

# **The High Cost Of A Free Gift**

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## Rom. 6:23

Perhaps you have heard it said: “The best things in life are free!”

This is especially true when you consider that the “best” thing in life is a gift.

I am speaking of that which God offers to all who will accept it: “eternal life”. It is truly a “gift from God”!

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

And yet, though eternal life is a gift...

- A high cost was paid to offer the gift.
- And a high cost must be paid to receive it!

A high cost for a free gift? How can that be?

This “paradox” can sometimes be difficult to comprehend.

However, teachings of Jesus are often found in the form of a “paradox”

Matt. 5:3-6, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”*

Upon closer examination, such “paradoxes” are not really contradictions, but expressions of very important spiritual truths!

In this lesson, we shall consider how it is that a gift which is free can be so costly, beginning with:

### The free gift of salvation.

Many have a wrong concept about how salvation is obtained.

“Just accept Christ and be saved” is the appeal of many.

And many people assume that it is a matter of “just accepting” Him, “with no strings attached”. However, consider the words of Jesus Himself.

John 14:21-23, *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not*

unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, *If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*"

To "receive Jesus", then, requires a full surrender to the Lordship of Christ, a sincere acceptance of His commandments.

John 15:10, *"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."*

## **Salvation is God's gift to undeserving men.**

### **Offered while we were still sinners, ungodly, and enemies.**

Rom. 5:6-8, *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

### **Not because we love God, but because He loved us!**

1 John 4:9-10, *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

### **And it is offered to all who will receive it!**

- Rev. 21:6, *"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."*
- Rev. 22:17, *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

Salvation, then, is offered "freely". But does that mean it costs nothing? Not at all!

Indeed, we shall see that nothing in all the universe has cost so much.

## **The high cost of providing the gift.**

### **What it cost the Father.**

- 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."*

- Rom. 8:32, *“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”*

It cost Him the sacrifice of His only begotten Son! He did not spare His Son in an effort to save us from our sins!

## **What it cost the Son.**

Phil. 2:5-8, *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”*

It cost Him the glory and majesty of heaven, which He had with the Father before coming to this world.

It cost Him the humiliation of servitude, even to the point of suffering and finally dying by crucifixion for our sins.

## **What it cost the Holy Spirit.**

- 2 Thess. 2:13-14, *“But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- Eph. 4:30, *“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”*

A ministry through the ages of patiently wooing the stubborn hearts of sinful men through the call of the gospel.

Suffering long with men who treat Him ill, being grieved when they resist Him.

God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit have paid dearly to make the gift of salvation possible. So certainly from the viewpoint of its “provision”, we can see “The High Cost Of A Free Gift”.

But the “acceptance” of this free gift is also costly.

## The high cost of accepting the gift.

### It costs the denial of self, and the rejection of much that men hold dear.

Paul, who gladly paid the cost, expressed it vividly in several passages.

- Gal 2:20, *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*
- Phil. 3:7-8, *“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,”*

One cannot accept Jesus Christ and His salvation on lesser terms than the complete surrender of self to Him!

This is what makes the gospel of Christ “a hard gospel” for many to accept. They want to accept Jesus as Savior, but not as Lord of their lives.

Some even suggest that accepting Jesus as Savior and as Lord are two entirely separate acts.

But the two are inseparable.

- Luke 2:11, *“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”*
- Acts 2:36, *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”*
- Acts 10:36, *“The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)”*

No man can accept Jesus as “Savior of his soul” without accepting Him as “Lord of his life”!

Jesus Himself made this clear when He warned His hearers that the cost of discipleship is high.

Luke 14:25-33, *“And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not*

*bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”*

The Lordship of Jesus over self, life, and possessions must be acknowledged if we are to know Him as Savior!

People must realize that Jesus commissioned His disciples to preach “repentance and remission of sins in His name”.

Luke 24:47, *“And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”*

There is no remission apart from repentance! And repentance involves the whole life!

2 Co 7:10-11, *“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.”*

Not only sorrow for the past that leads to repentance, but zeal and fervor for the future, that affects how we will live.

Repentance is therefore the abandoning of our own selfish way, to go God’s way in obedience and fellowship with Him.

## **Conclusion.**

That is why the “gift” of salvation, while offered freely, still comes with a high cost.

The Lordship of Jesus rightly demands a full surrender to His authority.

Matt. 28:18-20, *“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have*

*commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*

Yes, the gift of salvation is costly.

It cost God more than heaven can declare.

It cost Jesus the agony and shame of the cross.

Even today it costs the Holy Spirit who seeks to woo you through the gospel.

And it costs everyone who truly receives it the total submission of self to Jesus and who would be His for time and eternity!

Jesus has paid the high cost to offer you the gift of salvation.

*Acts 2:36-39, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 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. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”*

Have you paid the high cost of accepting the gift of salvation? You have to become a Christian. The following are the steps necessary to make that happen:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, “It doesn’t work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him.”
- **Repentance.** Acts 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.”*



Acts 11:18, “... *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*” If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, “There’s a burglar in my house!” So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, “I’m sorry; I’m sorry!” What is he sorry for? He is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.

- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, “*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are “**UNTO**” righteousness, life, or salvation. “Unto” means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, “*But John forbid him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said “*it becometh **us** to fulfil all righteousness.*” We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. “*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.” (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? “for the remission of sins”. Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?*

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. *“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth **and** is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” (Mark 16:15-16).*

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16).* Baptism is a requirement given by God.

Baptism is called a burial. *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Rom. 6:4).* Our old man is to be dead to us. *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” (Rom. 6:3-6).* Baptism is God’s blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.

This doesn’t mean “sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don’t take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not yet become a Christian, won't you consider it today?



