

Remembering God's Gift

Dr. Glenn Robertson

John 3:16

John 3:16 NKJ

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

As we gather to take the Lord's Supper, we gather to remember the Lord's death until He comes. We take the supper as an act of faith in God's gift in Jesus, His only Son.

John 3:16 NKJ

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

I would like for us to think on this verse for a few minutes as we prepare our hearts to take the supper.

Jesus' words are well known to us. Let us think about some of the words he spoke and their meaning.

His Only begotten Son

Monogenes

Only begotten (KJV, NKJV, NAS); one and only (NIVO) comes from a combination of *mono* (one or only) *genes* (birth). The word is often used in Scripture to speak of an only child, an only son or only daughter.

Heb 11:17 Isaac is Abraham's only son

Luke 7:12 the dead son who is a widow's only son

Luke 8:42 the ruler's only daughter

NKJ **John 1:18** No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*. (Jn. 1:18 NKJ)

NKJ **John 3:18** "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (Jn. 3:18 NKJ)

NKJ **1 John 4:9** In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. (1 Jn. 4:9 NKJ)

Jesus is the only-born Son of God. He came into our world as God's gift to bring us salvation. He came into our world as a gift by sacrifice, because a sacrifice was needed to purchase our salvation.

Jesus is God's gift.

Eternal life (everlasting life) *zoe aionion*

Life without end. This is more than merely living after death. John uses the word, life, to speak of possessing the life of God in us.

John 1:4 "in him was life, and that life was the light of men."

God has life in himself. All life whether physical or spiritual is derived from God. All life comes from God.

In this life we function mostly with our eyes fixed on the physical realities of life. We have to get the cows fed. We have to pay our bills. We need food. We want to enjoy some pleasures in our day. We live in a world we must relate to in a physical way. Yet, there is more to life than what we know and experience. There is more than what we see and touch. We need love. We need emotional wellness. These are not things we see. We know them by feelings, but not always by physical touch.

There is much of the life of God we never see. Before God created the heavens and the earth, before he made anything we call the universe, God existed. God has life in himself. The spiritual life of heaven is a reality we believe is real, even though we do not see it with our eyes. Angels are spiritual beings God has made that we do not see normally. Yet they exist. They have life because God gave them life.

The gift of eternal life is what we receive by faith in Jesus. The word “believe” is the Greek present active verb “having faith.” It is not just believing in our mind alone that grants us eternal life. Faith commits our soul and eternal destiny to this act of God in having Jesus die on the cross to cover our sin.

Such active faith receives eternal life because it places our soul at the foot of the cross and stakes our claim upon God’s gracious gift.

It is this eternal life which gives us hope in the face of death. We stand at the grave and talk to loved ones we cannot see. We long for them. We hold to the bond and wait for the day we will once again be united. Eternal life is the hope that God will one day rob the graves and give us back the living full of life.

One gift, but two paths

There is in fact a gift offered. God has given a gift. Yet in every offer of a gift remains a choice and two outcomes. No gift, if it is a true gift, is ever forced upon us. It remains a gift because it is offered. If it were forced upon us, it would not be a gift.

God so loved he gave – means God gave a gift. The gift is His Son to go to the cross to pay our sin so we could have eternal life.

So, this gift also brings two separate outcomes. It is a gift that defines two paths that emerge. One path leads to destruction. The other brings eternal life.

Forrest Fenn wrote a book about his life and left in it a poem for a treasure hunt. In the poem lies clues to find a treasure worth about \$2Million, buried somewhere in the Rocky Mountains.

**As I have gone alone in there
And with my treasures bold,
I can keep my secret where,
And hint of riches new and old.
Begin it where warm waters halt
And take it in the canyon down,
Not far, but too far to walk.
Put in below the home of Brown.
From there it’s no place for the meek,
The end is ever drawing nigh;**

**There’ll be no paddle up your creek,
Just heavy loads and water high.
If you’ve been wise and found the blaze,
Look quickly down, your quest to cease,
But tarry scant with marvel gaze,
Just take the chest and go in peace.
So why is it that I must go
And leave my trove for all to seek?
The answers I already know,
I’ve done it tired, and now I’m weak.
So hear me all and listen good,
Your effort will be worth the cold.
If you are brave and in the wood
I give you title to the gold.**

As of yet, no one has found the treasure. Two people have died trying to find it. If you find it you will have great wealth. It’s hidden less than 680 miles of the Mountain Man Museum, Pinedale, Wyoming. If you find it, it will not be a gift. You will earn your way there. If you find it, it will not be paradise, because you will not live forever.

In Facebook this week I read about the false god of the open choices. Seems a lot of people think they want the freedom to not be closed in by commitments in life. They want to always have open choices. They want options. Options suggests freedom. The god of the open choices says “Don’t commit to God with your life, with your time, with your money.” “Keep your choices open.” The open choices keeps you in the stream. You do not grasp either bank. I have options, you think. Yet, eventually the stream will cast you over the waterfall to your doom.

God is not the god of open choices. He made a choice. He sent His Son. Jesus made a choice. He took the nails on the cross. Nailed to the cross, Jesus gave up his options. He committed himself to a path of death to save us. Will you commit yourself to Him? Will you leave the stream of indecision and cleave to the bank of eternity in His Son?