The Greatest Gift

12/24/2018

Every year just prior to December 25th a lot of gift purchasing goes on around the world. Christmas for many wholesalers and retailers means big business. Christmas time is a multi-billion dollar occasion. No wonder the world so readily acknowledges a day that is supposed to relate somehow to Jesus Christ.

At Christmas time so many...
Spend money they do not have
On people they do not like
To buy gifts they will never use

However, on that first "Christmas" whether or not it was December 25th, God the Father gave the greatest gift this world would ever receive. He gave the gift of His Son.

God gave...
Out of His abundant Riches, His greatest Gift
To people He does love
A gift that will benefit the one who receives it, both now and forever.

Anything God gives is good. He is the giver of life and all good things that come to us in this life and beyond.

Jas 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

However, only the believer will fully appreciate all that God gives:
1Co 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

2Co 9:15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable (indescribable) gift.

Words cannot describe all of the blessings that come with His gift which is offered to the entire world.

What makes God's gift the greatest gift ever given?

1. The greatest gift was given to the most unworthy
2. The greatest gift was given to meet the greatest need
3. The greatest gift was given at the greatest price
4. The greatest gift was given at no cost to the receiver (it is free)
5. The greatest gift was given to last an eternity
6. The greatest gift can be yours today
7. The greatest gift comes with the greatest benefits

What makes God's gift the greatest gift ever given?

1. The greatest gift was given to the most unworthy

God did not give his Son to the world because the world was deserving. For if we are honest, we know all the ways in which we have sinned against God. We have lived for pleasure rather than for Him. We have lived for self; We have been puffed up with pride and at times have stolen glory that He alone deserves. We have violated His commandments.
Eccles. 7:20
For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.
Romans 3:10
As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
Romans 3:23
For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

2. The greatest gift was given to meet the greatest need

What would you say your greatest need is? Money? Love? Education? Physical Healing?

God's Word tells us that our greatest need relates to our greatest problem. And that problem is sin and the consequences of our sin.

God's justice demands that all sin be punished. Woe to those who face God's justice!

The Bible teaches that everyone who breaks God's Law deserves to pay. The payment for sin is a big one!
The "wages of sin is death" That's not just physical death but spiritual and eternal death. For the Scripture says: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev.20:14-15)

If man's greatest need had been education, God would have sent a teacher;
If man's greatest need had been money, God would have sent a banker;
If man's greatest need had been physical healing, God would have sent a doctor; If man's greatest need had been political reform, God would have sent a Politician.
But since man's greatest need was salvation from sin and Hell, God sent us a savior.

3. The greatest gift was given at the greatest price

John 3:16
For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God sacrificed His son as a substitute payment, in order to provide our salvation.

Illustration: The Bridge

4. The greatest gift was given at no cost to the receiver (it is free)

If a gift isn't free, then it isn't a gift.

The word gift means "the result of grace"

Ephes. 2:8-9
For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: [9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.

"Grace" = **G**od's
Riches
At
Christ's
Expense

"Saved" = Delivered, rescued. In context, salvation means to liberate from spiritual death (v. 1) and provide spiritual life. To be <u>acquitted</u> from God's <u>wrath</u> Ov. 3), to be provided with God's favor. To <u>absolve</u> from sin's penalty, and provide eternal forgiveness.

Salvation is negative and positive: to save from sin and its consequences; to eternal life and its blessings.

We have been untied from slavery; we have been set free from blindness and lostness; loosed from the pangs of death and hell; we have been snatched from danger.

ILLUS: the testimony of the Indian and the worm

"Faith" is the only requirement for salvation.

Jn. 3:36 - "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

"And that not of yourselves" - The "that" refers to salvation by grace through faith.

"It is the gift of God" - Jn. 10:28 - "I give unto them eternal life

A gift is not earned, a paycheck is.

ILLUS: Hymn - "Jesus Paid It All" If Jesus paid it all, there is no more to pay.

"Not of works" -
Titus 3:5 - "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

A "works" salvation denies the sufficiency and efficacy of Christ's work on Calvary.

"When a sufficient price is paid, no further price can be exacted" (Bill Jackson, Do Or Done, p. 14).

You can't add to infinity. Christ is infinite and His work is of infinite value.

"Grace" (v. 8) describes what God has done. "Works" (v. 9) describes what man can do.

Do you want what you can do or what God can do?

What work could a dead man do to resuscitate his life?

"Lest any man should boast" - SEE: Rom. 3:20-27; 4:1-3

To say that God provided 99% of our salvation and that we must do the remaining 1% is to give us something to boast about in Heaven.

5. The greatest gift was given to last an eternity

Romans 6:23
For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Joh 3:15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Joh 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

Tit 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

6. The greatest gift can be yours today

1 John 5:11-12
And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. [12] He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

v. 11
"And this is the record" - our assurance of eternal life is based on God's written record (not speculation or tradition)

Note the features of eternal life:

1. Eternal life lasts forever ("eternal" = never ending)

2. Eternal life comes from God ("God") (not religion, church, or a priest or pope)

3. Eternal life is a free gift ("hath given")
   (not earned or deserved or worked for)

4. Eternal life is personally received ("us")

5. Eternal life is <u>in Christ</u> ("in His Son")
(You get it through Him or you don't get it at all)
(No one can have eternal life apart from the Son because He <u>is the life</u> - Jn. 1:4; Jn. 14:6; 11:25).

6. Eternal life is a <u>present possession</u> ("hath") - v. 12

v. 12
According to God, there are only 2 classes or categories of people in this world (as He views people).

There are the "have's" and the "have not's". those who have a relationship with His Son and thus have life, and those who do not have either.

In order for a gift to benefit you, you must receive it.

Since God's gift cannot be seen or physically touched, it must be received by faith.

7. The greatest gift comes with the greatest benefits

Other than forgiveness of sin, a permanent relationship with God, and an eternal home in heaven, what else comes with God's Gift?

What practical blessings come with God's Gift of Eternal Life?

The Gift of "Living Water" (Spiritual Refreshment)
Joh 4:10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

"...The Gift of the Holy Spirit"
Ac 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

"...The Gift of Righteousness"

Ro 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

“Power, Love, and a Sound Mind”
2Ti 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Spiritual “Understanding”
1Jo 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

“All things that pertain unto life and godliness”
2Pe 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: