

faces alternatives which are far from equal. This is brought out very plainly in this verse. Here are wages. Here is the gift. They are not parallel. They are not in the same level at all. You take the sin, and you get the wages. You accept the gift, and you have the eternal life that is the gift, the two are not on the same pattern. The wages of this is that, the wages of this is that. You get this because you deserve it, or if you do something else you deserve this. Not at all. The wages is what you deserve. The gift is what God gives you apart from any desert of your own. A man can be in a burning building, and can say, I choose to stay here, or I choose to walk out. He cannot say I choose to stay here and not get burned. His choices are limited. You can choose the area of the world in which you want to live, but you have to take it as it is. You cannot choose the climate of one area with the topography of another area. You have to pick among alternatives which are far from equal in every choice in life, and so here I think the fact that man is responsible for his choices, that man has choices and alternatives before him, but I think it is clear in the verse that the alternatives are far from equal. You deserve the death for your sin. You receive the wages you deserve. But you can do nothing that deserves God's saving. It is a gift. It is His unmerited grace.

Well, now, secondly I think that in the verses we get a suggestion of the nature of sin. To understand it fully, we have to look at other passages. But I think that in order to understand this verse at all fully, we have in mind what the nature of sin is. ~~It~~ I think that it is germane to think of it ~~at~~ just a moment here, the nature of sin. God is presented to us in the Scripture as a righteous judge and as a loving father. God is one who had made laws for the welfare of all His creation, and someone will say, Why, if God loves us, will He make laws for us? Why doesn't He just let us ~~go~~ go along and enjoy ourselves, and do what we feel like. You try that ~~with~~ with a family of children for a while, and see where you ~~get~~ get. It is absolutely impossible. You ~~have~~ have to have laws. You try it with a