

The opsonia of sin is death, but the charisma of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now this is like a gem. A beautiful gem, this verse. I would like to look at different facets of it and see the light that is reflected from them. I'd like to look at seven facets.

First I'd like to look at the Nature of Choice. You notice we have alternatives, we have choices here. But the choices are not absolute nor do they exactly compare with one another. You say, Would you rather live in a hot climate or in a cold climate? Would you rather live in a country where English is the language or in a country where Spanish is the language? You ask questions like these that are abstract. But in life we are dealing mostly with concrete things and concrete things don't exactly compare. You may like the climate of a certain place but you may not like other features of it. You may like the life much better in a different place and may not like the climate in it. Life has choice constantly between alternatives. These alternatives are --- hardly ever are exactly similar. And here we have quite a contrast in these alternatives. You have the wages of sin. You have that which goes with it, that which you earn from it, that which enables you to go forward in it. And then you have the wonderful gift, the wonderful grace of God and you have the two put in contrast and you have one or the other. Life is made up of choices which are not identical, but we have to compare them and see what they really mean.

When I graduated from college they had a man sing that song on the platform INVICTUS by Henley. "Out of the dark that covers me, black as ~~the~~ the pit from pole to pole, I thank whatever gods may be for my unconquerable soul." What a terrible thing to have at a graduation of a so called Christian college -- "my unconquerable soul". "Whatever gods may be." A man here standing up and defying God and putting his desires as over against the great purposes of the mighty God. The alternatives are sometimes ludicrous, and at first sight this might seem ludicrous. "The wages of sin." "The gift of God." Apart from God's revelation it would be ludicrous, but in view of what God has revealed it is an alternative that stands before everyone of us. Will you have the wages of sin, or will you receive the marvelous gift, the marvelous charisma that God offers?

A second thing we notice about this verse, a second facet is what I will call the