**God’s New Gift**

There are words which stand out and get attention very quickly. Advertisers use such words as we hear of a “new” product or a product which is not actually new but “improved” or” better”. Bounty the new and improved picker upper, is one such advertising slogan which stuck in my mind. Dictionary.com gives the following definition for “new”, of recent origin, production, purchase, etc.; having but lately come or been brought into being: 2. of a kind now existing or appearing for the first time; novel: 3. having but lately or but now come into knowledge.

Another word is “gift” as it implies something which one receives without cost. Gifts can differ in purpose, quality, and value. We have all received gifts which wind up in the closet, regifted, or given away. On the other hand, we have received gifts which touch our hearts due to their expression of love,

Our title includes the word “God” which should always get our attention as He is the giver of every perfect gift. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” (James 1:17) God’s gift or gifts is perfect, giving us exactly what we need.

Why should we be interested or care about any such gift? Because man is hopelessly lost in sin. Much effort is spent ridiculing the idea and/or consequences of sin, Luke described the Greeks in Romans 1, man’s rejection of God and the knowledge of Him leads mankind further and further into sin. In place of God, man becomes self-righteous, self- indulgent, self-centered, and plan selfish.

The Christian understands their need for God’s grace. Before their obedience to the Gospel, they were lost in sin, separated from God for eternity. The Philippian jailer understood his helpless condition. “**And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30)** There is not a more pertain question for anyone to ask but what must I do to be saved. The very core of the Gospel is about the forgiveness of sin and salvation.

God’s gift shows us His love for us. Like a hand-crafted quilt shows time, effort, forethought, and sacrifice; so God’s gift shows us those things on a much higher level. His nature is one of justice, righteousness, along with mercy and love. We see these coming together in this new gift. **“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.” (Romans 11:22)** God’s willingness and His desire to forgive us of our sins is amazing. **"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. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 3:16-17)** The Christian understands this need for and willingness to accept the New Gift.

Which gets us to the result of God’s gift, which is forgiveness. His plan for man’s salvation runs throughout the Old Testament. Jeremiah spoke of a future time when man’s sins would be remembered “no more,” **"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.". Jeremiah 31:33-34)** With God there is no such thing as partial forgiveness. Unlike the Law od Moses which required continual animal sacrifices for sin each year in which past sins remained, Jesus’ death, His blood washes away our sins. The Good News in the Gospel is the power to forgive both Jews and Gentiles, Romans 1.16.

The end result of faith in the Son of God, repentance of our sins, being willing to confess Him before men, and being baptized is the remission of sin. “**Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)** Everyone baptized from the Day of Pentecost onward in the Bible was in order to be save, to have their sins washed away by His blood Acts 22.16, to be added to His body, Acts2.47.

Based on Jesus’ death on the cross, being buried in a grave, and coming out of the grave in His resurrection; the Christian has been died to sin, raised from the watery grave of baptism in order to walk in newness of life. **“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3-4)**

Let us accept this gift through obedience with love, gratitude, and commitment. –Dennis Tucker