

## UNWRAPPING GOD'S INDESCRIBABLE GIFT; GAL. 4:4-7

### INTRODUCTION.

IN ACTS 20:35 ~ PAUL DECLARES THAT JESUS SAID ~ "IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE than receive."

▶▶ However ~ in the run up to Christmas, ~ we may have been tempted to not believe what Paul tells us ~ as we were looking forward to receiving gifts on Christmas morning.

▷▷ But of course what Jesus says is true at any time of year.

▶▶ And speaking of receiving gifts ~~ Perhaps one of the best parts of receiving a gift is the anticipation and the excitement that accompanies the unwrapping of that gift.

▷▷ We may be thinking at the time ~~ "I wonder what it is?" ~~ "Is it what I want?" ~~ "I hope I won't look disappointed if it isn't!"

↪↪ It may be safe to say that some of us ~ know exactly what I'm talking about.

→→ Meg and I have different philosophies . . . . .

▶▶ Well ~ regardless of what and how many gifts you received this Christmas, ~ none will come close to measuring up to the gift that God gave the world on that first Christmas.

▷▷ In 2 Cor. 9:15 ~ LEB, ~ Paul described God's gift to us as "indescribable."

↪↪ Now ~ the immediate context of that verse points to God's grace ~ But the broader context hints that ~ ultimately ~ Jesus is God the Father's "indescribable gift" to us.

→→ Paul says that this is a gift so wonderful that it cannot be described in words.

▶▶ On that first Christmas, ~ God the Father gave His Son to this world so that sinners like you and me might be saved ~ forever ~ from our sins, ~ the wages of those sins, ~ death, ~ and hell.

▷▷ Rom. 6:23. ~~ "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

↪↪ That is indeed a gift so wonderful that it's description is beyond words.

→→ Especially when we consider . . . . . ↵ 1/9

IN GAL. 4:4-7, ~ OUR TEXT FOR TODAY, ~ PAUL HELPS US UNDERSTAND AND appreciate more the "indefinable gift" that God gave us on that first Christmas.

▶▶ Basically, ~ Paul helps us unwrap the gift.

▷▷ And as he does so, ~ I think we'll see that this is definitely a gift so wonderful that it cannot be described in words.

▶▶ So let's spend some time this morning with Paul unwrapping God's "indefinable gift."

### IN V 4 ~ PAUL SHOWS US FOUR FEATURES OF GOD THE FATHER'S "INDEFINABLE gift."

FIRST, ~ PAUL NOTES THE TIMING OF GOD'S "INDEFINABLE GIFT."

▶▶ "But when the fullness of time had come." ~ I.e., ~ "When the set time had come, ~ God sent forth his Son."

▶▶ Notice, ~ God the Father, ~ and not blind chance, ~ chose when Jesus would come.

▶▶ Historically speaking, ~ the time was very appropriate for the birth of Jesus.

▷▷ The Roman empire had brought peace and a road system that made travel more convenient, ~ widespread use of the Greek language simplified communication, ~

↳↳ and the Jews had proclaimed monotheism and the messianic hope in the synagogues of the Mediterranean world

→→ All of these combined to provide a wonderful vehicle for the spread of the gospel.

▷▷ But make no mistake ~ It was God who was directing events. ~ He was guiding history ~ not .....

↳↳ And at the time that God the Father had predetermined, ~ He gave us His "indefinable gift."

THE SECOND FEATURE OF GOD'S "INDEFINABLE GIFT" IS THAT GOD'S SON IS THE "indefinable gift." ~ "God sent forth his son."

▶▶ The apostle John puts it this way. ~ 1 Jn. 4:9, ~ "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him." ⇓⇓ 2/9

▷▷ God the Father didn't just tell us He loved us. ~ He showed it by taking sacrificial action. ~ He "sent His only Son."

▷▷ The NIV, ~ for 1 Jn. 4:9, ~ captures the meaning of the Greek quite well here. ~ "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him."

↪↪ The word behind "one and only" means "unique, ~ one of a kind." ~ It was amazing that God would send a Son, ~ but to send His one and only Son is a measure of the enormity of His love for us.

↪↪ We have here the idea of a Son who is specially precious and greatly loved because He is the only one.

↪↪ God had only one Son, ~ and He sent this "one and only" Son into a hostile environment, ~ i.e., ~ into this rebel world, ~ in order that "we might live through him."

▷▷ Truly, ~ God the Father has given us an "indescribable gift."

▷▷ Now, ~ it is important to note here the phrase "through him." ~ Jesus came "so that we might live through him." ~ It is only through Jesus that we can receive eternal life.

↪↪ As Jesus puts it in Jn. 14:6b, ~ "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

THE THIRD FEATURE OF GOD'S "INDESCRIBABLE GIFT" IS THE DEITY AND HUMANITY of Christ ~ Paul ~ "God sent forth his son ~ [Deity], ~ born of a woman ~ [Humanity]."

▶▶ Over and over, ~ the Scriptures declare the deity and humanity of Jesus.

▶▶ Is. 9:6 ~ "For to us a child is born ~ [hum, ~ 100%], to us a son is given ~ [deity, ~ 100%]."

▶▶ Is. 7:14 ~ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" ~ Means "God is with us."

▶▶ And Micah 5:2 ~ NASB ~ "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel ~ [humanity]. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity ~ [deity]."

▷▷ "goings forth" means primarily "to conduct one's activities."

↪↪ Lying in that manger on that first Christmas was the Second Person of the Trinity, ~ who has been conducting His activities from the days of eternity. 📖 3/9

▶▶ As Christmas hymn . . . ~ Veiled in flesh the God-head see ~ Hail the incarnate deity ~ Pleas'd as man with men to dwell ~ Jesus, our Emmanuel.

▶▶ Contrary to the popular opinion held by much of the world, ~ Jesus did not have His beginning in Bethlehem. ~ At Bethlehem God the Son took on a human nature, ~ but He has been around for all eternity.

▷▷ Jn. 1:1, ~ "In the beginning was the Word ~ [i.e., ~ at creation, ~ the Word already existed], ~ and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

↪↪ Jn. 1:14, ~ "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

▷▷ Jn. 8:58, ~ "Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

▶▶ Jesus is both fully God and fully man in one Person & will be so forever. ~ Didn't take off His humanity . . . .

▶▶ Now, ~ this is a great mystery.

▷▷ How God ~ who is infinite ~ and finite humanity can be united in one single Person is totally beyond our understanding

▷▷ And we must always remember what God says through [Is. 55:8-9](#).

↪↪ "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

▷▷ But, ~ my brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ let's rejoice because through this mystery ~ God provided our salvation.

▶▶ Indeed, ~ God the Father has given us an "incredible gift."

## AND LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS.

▶▶ In [Lk. 2:11](#), ~ the angel told the shepherds ~ "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

▷▷ To conquer sin & death & all the powers of evil ~ God came ~ not with an invading army ~ but as a child! ↯↯ 4/9

▶▶ In another context, ~ in 1 Cor. 1:27, ~ "But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong"

▶▶ And in Ps. 8:2 ~ "Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger."

▷▷ This means that God uses the weak to defeat the mighty ~~ In this God's greatness is further revealed.

▶▶ God's power is so awesome that He can defeat His enemies by coming as a mere child! ~~ His most awesome work was done . . . .

▶▶ To be sure, ~ God the Father has given us an "indescribable gift."

THE FOURTH FEATURE OF GOD'S "INDESCRIBABLE GIFT" IN V. 4 IS THAT JESUS WAS "born under the law."

▶▶ The Sovereign of the universe became a subject!

▶▶ Like every other human being, ~ Jesus was born under the Law. ~~ I.e., ~ He was subject to and under obligation to obey God's Law.

▶▶ But unlike any other person, ~ Jesus satisfied the requirements of that law by living in perfect obedience to it.

↪↪ In Matt. 5:17, ~ Jesus said ~ "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them"

↪↪ And Heb. 4:15 ~ "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin."

▶▶ Jesus obeyed God's Law completely. ~~ And as a result, ~ He could be the perfect sacrifice for sin, ~ because, ~ although fully human, ~ He never sinned.

▷▷ Only a sinless sacrifice could take away sin and provide reconciliation between people and God.

▷▷ His death bought freedom for us who were enslaved to sin ~ offering us redemption and adoption into God's family.

▶▶ Without a doubt, ~ God the Father has given us an "indescribable gift." ↯↯ 5/9

▷▷ And to acquire the benefits of this gift, ~ a person merely has to receive it and open it as their own.

### IN V. 5 ~ PRESENTS US WITH TWO REASONS FOR GOD'S INDESCRIBABLE GIFT.

THE FIRST REASON FOR GOD'S INDESCRIBABLE GIFT WAS THAT JESUS "TO REDEEM those who were under the Law."

▶▶ I.e., ~ "to rescue those who lived under the control of the Law."

▶▶ God's Law was not given to impart life and a right standing with God ~ Its purpose was to reveal that the whole world is a prisoner of sin ~ condemned under its judgment

▷▷ In Gal. 3:22a, ~ "But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin."

↳↳ Basically, ~ the point here is that Scripture declares that all people are controlled and imprisoned by ~ and also guilty of ~ sin.

▷▷ Gal. 3:10a, ~ "For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse." ~ The Law placed us under a curse because we all fall short of its standards.

↳↳ As Paul says in Rom. 3:10 ~ "None is righteous, no, not one." ~ And in Rom. 3:23 ~ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

▶▶ So Jesus came to rescue us from the curse of the Law, ~ slavery to sin, ~ and the guilt that comes from sin.

▷▷ And His sacrifice was a resounding success!

↳↳ When He went to the cross for the lost, ~ He paid a price that no one else could have ever paid.

→→ He was able to declare from that cross: ~ "It is finished!" (Jn. 19:30)

▶▶ This means that for all of those who . . . ~ God, ~ as Paul puts it in Col. 1:13, ~ LEB, ~ "has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son he loves."

▶▶ And Jesus' death on the cross rescues those who believe in Him ~ once and for all time.

▷▷ I.e., ~ His sacrifice on the cross was and is sufficient to save those who come to Him for salvation and to keep us saved forever! ↴↴ 6/9

↳↳ Heb. 9:12; ~ "he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

↳↳ Heb. 10:14; ~ "For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified."

▶▶ Undeniably, ~ God the Father has given us an "incredible gift."

THE SECOND REASON FOR GOD'S INCREDIBLE GIFT WAS "THAT WE MIGHT receive the adoption as sons"

▶▶ My brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ not only have we been forever rescued from the domain of darkness and forever transferred us to the kingdom of Jesus, ~ 77

▷▷ but through God's "incredible gift," ~ we have also become children of God.

▶▶ Let's reflect for a moment on the big picture of our salvation.

▷▷ Sinners. ~ Dragged into God's court room. ~ Guilty as charged. ~ Pay penalty.

▷▷ But wait, ~ the Judge has done something amazing. ~ He has made a way for us to escape the penalty. ~ He sends His beloved Son to take our place. ~ Full wrath. ~ Believers in His Son are declared not guilty.

▷▷ Then the Judge does something even more amazing.

↳↳ Lays . . . gavel, ~ . . . robe, ~ steps down from His bench, ~ and takes pardoned sinners home, ~ not slaves, ~ not guests, ~ but as His full-fledged children.

▷▷ Jn. 1:11-12, ~ "He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ~ But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

▷▷ 1 Jn. 3:1a, ~ NIV ~ "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

▶▶ Irrefutably, ~ God the Father has given us an "incredible gift."

IN VERSES 6-7, ~ BRIEFLY, ~ PAUL PRESENTS TWO RESULTS OF GOD'S incredible gift. 77 7/9

I.E., ~ 2 RESULTS IF A PERSON RECEIVES THIS GIFT AND OPENS IT AS THEIR OWN.

THE FIRST RESULT, ~ POINTED OUT IN VERSE 6, ~ IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

▶▶ Fulfillment of promise made by Jesus ~ Jn. 14:16-17, ~ "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."

▶▶ God the Holy Spirit is a gift from God the Father to all believers when they become children of God.

▷▷ At the moment of conversion ~ God the Holy Spirit gives us new life and indwells us.

▶▶ He empowers us to lead holy lives ~ He gives us understanding of Scripture

▷▷ And His dwelling within us is the guarantee that God will complete the good work that He has begun in us ~ and that we will receive our inheritance and glorification, ~ which we'll look at next.

▶▶ Unquestionably, ~ God the Father has given us an "indescribable gift."

THE SECOND RESULT OF RECEIVING AND OPENING THE GIFT AS OUR OWN IS THAT believers are heirs of God. ~ Verse 7.

▶▶ Not only are believers now full-fledged children of God, ~ but as Paul says in Rom. 8:17, ~ we are "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ."

▶▶ Talked before ~ inheritance/fellow heirs with Jesus.

▶▶ And what will Jesus inherit? ~ Everything ~ Heb. 1:2 tells us that the Father has appointed Jesus "heir of all things."

▷▷ You know, we may not have much in this life ~ But in eternity ~ we're going to end up with everything.

▶▶ And in 1 Pet. 1:4, ~ Peter describes our inheritance as "imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for" us.

▷▷ Basically, ~ in Peter's fourfold description of our inheritance, ~ he is emphasizing the absolute certainty and security of our inheritance. ¶¶ 8/9



↳↳ This means that ~ absolutely nothing and no one, ~ no circumstance, ~ no human or demonic force, ~ can touch ~ or have any kind of effect on ~ our inheritance.

→→ As a result, ~ our secure and certain inheritance should give us joy and encouragement even in the darkest of times.

▶▶ Indisputably, ~ God the Father has given us an "indescribable gift."

### CONCLUSION.

REGARDLESS OF WHAT AND HOW MANY GIFTS YOU RECEIVED THIS Christmas, ~ none will come close to measuring up to the gift that God gave the world on that first Christmas.

▶▶ "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"

LET'S PRAY . . . . 9/9