

IS LIFE A GIFT OR A PURCHASE?

A Brother writing us asks: If Christ Jesus our Lord, as our ransom or substitute, bought us and all our rights to life, how shall we understand the Scriptural statement that "The *gift of God* is eternal life?" If a purchase for us by Jesus, how can it be a *gift* of God? or vice versa, If a *gift* of God, how can we say that Jesus *purchased* it for us?

We reply: It is just such short sighted reasoning that is causing the general sectarian confusion on all Bible doctrines – the setting of one Bible doctrine *against* another, instead of seeking to see in what way they harmonize. Now, the brother cannot question that the Bible does teach clearly that the wages of man's sin was death, and that it passed upon all, and that Christ **DIED *for our sins***, and hence paid our penalty. Nor, can he contradict the Lord when he says that He came into the world that he might give his life a *ransom* (a price) for many lives (Matt. 20:28); nor the apostle Paul when he says that Christ Jesus gave himself a *ransom* [Greek, *a corresponding price*] for all (1 Tim. 2:6), nor Peter when he says that Christ *purchased* us with his own precious blood. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 1:18,19.) But our brother seems to think that all these very exact statements and many more, as well as all the typical sacrifices of the Jewish Age, are all opposed, contradicted and upset by the one text he quotes, that "the *gift* of God is eternal life."

Our brother errs in this; for these are not contradictory: he has merely misquoted the last text and omitted the part which shows the harmony between this and the others which he thought it contradicted. Now see: "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life *through* JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD."

God has no gifts for sinners, but stands pledged to pay to such, the wages of sin, which is death. Our Lord Jesus, by becoming our substitute, ransomed us from the wages of original sin, and brought us into that harmony where we could receive from God, not the wages of

Adam's sin, but the gift of everlasting life. So far as men are concerned, the gift of life and forgiveness of sins is as directly of the Father as though our Lord had not redeemed us. But in order that we may have full confidence in our heavenly Father, he explains to us the *process* and philosophy of the redemptive plan, by which he remains just and maintains his just laws, which condemn sinners to death, and yet has provided a way for justifying the sinner, releasing him from the just penalty and granting him life – *through* Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Notice some other statements of this same Apostle in this same epistle, regarding other favors of God conveyed to the sinner *through* his Redeemer, and in no other way. For instance: –

"We have *peace* with God THROUGH our Lord Jesus Christ." – Rom. 5:11.

"That as sin reigned unto death, even so might favor reign through righteousness, unto eternal life by [THROUGH] Jesus Christ our Lord." – Rom. 5:21.

"Reckon ye also yourselves to be *dead* indeed unto sin, but *alive* unto God THROUGH Jesus Christ our Lord." – Rom. 6:11.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life THROUGH Jesus Christ our Lord." – Rom. 6:23.

Every divine favor is granted in and THROUGH Christ. – "He is Lord (master, owner,) of all." All things are *of the Father* even as all things are by or THROUGH THE SON. – 1 Cor. 8:6.

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