

God's Indescribable Gift

2 Corinthians 9:15

Introduction

While in the middle of inculcating Christian duties, Paul stops to make this great and glorious statement about Christ and our redemption **Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!** No better text for Christmas morning. The coming of Christ into the world, Mary bringing forth her first-born son, laying Him in a manger, with good tidings of great joy that there is born this day a Saviour who is Christ the Lord. What better response than "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift".

Going to consider the gift which was given, the description given to this gift, and our response to it.

The Gift which has been given

No doubt that Paul's reference is to Christ and all He has done for us. N.B. Description is of "a gift" δωρεα – something which has been freely given. Bestowed on us freely. Not ours because we made a payment or earned it or in any way deserved it. Christ, and all God's saving grace and purposes bound up with Him, are one supreme all comprehending gift.

The Bible delights to remind us of the fact. In the Old Testament we read **For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given** (Isaiah 9:6).

Then the New Testament uses 17 words for "give" and "gift" to describe what God has bestowed on us in Christ. Indeed dominant truth of "grace" is closely linked with free gift. **God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son** (John 3:16). **But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God** (John 1:12). The gift of God's eternal life in union with Jesus Christ our Lord. **He who did not spare his own son but delivered διδωμι him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give χαριζομαι us all things** (Romans 8:32). **By grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God** (Ephesians 2:8). **Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us** (Ephesians 5:2).

The Gospel was founded on giving, and its spirit is giving. No buying, selling, bartering or earning involved – under the Gospel all is a gift. Christ is a gift, eternal life is a gift, grace is a gift, salvation is a gift, glory is a gift.

That is the glory of the Gospel, and also its offence. Many are too proud to accept a gift, unwilling to be beggars and receive grace. They want to earn, deserve, put God in their debt. They want to deserve their salvation through their religion and morality. But God says salvation is a gift, or else not yours at all. Try as you like, you cannot earn his favour because your best is not good enough.

God owes us nothing. We deserve nothing. Salvation is his gift, He gets all the glory. We must come with empty hands or else nothing will be given.

### The gift described

Paul uses a very unusual word. All evidence suggests it is his own word *τη ανεκδιηγητω αυτου δωρεα* Not found in classical Greek. Appears first in New Testament and only in this verse. Seems to have been coined or created by Paul to describe God's gift which cannot really and fully be put into words. Various versions –“unspeakable”, “indescribable”, “inexpressible”, “beyond words”, “too wonderful for words”. Cannot put into human words what God's gift is. Cannot set it forth in detail. Beyond any writer. Too wonderful, marvellous, stupendous. Cannot put it down in black and white. Cannot count it up. Cannot estimate. Beyond all our calculations.

Think of things we sing about, read in Bible, preach or talk about or debate. We toss these terms to and fro, slip off lips so easily. Ever pause and think what they mean? The Word – from all eternity – with God and was God. Became flesh. From throne of God to breast of Mary. In Him dwells all fullness of godhead bodily. Ever consider the wonder of His person: His humanity – suffering, weariness, hunger, thirst, death; His deity –with His word He could cure and heal, raise dead, still storm, forgive sins, teach with such authority.

In His death, Christ was made sin for us. Cry of dereliction **My God, why have you forsaken me?** Now in His present position, He has all authority in heaven and earth. **Love of Christ which passes knowledge.. that you may be filled with all fullness of God** (Ephesians 3:19-19). **All things are yours... things present and things to come** (1 Corinthians 3:21-22). **Heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ** (Romans 8:17). Love of God toward wretched sinners – inconceivable, infinite, unspeakable. Saved from lost and Christless eternity. Being with Christ is far better than present life.

Our minds cannot grasp these glorious truths. Our experience is so small. We can only dip our toes into vast unfathomable ocean of spiritual experience. Scarcely begun, and yet in Him we are already happy and satisfied. The hymn writer describes being in heaven:

*“Till we cast our crowns before Him,  
Lost in wonder, love and praise.”*

But surely we are already lost in wonder, love and praise. Put all theologians together – pool their wisdom and knowledge – cannot get near meaning of gift of Christ. Our imaginations are outstripped. **O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgements and his ways are past finding out** (Romans 11:33). We pause to wonder and we pause to worship.

### Our response to the Gift

Thanks! The shepherds **returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen** (Luke 2:20). We ought to **declare the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His wonderful light** (1 Peter 2:9). God expects our gratitude and is grieved when we fail to give thanks. How sad the Lord was when

only one leper out of ten returned to thank Him for healing. We do not thank God as much as we ought. We owe Him everything, creation, care, health, and above all Christ. How easy to forget Him in fair weather.

We ought to praise Him with our lips and tongues, and then do something to show our praise – actions speak louder than words. We ought to give ourselves away to the Lord- if God has given us Christ, we ought to give Him our selves. Our bodies to be presented as living sacrifices, living for Him who died for us.

We ought to imitate God in being generous givers. Story of the minister who preached sermon about giving. Promised that at end of sermon he would name the biggest giver in the church. The congregation listened very attentively! Finally the secret was revealed. Who was the biggest giver? The Lord. We belong to a generous God and we ought to be imitators of Him. **God loves a cheerful giver** (2 Corinthians 9:7).

### Conclusion

R.A.Torrey writes, “Jesus is God’s greatest gift and in Him all other good gifts are included. I do thank God for Jesus Christ and am so glad that I have taken Him for my Saviour and surrendered to Him as my Lord and Master.” Then he gave seven reasons why he was glad he was a Christian. “(a) I know my sins are forgiven, (b) Christ has set me free from sin’s power, (c) I know I am a child of God – I know it because His book says so and the spirit of God bears witness with my spirit that I am a child of God, (d) I have been delivered from all anxiety and fear, (e) I know I shall live forever, (f) I know that I have an inheritance incorruptible reserved in heaven for me.

**Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift** – His gift too wonderful for words.