

## Your Free Christmas Gift!

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Someone revised one of the Christmas tunes and applied it to the month of April instead of December. It goes like this:

“On the fifth day of April,  
My true love gave to me  
Five packs of seed,  
Four bags of peat,  
Three bags of fertilizer,  
Two bottles of insect spray,  
And a pruning knife for the pear tree.”

What a gift this was! I would like to offer you a Christmas gift. It's a gift that is free and ready for the taking. If you want it, you can have it! It's your free Christmas gift! Christmas is a time of giving. At this time of the year we often think of gifts that we want to buy for those who are special in our lives. We also see those ads on TV which say, “If you order now, a free gift will be sent to your home. You will get a 100-dollar value absolutely free.” What a bargain! Well, I have a bargain for you today. It's a free Christmas gift that you really can't turn down. This is the greatest gift that you could ever receive and the greatest gift that you will ever need. It's the gift of eternal life (everlasting life).

As I think of how Christmas has been secularized, as a time of gift giving to others, I'm afraid that we have lost the true meaning of Christmas and the true gift that is offered to us because of the entrance of Jesus into this world. It's the gift of eternal life made possible through Jesus Christ, who was born in this world as a babe, who died on a cross as the God-man, and who rose again the third day.

This free Christmas gift is mentioned in Romans 6:23:

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

There are four revealing facts related to this Christmas gift.

### **1. It's a gift that we desperately need.**

We need the gift of eternal life for the Bible says, "The wages of sin is death." This demonstrates the need for this gift. The Bible declares that sin has the consequence (price tag) of death attached to it. We often look at the price tag before purchasing a gift in the store. Some of you may be well-off and don't need to look at the price tag. Most of us are well under and need to look at the price tag! Well, we need to stop and think about the price tag that is attached to our sin. There is a wage (necessary payment or fine) that comes with our years of sinning against God!

The word "wages" speaks of payment for something. When you work on the job you are expecting a wage to be paid to you at the end of the week. A wage is something your employer is obligated to pay. The Bible says that we must pay for our sin or experience the necessary wages, penalty, payment and fine that we have incurred (become liable for) over the years of sinning. The Bible pictures all people as incurring a sin debt that they need to pay for in order to satisfy God's righteous judgment against sin. The wages or payment for our sin can be nothing less than experiencing God's righteous judgment against sin and sinners.

Yes, the "wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Death in the Bible means separation. In this Biblical context, which deals with salvation and judgment, death is talking about separation from God's fellowship, God's presence, and God's heaven. It's ultimately talking about the second death. It's an eternal death where both the spirit and body are separated from God existence and punished for sin. It's a death that all unsaved people will experience who have never received the gift of eternal life. It's a death of punishment for sin in an awful place called hell.

If you believe in the authenticity (truthfulness) of the Bible and what Jesus said you must believe in hell.

Jesus asked in Matthew 23:33

“How shall he escape the damnation of hell?”

There is still a Heaven to gain and a hell to shun! That may sound old-fashioned but its Bible fashioned!

Revelation 20:12-14 paints this picture:

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

Let’s cut through all the secular humanism, modernism, and liberalism of our day. The Bible still teaches and has always taught that the ultimate death that a person experiences is separation from God’s presence in an awful place called hell.

You see, eternal life is a gift that we need! I need it and you need it if you have never received it!

## **2. It’s a gift that can only be free.**

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The word “gift” expresses the free character of eternal life (“the gift of God is eternal life” – Rom. 6:23). Eternal life is a gift. A gift is not something that you earn. It’s something that is given to you. A gift can only be free! If it’s not free then it’s not a gift! I brought my wife some roses the other week and put them on the table. I did not attach a sign to them which read, “Honey, I love you, that will be twenty-four dollars.” Not really! Why? It’s because a gift can only be free.

The gift of salvation is always pictured as something which is free. It's free for the taking. It's absolutely free since it is "the gift of God which is eternal life." God is saying, "I love you, and I have a gift for you, and it's free to receive!"

Isaiah 55:1 speaks of this free gift of eternal life and salvation from hell. Isaiah illustrates how free it really is by saying: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

Salvation and the gift of eternal life are once again pictured as something which is free to receive! If you want it, you can have it! "Come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." *There are no requirements and no conditions.* Just come and dine! The meal is on the house you might say! Eternal life is free. It's absolutely free! There are no requirements or conditions that one must meet to have eternal life. It's a free gift that is yours for the taking. Yes, "the gift of God (a free gift from God) is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).

### **3. It's a gift that we must reclaim.**

Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The true message about Christmas is that Jesus Christ came into the world to die on the cross, so we might through His death possess the gift of eternal life. This is a message that we must reclaim at this Christmas season. We must rediscover the true message and meaning of Christmas amidst the presents, Christmas trees, lights, and many traditions of Christmas. We need to bring the true message out of the closet and shout it from the housetops! This is because many people do not believe in this wonderful gift that Jesus Christ offers to them because of the Christmas story. In fact, people have their own perception and beliefs regarding eternal life.

Muslim martyrs think that eternal life is the promise of a harem of women in the afterlife. A man once told me that he believed in eternal life. However, he then began to tell me what his view of eternal life was. He said that he would keep being born again or recycled in another life form. Of course, this man taught that eternal life was in reincarnation or the doctrine of karma. Much confusion exists today about the true teaching of eternal life. Therefore, the Biblical teaching about eternal life is a gift that we must retrieve, recover, reclaim and bring to the attention of others once again for Jesus clearly taught it in the pages of the Bible.

Eternal life speaks of an unending possession of life that every person has residing in their human spirit when they believe in the message (claims) of Jesus Christ.

John 3:16

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son (this is Christmas and the cross all in one little saying), that whosoever believeth in him should not perish (*experience death or separation from God in hell - paying the consequences for our own sins*), but have everlasting life (*possess eternal life within our human spirit so that we will live with God forever in Heaven*).”

John 6:47

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath (already possesses) everlasting life."

Eternal life is something that we can possess even today. It's something we can possess in our human spirit right now. This wonderful gift becomes ours when we are born again. When we are born again we receive God's gift of life in our human spirit, which is eternal life. Jesus said in John 3:7, "Marvel not that I said into thee, ye must be born again." Being born again means we receive an infusion or implantation of God's life within our own human spirit. Our spirit is made alive spiritually with God's life! This means we will be accepted by God and live with Him forever!

What a wonderful gift this is! How wonderful it is to perceive and know that we have this kind of life residing within our own human spirit.

1 John 5:13 gives us this wonderful promise:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Because we have eternal life residing in our human spirit, we will enter Heaven someday and dwell with Jesus Christ forever and forever, enjoying the presence of Jesus Christ and the place that He has prepared for us in Heaven (John 14:1-2). Eternal life! The opposite of eternal life is eternal death or separation (banishment) from God’s presence in hell. Our verse makes it very clear. “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).

I thank God for eternal life! This is a gift and possession that all of us can know that we possess. We can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we have this life residing within us. Jesus compared eternal life to an eternal spring of water bubbling up within the realm of our spirit, a well of water that will never run dry!

John 4:14

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

If we will just place our faith in the claims of Jesus Christ (His death and resurrection on our behalf) this eternal spring of water will become ours forever! Eternal life!

It has been said that high up in the north in the land called Svithjod, there stands a rock. It is one hundred miles high and one hundred miles wide. Once every thousand years a little bird comes to this rock to sharpen its beak. It has been said that when the rock has finally been worn away only a single day of eternity will have gone by. My friend, the thought of eternal life is staggering but I know one thing. I would rather have eternal life than eternal death. I want to enjoy the blessings of eternal life both now and forevermore!

#### 4. It's a gift we can now receive.

Romans 6:23

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The question is this?

How do we receive the gift of eternal life?

- a. Through the penalty that Christ paid (“through Jesus Christ our Lord”) - Rom. 6:23.

Eternal life comes through what Christ has done. It's through Jesus Christ. This means that when Jesus died on the cross He actually took the wages of sin that you deserved (the penalty that you deserved for your sin) upon Himself. Jesus Christ suffered great untold agony on the cross as God the Father poured out His righteous wrath upon His only begotten Son (John 3:16). There on the Cross Jesus took your judgment, your hell, your penalty! He became your substitute and died for you, as you, and in your place. Jesus paid for your fine with His own life so you could go forever free and escape God's wrath and judgment!! There was no greater love than this!

- b. Through the grave which Jesus came (“through Jesus Christ our Lord”) - Rom. 6:23.

This statement in Romans 6:23 (“through Jesus Christ”) also includes the resurrection! We receive the gift of eternal life not only through Christ's death but also through His resurrection. It's through the death and resurrection of Christ that we can be set free from sin's penalty and receive the gift of eternal life. One thing is certain, without the bodily resurrection of Christ from the dead we could never receive the gift of eternal life.

On the third day Jesus Christ arose from the dead!

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 states:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

My friend, Jesus Christ rose from the dead to verify His claims (who He was), to prove that He had paid for the penalty for our sins (what He did), and so that He can now give us eternal life (what He promised). A living Lord and Savior mean that Jesus Christ can deliver eternal life into our spirit and cause us to live forever with Him.

**c. Through the choice that we have made.**

God calls upon you to make a personal choice! Salvation is free but you must choose to receive it. Everything sooner or later comes down to a personal choice.

John 1:12 says:

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

Receiving Christ means that you embrace His claims (that He died for you and rose again to give you eternal life) and commit your faith to His promises. Our *faith* must take action. Our *will* must move and we must make a personal choice or decision to receive the gift of eternal life!

Acts 16:31

“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”

This is what belief or faith is all about. When I believe in Jesus Christ, I am placing my full confidence in Him to become my Savior. I'm committing and transferring my faith to Him alone. Belief in Christ is not passive. It's active! I must make the choice to allow Jesus Christ to become my Savior.

You must step into the life preserver if you want to be saved from drowning. You must drive across the bridge to get to the other side. You



must commit yourself to the airplane to take you from point A to point B. Faith in Jesus Christ is like this. It's active. It makes a definite choice.

Will you believe on Jesus Christ today? Will you step into the lifeboat? Will you cross the bridge? Will you step inside the airplane? Will you, by an act of your own will and choice, transfer all of your trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation? Eternal life is a gift that is free and ready for the taking. If you want it, you can have it!

Revelation 22:17 explains faith in this way:

“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.”

Just come to Christ, believe in His claims, and take His gift! Reach out to Jesus Christ and commit yourself to Him. Ask Him to be your Savior today! Anybody can come! Why not come to Jesus now? Is anything keeping you from coming? Perhaps it's humanism, intellectualism, your love for sin, or your love for self? These things keep people from coming to faith in Christ (“and men loved darkness rather than light” - John 3:19). However, anybody can express faith in Christ if they are broken over their sinful ways and choose to respond to God's call upon their heart. Dear friend, you can come right now! Just as you are! Just come! Come and express faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and He will give you the gift of eternal life and save you from eternal death in hell forever!

Faith in Christ is explained as a simple look to Jesus Christ. It's when you totally rely or depend upon Him to be your own Savior from hell. When you come to Christ and express faith in Him, it's then that you can receive the gift of eternal life and the life of Jesus Christ will be born inside of you as the Christmas hymn says. You will receive His life.

“O holy Child of Bethlehem!  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in;  
Be born in us today!”

If you truly want to be born again and receive God's life, and His gift of eternal life, you can. It's free. It's yours for the taking.

On January 6, 1850, a snowstorm almost crippled the city of Colchester, England; and a teenage boy was unable to get to the church he usually attended. So he made his way to a nearby Primitive Methodist chapel, where an ill-prepared layman was substituting for the absent preacher. His Bible text was Isaiah 45:22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." For many months this young teenager had been miserable and under deep conviction, but though he had been reared in church (both his father and grandfather were preachers), he did not have the assurance of salvation.

The unprepared substitute minister did not have much to say, so he kept repeating the text of Isaiah 45:22 while adding in a few comments of his own here and there. "A man need not go to college to learn to look," he shouted. "Anyone can look - a child can look!" About that time, he saw the visitor sitting to one side, and he pointed at him and said, "Young man, you look very miserable. Young man, look to Jesus Christ!" The young man did look by faith, and that was how the great preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon was converted.

How wonderful it is to receive this free gift of eternal life. Have you looked to the Savior and received this wonderful gift? Do you know that you possess eternal life? If not, I invite you to receive the greatest Christmas gift that you could ever receive. It's the gift of eternal life. This is your free Christmas gift! Do you want it?

In the quietness of your own soul you can pray:

"Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you for offering to me the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ! Right now, at this very moment, I do believe in Jesus Christ. I believe that He died on the cross to pay the penalty for my sin. I do believe He rose again to give me eternal life. I will place my faith only in Christ to save me this day. In Jesus' name, Amen."

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). What a Christmas gift this is! It's a

Christmas gift just for you! It's a free Christmas gift! Let us know if you have received this wonderful gift.