

God's Gifts To Man

Introduction. Any gift, present, pardon, or concession that is granted freely, out of one's goodness, is called grace. God shows mercy and benevolence toward His favored ones; His "grace," then, is suggestive of loving care and condescension.

The word "gift" is related to the word for "grace" 11 times in the New Testament. Usually when anyone is asked about God's gifts, they think about the gift of Christ in John 3:16 or the mention of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers in Ephesians 4:8-11. Today we are going to look at four gifts that God gave man when He created the world, and what those mean in how we live.

I. Life

- A. The first gift God gave man was life itself (Genesis 2:7). Because of it being a gift, man is obligated to God, not the other way around (Acts 17:25).
- B. So long as we have the gift of life, we are obligated to use it well. Integrity must be a lifelong pursuit (Job 27:3-6; Proverbs 11:3, 6, 11, 20).
- C. Life in this body is not everlasting (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 3:20). Because of life's brevity, man is given the task of preparing for eternity (Psalm 103:13-17; John 3:16; Galatians 6:8).

II. Work

- A. God assigned man work to perform (Genesis 2:15). Man is expected to spend a lot of his time in labor (Exodus 20:9; Psalm 104:19-23).
- B. Man is required to take responsibility for his own needs, and not be a bother to others for support (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-12).
- C. Although there is satisfaction to be derived from labor (Psalm 128:2), it must be kept in perspective. Your worth will not be measured by what you financially leave behind. Whatever we work for in this life will not outlast this life (Proverbs 23:4; Luke 12:20-21; John 6:27).

III. Companionship

- A. In recognition of the undesirable condition that is loneliness, man was given woman (Genesis 2:18-24).
 1. Man was not given any animal (Leviticus 18:23; 20:15-16).
 2. Man was not given man, and woman was not given woman (Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:10).
 3. Man was not given more than one woman (Matthew 19:5; Romans 7:3).
 4. Man was not given the option of ending what God made (Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:3-6; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11).
- B. Man must be thankful for the gift God has given and express his gratitude through proper treatment of his wife (Proverbs 18:22; 31:10, 28; Ecclesiastes 9:9; Ephesians 5:24, 28; 1 Peter 3:7). A lot of responsibility is put on the man because he is the head over the woman (1 Corinthians 11:3). For her part, woman must strive to be the blessed gift intended by God (Proverbs 12:4; Ephesians 5:22; 1 Peter 3:5-6).

IV. Dominion

- A. Despite what the environmentalists want us to think, God gave the earth to man, not the other way around (Genesis 1:26-28; 9:1-3; Psalm 115:16). God is extremely considerate of man to give us such authority (Psalm 8:3-9).
- B. God intended for man to tend the earth; the earth was not created to be our idol.
 - 1. While it is true that man was commanded by God to “tend the earth,” he should consider it part of his mandate to care for creation.
 - a) It is right to keep air and water as clean as we can.
 - b) It is right to refrain from over-fishing and over-farming (Exodus 23:11).
 - c) It is right to be humane to animals (Proverbs 12:10).
 - d) It is right to pass laws which prohibit pollution as much as is reasonable.
 - 2. But the position of many people today is tantamount to making the earth an idol to be worshiped. We must not serve the earth, but the One who made the earth (Romans 1:25). We do not have a Mother Earth, but a Father God!
- C. It is futile to try to save the earth for it is doomed for destruction (Mark 13:31; 2 Peter 3:7, 10). Our focus needs not to be on saving the earth, but on saving what will last beyond it (Matthew 10:28). We will only do this by spreading the gospel (Mark 16:15-16; Romans 1:16) and sanctifying ourselves (1 Thessalonians 5:4-10; 2 Peter 3:11-12).

Conclusion. When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could say, “I used everything you gave me.” The appropriate response to the gifts of God should always be our loving, diligent obedience. We pray for your eagerness to be one of His disciples today.

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