

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

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2 Corinthians 9:15

1. At the conclusion of two chapters that focus on giving Paul exclaimed, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"
2. The KJV uses the phrase "unspeakable gift."
3. The Living Bible capitalizes the word gift and interprets the verse, "Thank God for his Son-his Gift too wonderful for words." TLB
4. We tend to make ourselves the chief beneficiaries of God's Gift and that has led to all sorts of mischief in that we become selfish rather than selfless.
5. Jesus did not suffer and die just to keep us from going to Hell; rather He suffered, died and rose again to satisfy the justice of God, to reconcile us to God, and to restore a broken relationship.
6. Ultimately Jesus did all that He did to glorify God. John 17:1-5
Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, 2 even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. 3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.
7. Certainly we reap all sorts of benefits once our sins have been forgiven and our relationship with God has been restored--escaping the eternal consequences for our sins is one of those benefits.
8. In reality the entire course of our lives is changed for time and eternity.
9. Let's focus on a few of the ways we benefit because Jesus Christ glorified God on the earth by accomplishing the work God gave Him to do.

I. We are transferred from one authority to another.

A. Paul made this clear when he wrote about his prayer for the Colossian Christians.
Col 1:9-14

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. 13 **For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

B. Every lost person is under the power of the god of this world who had blinded the minds of the unbelieving. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

C. Those of us who have been rescued and transferred to the kingdom of King Jesus are to work with God in rescuing others.

D. We should be encouraged in that Jesus stated that the gates of Hell would not overpower or prevail against His church. Matthew 16:18

NOTE: I take this as an offensive rather than a defensive promise.

II. We are transformed from one sort of person to another.

A. We are born again from above.

B. We are new creations. 2 Cor 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature (creation); the old things passed away; behold, new things have come (all things have become new).

NOTE: The next verse starts out, "Now all these (new) things are from God."

C. Paul emphasized this transformation in Col 3:5-11.

5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him — 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

III. We are transfigured by the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ through His Spirit.

A. Jesus promised His grieving disciples just prior to His crucifixion, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." John 14:18

B. Note Paul's words in Rom 8:9-11.

9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the **Spirit**, if indeed the **Spirit of God** dwells in you. **But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.** 10 If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

C. God saved us that He might manifest the life of His Son in and through us.

2 Cor 4:7-11

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; 8 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, **so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.** 11 For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, **so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.**

IV. We are transformational in that our lives will impact others.

A. Paul makes this clear in 2 Cor 2:14-17.

14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. 15 For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. **And who is adequate for these things?** 17 For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

B. Jesus said it a little differently in the Sermon on the Mount. Matt 5:13-16

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

C. I cannot imagine any greater joy or privilege then to know that by the grace and power of God I have been His instrument in the life of another person.

APPLICATION

1. If we have truly been transferred, transformed, and transfigured how can we help but be transformational?
2. Paul wrote that we are to do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that we will prove ourselves, to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among who we are to appear (shine) as lights (luminaries) in the world. Philippians 2:15
3. How sad that so many choose to live their lives in pursuit of that which has no eternal value or purpose.