïve consumers (including myself) into frivolous spending sprees for “this” fantastic item and that “must-have,” once-in-a-life-time product. The problem is that by now we are beginning to wise up, by now we realize that "but that's not all" means they can't get us to buy without the added amenities. And this consumer-badgered, customer-barraged economy causes us to lose faith in what is real.

To me the greatest tragedy of a sales-oriented society is the ill affects it has on God's word to mankind. The Bible says, "the truth shall set us free" (John 8:32). In its simplest definition, truth denotes what is real. You see, God offers us what is real in a world of pretense, half-truths, delusions, and outright falsehoods. But then we take God's word just as we take all the advertisements. Our mind is convinced that God's word is just like all the other words. We can't trust it. We don't “buy” it at face value.

Well, to me God's word is the true, real "But that's not all!" God offers us the “unbelievable” if we only believe it by faith in Jesus Christ. Let me illustrate using one chapter of the Bible: Ephesians one: First, God blesses all His children, those who believe into Him, with Himself. As our heavenly Father, He blesses us by selecting us before time began and by marking out our destiny to be with Him no matter what! ***But that's not all*!** As the Son of God, He redeems us, He forgives our sins and He causes us to have the greatest enjoyment in this life (grace). ***But that's not all*!** As the Spirit of God, He has placed His mark of ownership on us so we belong to Him and He then gives us Himself as a pledge so that even He belongs to us! In this life, we can "own" God as our own. ***But that's not all*!** God also blesses us by giving us His resurrection power which overcame death, which ascended Jesus Christ from the grave to the heavens, which brings us above all of God's enemies and which subjects all things to God. ***But that's not all*!** Jesus Christ transmits all that He is and all that He has accomplished to the church, which is His Body. ***But that's not all*!**

[ctr … based on the Gospel of John 18:1-27]