

Introduction. What a wonderful Easter text! In this 8th chapter of Romans, Paul is rising to the climax of his answer to the objection raised against the gospel, that free forgiveness of sins will lead to the idea that we will continue in sin, so that grace may abound. In fact, Islam rejects the Gospel for this reason. Rome does, too, to a lesser extent and makes justification depend upon infused love. Those who cannot see the connection between the grace of God and the work of the Holy Spirit will always go astray on salvation as the free gift of God.

Paul shows that justification cannot lead to sinfulness, because God gives wonderful gifts to His children: These wonderful gifts are the result of justification. These gifts are: everlasting life, forgiveness of sins, calling, adoption into the family of God, sanctification, a new heart, love for Christ and His Father and many other things. None of these things are the cause of justification, but are the fruit of it: justification is the free putting away of guilt, the free gift of God in Jesus Christ and comes because of the unsearchable love of God for His people from the foundation of the world.

I want to make three points this Easter morning, 2014: I. The Gift of God: The Holy Spirit; II. The Gift of God: Purchased at the Cross; III. The Gift: Confirmed by the Resurrection.

I. The Gift: The Holy Spirit.

A.Ro 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1. Contrast: death and life.

- a. Death: a spiritual death of which physical death is a symbol. Re 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.
- b. The signs of spiritual death: fearful; unbelieving, abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars. These are the symptoms of spiritual death; a soul that is dead in trespasses and in sins. Eph. 2: 1 ¶ And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.
- c. Your life without Christ reeks of the stench of death. If your wicked heart was ripped from your bosom and rolled across the floor, it would stink up the place and we would flee in horror. God is frightfully angry with the sinner every day, and death is his punishment for sin. Alienation from God now, wickedness in your life, physical death at the time appointed for you, and eternity in hell, the second death: these are all the result of your transgressions of the law of God.
- d. This is the reason why our text says that God's law is a law of sin and death. It cannot bring life but it shows the extent of your death: fearful; unbelieving,

abominable, murder, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, liars. There is a part prepared for you in the lake of fire and brimstone and you will surely go there, for the law requires it and you cannot save yourself from it.

2. But there is a law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. There is a rule in Jesus Christ that will deliver you from the law of sin and death. It sets you free from the guilt of your sin and the death that is God's judgment against sin. It is the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.
3. Eternal life is the free gift of God, because it is the Spirit is the gift of God.
 - a. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.
 - b. Only God's Spirit can set you free from the law of sin and death. If you continue to walk in yourself, the flesh, you are dead, you are dying, and you will surely die, for the wages of sin is death.
 - c. Vs. 10: the Spirit gives life because of the righteousness of Christ. Eternal life does not mean everlasting existence: you already have that from creation; but it is either an eternal death, or an eternal life. Death, Life: these words describe the quality of the existence, not the fact of it. Psalm 34:21: "Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate [held guilty]."
 - d. The righteous are in a state of eternal joy and gladness before God because their sins are forgiven: Ps. 34:22: "The LORD redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate [held guilty]."
 - e. Mt 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. After the separation at the last judgment of the sheep and the goats.

So the Spirit Himself is the gift that brings to you and me all the good things that are included in the term: eternal life. Without the Spirit we are bound in eternal death and damnation.

II. This Gift of the Holy Spirit was purchased for you at the Cross of Christ, by the sufferings and obedience of Jesus Christ.

- A. This is the reason Peter called the multitude to repentance at Pentecost: Acts 2:31-36. Turn to and read.
- B. The great promise of Messiah was this: that when He came He would pour out his cleansing and justifying Spirit upon the remnant of Israel and those among the Gentiles who would be called: Acts. 2;38,39
- C. Acts 5:30-32. Turn to and read.
- D. The law of sin and death and the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ are contrasted in Romans 10:1-13 Turn and read. God will send the Holy Spirit to those who call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus.
- E. The Holy Spirit is the gift of the Lord Jesus for you, because of His death on the Cross. John 16:7-15 What a wonderful gift is the Spirit to you and me!!

III. This Gift of God of the Holy Spirit was confirmed of God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

- A. The resurrection of Christ assures our resurrection: See Roman 6:6-14 Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are married to another; instead of to the law of sin and death, you are married to Jesus Christ, and his wedding gift to you is the Holy Spirit.
- B. Instead of the works of death, which are of the flesh, you, being crucified with Christ begin to live in the life of the Spirit. See Romans 8:11-14 read.
1. The works of sin and death are described in Galatians 5:19-21. These are outside the kingdom of God and are the works of dead men and women, whose end is the second death in hell.
 2. The works of the spirit of life in Christ are found in Gal 5:22-26. Put away pride and selfishness wicked desires, because you have the gift of God through Jesus Christ.
- C. Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Application: Romans 8:8-13 We are to mortify; or to use another figure, we are to put off the old and put on the new. Because of the New Life in Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the way of life. You will live if you do this; otherwise, your present life will reek of sin and death. Let us do it, for the glory of God, the good of our families, the spiritual prosperity of our church, and to be salt and light for our community and nation. Amen and Amen.