

GIFT, n. [from give.] A present; any thing given or bestowed; any thing, the property of which is voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation.

Gift of 5c for each one of you...what would you think? Gift of \$5000 for each one of you, would you change what you think of my gift?

Gifts how many of us love to receive gifts? Why do you enjoy receiving gifts? They show that you are loved

They are free

We get to have something valuable/useful through no outlay of ourselves.

You and I have been given the greatest gift we could ever receive. That gift releases you from sin, from guilt, from anxiety, and gives you all that you need. The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. Ps. 23:1.

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

This God...the Creator of the Universe, the One that gives each day the sunshine, each tree its life, who is interested in every event in your life...This God has given a Gift....and that is eternal life.

1888 Materials 131. When Christ came to the world, all heaven was poured out in this one great gift. God Himself came to us in Christ. God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. 2Cor. 5:19

Think of it...all that heaven is....all that God is... was poured out in this one great gift. And why was it given; why are gifts given?....that we might have eternal life!

This gift, in keeping with its meaning, voluntarily transferred to us something of value, without any compensation required. That is a Gift!

What is the opposite of a gift? A pay packet. Wages. You have worked to receive it. You have earned it, and it is owed to you. In fact, if you don't work, then you won't receive the thing of value.

But what does our Scripture say gives wages? Sin.... The enemy of God

What does God say He will give....Gift? Eternal life.

880 times in the Bible is there said that God will give to His people

In Genesis, the lights in the firmament were to GIVE light upon the earth

The Lord said to Abraham, I am your God, I will GIVE this land to you upon which you stand.

The Lord said to Abraham, I will GIVE thee a son in thine old age.

The Lord said to Jacob, when he was lying there with a stone for a pillow, Behold the land on which you are lying, I will GIVE you...

And this is just in Genesis!

So what method does the Great God of the universe use when dealing with His people through wages, or through gift?

The greatest business that God is conducting here on the earth is what? 2 Cor. 5:19 reconciling us to Himself the work of our salvation. Upon what then will this process be based? If God is doing it....upon what will it be based --Upon wages, or upon gift?

Rom 4:4-5. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Which method is the way of righteousness? To him that works, or to him that works not? The method that God is behind. Again we see inspiration teaching us that God wants our heart...faith...belief, and this He counts as righteousness.

There are two methods spoken of here....one of

wages...the other, of gift...grace ♦ two methods that are♦infinately opposite to each other.</p><p>♦</p> <p>♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ # One method places its people under requirement, bound to work,♦whether they want it or not. We call this bondage, captivity.♦♦The other method, that of Gift... grace♦-- transferring something of infinite value to them as theirs, without compensation required, all because they are loved.</p> <p>♦</p> <p>♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ # You cannot have parts of♦either method, for they are infinately opposite in principle.</p> <p>♦</p><p>Romans 11:6. If a gift is received as wages, it ceases to be a gift; if wages are received as a gift, they cannot be wages, they have not been earned, but are voluntarily♦given to us.</p> <p>♦</p> <p>God♦s dealing with the world, according to the Bible, is that ♦He so loved the world, that He GAVE His only begotten son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.♦ John 3:16</p> <p>♦</p> <p>The foundation, the method God uses in all His interactions with this world, is by Gift ♦ something valuable that is transfer to us without compensation required, because we are loved. This is the currency of God♦s transactions with us, the method He uses in interacting with humanity.</p> <p>♦</p> <p>But what currency have we been accustomed to thinking God is dealing with us. Havent we felt that He requires something from us before we can be called Christians? Don♦t we feel that we cant have heaven♦s love and favour unless we are doing the right thing first? Doesn♦t that make us then getting eternal life as wages, because we have done the right thing to♦obtain it?</p> <p>♦</p> <p>Yet my Bible doesn♦t place my eternal life in such a process. My Bible tells me that God thinks something of me even before I became a Christian; that I am the recipient of a wonderful Gift in Jesus, and no♦payment on my part is required ♦ this Gift is mine! How true it is that it says♦We love Him, because He first loved us! (1John 4:19)</p> <p>♦</p> <p>Many of us are willing to acknowledge that Jesus is ours by a Gift. Yet we then♦live as though♦we have to work to improve our lives.... keeping our state by aligning our lives♦with His requirements, as though our growth as Christians is based on♦obedience and good works. But my Bible says, that as we have received the Lord Jesus, so walk we in Him (Colossians 2:6). In other words, in the same way we received Jesus -- a gift from God, is the same process...method, that we walk with Him, day by day, through our lives. We are sanctified by the same method by which we are justified.</p> <p>♦</p> <p>MB 55. ♦The disciples of Christ must obtain righteousness of a different character from that of the Pharisees, if they would enter the kingdom of heaven. God offered them, in His Son, the perfect righteousness of the law. If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ, then the very life of God, His love, would dwell in them, transforming them into His own likeness; and thus through God's free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires. But the Pharisees rejected Christ; "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness" (Romans 10:3), they would not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God.♦</p> <p>♦</p> <p>♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦ # Did the Pharisees regard their righteousness as an act of grace, as a gift toward them or did they regard righteousness as their wages, the reward of their obedience.</p> <p>♦</p> <p>♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦# Were they free in the love of God, or were they in bondage? "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." Matt. 23:4</p> <p>♦</p> <p>But how did they regard themselves?</p> <p>♦</p> <p>John 8:33-36. ♦ They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?♦ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. ♦And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son

abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

The Pharisees felt that they were God's children, the seed of faithful Abraham, not far away from inheriting the kingdom. because they lived according to the commandments. They felt their devotion to the requirements assigned them by God freed them from sin and the uncleanness of the world. They believed their attention to God's law lifted them above the commonness and sinfulness which God condemns. They felt they were above being sinners, and were offended that they should be regarded as being in bondage.

But what does Jesus say? Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. Jesus immediately points to the cause of their bondage they believed they received nothing except by working for it, as wages, the lot of a servant. A servant cannot stay in the master's house, unless he faithfully attends to all the Master's requirements. The Pharisees believed their entrance into heaven was the final reward for their obedience to God on earth. Their adherence to command keeping, placed them as servants, as bondmen, and left them yet still under sin.

Gal 4:4-7. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

A son is in a different position to the Father, than is a servant. A son is part of the household by birth, from an act of love by the Father. A son naturally receives His Father's character. A servant however is in the household only because of his service; if he doesn't obey, he is cast out and punished; a servant is bound to work, and has no part or inheritance of the Father.

God says, He sent forth His Son that we might receive the adoption of sons. We are children of God by gift, as an act of love by the Father. And because we are sons, God has sent the Holy Spirit to us. This is living by the Spirit.

John 3:16-18. 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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned.

Notice that inspiration declares that obedience is not our adherence to the requirements of God, but believing on Him whom He has sent!

Brethren, the way of righteousness is not law-keeping. Law keeping is the service rendered by a servant, because he is required to do so. If you think your standing with God relies upon how well you follow his commandments, you are bound to forever work to keep a place in the household. You are in bondage. What is your focus? Upon how wonderful God is, to give you a place in His house, because He loves you? Or that you must align your life, or else miss out on a place in the household because you slacked on a requirement. Where is your heart? Living in fear, forever feeling tardy....or rejoicing and at peace, for Jesus is your peace with God.

You know, I sometimes hear Christians reminiscing of the good ol' days, how they would do this or that, before they became Christians. How they used to dance, or cruise the strip, or have a night out on the town. I never could understand that if they found it so good back then, why are they here now! They still talk of it as though they missed it. But oh! they've reformed, they put away those wicked things; they have changed their habits, and are now on the straight and narrow! But really, where is their heart? Are they free, or are they in bondage?

But brethren, to obey is beautiful.

<p></p> <p>Joh 14:15 </p> If ye love me, keep my commandments.</p>
<p></p> <p></p> The word keep here is translated from teros, which in the Greek means, to watch, to guard from loss or injury. This is the same meaning as our word cherish.</p> <p></p> <p></p> And commandments here, is translated from entole, which literally means, what I have told you.</p> <p></p> <p></p> Notice that inspiration says that keeping, or obeying, is simply cherishing what I have told you.</p> <p></p>
 How many here still have the first few love letters your spouse wrote you? Why do you keep it? Why do they have a special place in your heart? Because you love her.</p> <p></p> <p></p> What did Jesus say was the first and great commandment of His law?</p> <p></p> <p>Matt. 22:37-40. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.</p> <p></p> <p></p> Brethren, we are given a great Gift. That Gift is yours, here and now. Jesus is your righteousness. Let this touch your heart, and you will have love for God. The first and great commandment of His law will thus be fulfilled in you. We are in harmony with the law of God as result of the Holy Spirit; we will be one with the Father, not as servants doing every command, but as SONS and DAUGHTERS, adopted by the heavenly Father as an act of love. Our Father's character becomes a part of us, like the parent's character becomes a part of their sons and daughters. We are, it is written, born again, from above, of our Heavenly Father. Righteousness becomes a part of us, as is rose scent from a rose. Obedience is possessing truth, not working at it from the outside.</p> <p></p> <p></p> We ARE GIVEN a great Gift, all of heaven, and it is not just given....it is borne to our hearts continually by the Holy spirit. That Gift brings us salvation. This is our faith, our freedom, our liberty in Christ. Harmony with God's law is worked out in us, fruit of the Holy Spirit. This is our focus, our message. By grace are we saved, through faith.</p> <p></p> <p></p> Let us close with prayer.</p>