

Question: Is there a free ticket to Heaven?

If we are offered something for “free,” we expect to be able to receive it without meeting any conditions, except to be present and claim the gift. If there was a “free ticket” to Houston waiting for you at the bus station, all you would need to do to get to Houston is go to the terminal, claim your ticket and get on the bus. But in reality you have had to **do** something to receive the benefit.

Whenever we speak of Heaven, we are also talking about salvation. God “desires all men to be saved” (1Tim 2:4). Salvation will culminate when God ushers into Heaven the souls of men redeemed by the blood of Christ and forgiven of their sins (Col 1:3-5, 13-14).

As to whether salvation is totally “free,” that is, with no conditions attached to it, let us listen to Jesus the “author of eternal salvation” (Heb 5:9) and those who recorded His instructions:

- 1) “He who believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mk 16:16).
- 2) “God...now commands all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).
- 3) “The Lord...is longsuffering...not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2Pet 3:9).
- 4) “If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9).
- 5) “Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev 2:10).

These are a few of the details or conditions for receiving a “ticket to Heaven.” What, then, is “free” in the matter of salvation? Paul said that the “free gift” is the “grace of God” exhibited in “the one Man, Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:15). Romans chapter five explains that the human race does not deserve God’s grace or offer of salvation. “But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom 5:8).

God’s grace or His plan of salvation for man is free, but the “ticket to Heaven” is not without cost. Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me” (Lk 9:23). He further admonished that “if anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.” He said that all men must “count the cost,” and if they are willing to be His disciples they must “forsake all” that they have (Lk 14:26-33). The trip to Heaven appears to require a very expensive “ticket.” First, it required the lifeblood of Jesus Christ, and then it requires a life of obedient faith from men – a high price to pay, but well worth it!

The Word of God describes the “ticket to Heaven” as “living by faith” (Heb 10:38). Every time the phrases “by faith” or “through faith” are used in the Bible, it implies obedience to the word of God (see Heb 11). Moreover, the Scriptures teach that we are saved “by grace...through faith” (Eph 2:8). The grace of God is extended to man as a “free gift,” man did nothing to deserve the chance to go to Heaven, but man must avail himself of God’s gracious offer of salvation “by faith.”

Study your Bible and search the Truth. Write or call us today if you would like to enroll in a Bible correspondence course by mail. Thanks for reading!