

"THE HIGH COST OF A FREE GIFT"

Rom 6:16-23

INTRODUCTION

- A. Perhaps you've heard it said: "The best things in life are free!"
- B. Especially true when consider the "best" thing in life: God's offer to all: "eternal life" truly a "gift from God"! . Rom 6:23
- C. And yet, though eternal life is a gift... A high cost was paid to offer the gift. And a high cost (**in man's eyes**) must be paid to receive it!
- D. A high cost for a free gift? How can that be? Jesus' teachings often found in form of a "paradox" (e.g., Beatitudes - Matt 5:3-6)
- E. Upon examination, such "paradoxes" are not contradictions, but expressions of very important spiritual truths!

DISCUSSION: how can a free gift be so costly?

I. THE FREE GIFT OF SALVATION

- A. Many have a wrong concept about how salvation is obtained
 1. Some think salvation is earned by their "good works"
 2. Even some professing Christians have a similar concept of attaining heaven, that reward is received because of: Their good life - generous giving - faithful attendance
- B. But salvation is God's gift to undeserving men...
 1. Offered while sinners, ungodly, and enemies Rom 5:6-8
 2. Not because we love God, but He loved us! 1Jhn 4:9-10
 3. Offered to all who will receive it! Rev 21:6; 22:17
- C. 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...

II. THE HIGH COST OF PROVIDING THE GIFT

- A. What it cost the Father Jhn 3:16; Rom 8:32
 1. It cost Him the sacrifice of His only begotten Son!
 2. Did not spare His Son in an effort to save us from sins!
- B. What it cost the Son Phil 2:5-8
 1. It cost Him the renunciation of glory and majesty, which He had with the Father before coming to this world
 2. It cost Him the humiliation of servitude, even to the point of suffering and finally dying by crucifixion for our sins
- C. What it cost the Holy Spirit 2Thess 2:13-14; Eph 4:30
 1. A ministry through the ages of patiently wooing the stubborn hearts of sinful men through call of the gospel
 2. Suffering long with men who treat Him ill, being grieved when they resist Him
- D. From the viewpoint of its "provision", we see the "high cost of a free gift". But "acceptance" of this free gift is also costly...

III. THE HIGH COST (in man's eyes) OF ACCEPTING THE GIFT

- A. Costs denial of self, and renunciation of what we hold dear
 1. Paul, who gladly paid the cost, expressed it vividly in several passages Gal 2:20; Phil 3:7-8
 2. One cannot accept Christ and His salvation on lesser terms than the complete surrender of self to Him!

- B. Makes gospel of Christ "a hard gospel" for many to accept
 1. Accept Jesus as Savior, but not as Lord of their lives
 - a. The two are inseparable Lk 2:11; Acts 2:36; 10:36
 - b. Religious leaders who have taught otherwise are beginning to see their error: "The church today is paralyzed at the moment of its supreme opportunity because we have committed the blasphemy of insisting that what is so costly for God shall come easy to us. We haven't dared face our congregations with a hard gospel." -- Dr. Paul Calvin Payne, General Secretary, the Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church
 2. No man can accept Jesus as "Savior of his soul" without accepting Him as "Lord of his life!"
 - a. Jesus warned: cost of discipleship high Lk 14:25-33
 - b. Lordship of Jesus over self, life, & possessions must be acknowledged if we are to know Him as Savior!
 3. We must realize Jesus commissioned disciples to preach "repentance and remission of sins in His name" Lk 24:47
 - a. There is no remission apart from repentance!
 - b. Repentance involves the whole life! 2Cor 7:10-11
 - c. Repentance is abandoning our own selfish way, to go God's way in obedience and fellowship with Him
- C. "Just accept Christ and be saved" is the appeal of many.
 1. And many people assume that it is a matter of "just accepting" Him, "with no strings attached"
 2. Yet, consider words of Jesus Himself Jhn 14:21,23
 3. To "receive Jesus", then, requires a full surrender to the lordship of Christ, a sincere acceptance of His commandments cf. Jhn 15:10

CONCLUSION

- A. That is why the "gift" of salvation, while offered freely, still comes with a high cost...
 1. Salvation cannot be earned, nor merited, by any amount of good deeds
 2. For even after a lifetime of diligent obedience we are still "unworthy servants" Lk 17:10
 3. But the Lordship of Jesus rightly demands a full surrender to His authority Mt 28:18-20
- B. Yes, the gift of salvation is costly...
 1. It cost God more than heaven can declare
 2. It cost Jesus the agony and shame of the cross
 3. Even today it costs the Holy Spirit who seeks to woo you through the gospel
 4. And it costs everyone who truly receives it the total submission of self to the rightful claims of Jesus on the lives and souls of all who would be His for time and eternity!
- C. Jesus has paid the high cost to offer you the gift of salvation... have you paid the high cost of accepting it? Acts 2:36-39