The word “unspeakable,” you need not be told, presents the simple idea of something, the nature of which cannot be expressed in words. It is believed that it occurs but three times in the word of God by Paul - once by Peter in every place there is a difference of meaning. One of these occasions when it is used is where Paul in the 12° Ch. 4° v. of this Epistle, is describing the extraordinary translation of himself to the third Heaven or Paradise, and states that he heard “unspeakable words.” In this connection we shall discover that the language means some thing that is secret, that ought not to be uttered. Then there is another occasion when...
Peter uses the word to describe the believer's joy — he calls it "joy unspeakable"; by which he evidently means to convey to us the idea that this joy is to be felt but cannot be communicated by words. Then a third place where this word is used is in this text, and the gift which is here spoken of being the gift of God's dear Son, is called "the unspeakable gift," in the sense of something so rich, so divinely precious, as to baffl e and defy the power of all language to estimate. Indeed, the word used to set forth this gift, in the original Greek, it is a remarkable fact, is
used only in this place; it means literally something that cannot be explained, or suitably set forth in speech, or in detail.

I am aware that Commentators have given various interpretations of the passage. Some have supposed that the gift alluded to is the Gospel, the fountain of all the influence for good that is exerted upon the hearts of others that it means the habit of brotherly love which would induce men to be charitable; but there seems no reason to adopt any interpretation except that which refers the language to J.C. himself, as in this gift all other things—the Gospel, & the fraternal love of Xians among
other are of course included. Therefore without hesitation we may proceed upon this explanation that Paul simply meant to give utterance as far as he could to the gratitude which swelled in his heart when he remembered that the brotherly love which prompts the love of Christ to its deeds of charity was the direct result of Christ's love to the race of men, and exclaimed in his rapture "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!"

It will be of interest to us to dwell briefly upon the singular fact that Paul regards this gift as one that is unspeakable; that Paul declares it to be (not unlawful for him to utter)
as were the forbidden secrets of Heaven, to which he was admitted; nor was the joy to which Peter referred, that was only to be felt but not uttered in words; but that it was just simply beyond the power of language to define, describe, or set forth so as to be properly estimated. That Paul should so characterize this gift, is remarkable, when we consider his peculiar character, and qualities, and this fact rightly weighed will enhance in our estimation the grandeur, the glory, the preciousness of the gift.

For who was Paul, and what were his traits, and qualities? In the command of
language he is unsurpassed among all the orators whose lives and efforts are given in history. So wonderful was this power of speech in him that when he visited Antioch, the statement is that after his first masterly sermon in their synagogue, almost the whole city came to listen to his marvelous eloquence. It is this Paul, who visiting Ephesus with Barnabas so spake— with such powerful irresistible eloquence—that a great multitude both of the Jews also of the Greeks, believed. It was Paul again who with Barnabas at Lystra was taken to be of the God.
of his power of speech, he was called by these people, Mercuvius, their own God of Eloquence. This Paul also stood on Mars' Hill in Athens, and with marvelous skill of words "exposed the absurdity of Heathenism, in the very presence of the most polished assembly that up to that time had ever surrounded a teacher of Hellenism." This was the Paul who stood undaunted before the grand council of his Jewish enemies and spoke with unflinching courage the words that confounded them all. He it was whose eloquence almost persuaded Agrippa the incestuous king to be a Christian; and this same Paul
by his overwhelming reasoning shook the guilty soul of Felix, and caused him to quail with trembling, shuddering guilt, which told him that his only escape from the terrible influence of his words was to send the dreadful preacher from his presence. It is this Paul whose letters to the Chhs. are the wonder of admiration of these late ages of the Ch., as containing the finest specimens of argument, and eloquence, and wisdom in every variety of style. This Paul also is the author of the sublime treatise on the resurrection in 15 Ch. 1 Cor., the grandeur of whose conceptions...
and the marvelous beauty of the language excel all the most exalted specimens of eloquence recorded: this Paul of whom all this is true, here says that there is one subject for which his powers of language are utterly inadequate to describe, or set forth. All other subjects he mastered; on all other occasions he found himself furnished with language. The prejudices of the Heathen could not resist him; the blindness of idolaters could not but behold him with admiration. The Philosophy of Athens was confounded; the pomp of Royalty was abashed; the pride and lust of the haughty Rulers trembled.
for the
sweeping tornado of his speech, and
the world still acknowledges the
unanswerable logic, the unsurpassed
beauty of his diction, and the grandeur
of the doctrines of his epistles.
And yet when this man of eloquence
finds himself confronted with the mighty
thought of God's gift of His Son, Je-
to die for man, he at once yields
to the pressure of the ponderous theme,
and confesses that it successfully
evades the grasp of his intellect,
and defies his power of speech?
Should it be supposed now that
all this marvelous power of speech
which is attributed to Paul was due
to the fact that he was inspired, it may be admitted and yet it might be contended that this only enhances the inconceivable value of the gift, to know that even to the inspired servant of God authorized to speak of the great salvation to his dying fellow men, the attempt to present the estimate of this divine gift, should prove utterly abortive. Surely surely then this gift of God to the world is one of unspeakable preciousness.

To justify this epithet let us consider,

I. The cost of this gift. The remark of the venerable Archb. Alexander on his bed of death
was that "all his theology was comprised in that one verse" God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish but have everlasting life." Now the preciousness or value of the gift is here seen at once. Nor can we conceive anything that language can add to the impression of its cost, beyond the simple fact that God gave his only Son. The death of the firstborn was the last of the ten plagues, and last because it was the severest, and severest because it was the first born Son.
scarcely a
who perished. There is no heart to deplore
that does not keep a place for the son
of its strength, — the glory of its might.
The higher we rise in the virtue of the
parent, and the nearer to the standard
of purity & virtue that Parent may,
the deeper, purer, more tender
the affection it bears to the son of its
love. When therefore the Parent is found
to be the Holy God, Himself, we may
to understand
be able at least that the affection He
bears for His only Son must be be-
yond conception: deep, pure & tender,
that the cost of that Son to God must
have been proportionally great. The
love of God for His Son is in point
of fact just this— it was an unbeginning love. There never was a time— there never was a period in all that we understand by the Past, when the father did not love the Son. One in nature, in essence, in substance equal in power and glory, without beginning of days or end of years, these cannot be conceived such a thing as a suspension of harmony which subsists in the hallowed union of the three adorable persons of the Godhead. The inconceivable mystery of the Divine Union of course renders it beyond our reach to understand, and therefore it would be presumption in us to undertake
to explain it. But surely love is one of those unearthly emotions which without any hesitation may be ascribed to God—especially as it is said "God is Love," and the higher, holier, and more excellent the Being in whom it exists, the deeper and more intense the Love it bears to the object. The Immaculate Holiness of God for His Son, therefore being more intense than it is possible to conceive, the cost of rendering must have been great beyond all estimate, and hence must teach us that the gift must be indeed an inexpressible gift. Not only was it an imbeginning love but it was without measure. Nothing is withheld from the Son. "The Father loved the Son and hath given all things into His
hands." "All power is given unto me in Heaven and our Earth." Not only so, but without change or variation. Ever deep, and meausureless, and absorbing, there was never a moment of wavering in it. And yet Jesus on the Cross did complain that he was forsaken of His God. But that was when He was the voluntary representative of sinners under His broken Law, and the obturation of His Condemnance was not from His Son as such, but from Man who had incurred His displeasure and who must suffer in his own person or by another. So also this love will be without end. All Eternity will only deep
and intensify it. When we conceive then of His Love of the Father to His Son as with-out beginning, without measure, without change and without end, and notwithstanding all this that God gave His life to die for man, the unspeakable nature of the gift is sufficiently manifest from the cost. It was indeed a ransom paid for our redemption, the value of which is unspeakable.

II. The gift will appear unspeakable if we dwell upon the woes from which it delivers us. These are all included under the threefold designation, Death temporal, spiritual, and eternal. This gift of life to man redeems him from the sting of death temporal which is Sin, and it redeems him from the
strength of Sin which is the Law. We do not need to go into a separate discussion of these three forms of death, for they will all be neutralized by the redemption of X, which is experienced by the believer when he meets death. To show how Sin is the Sting of death, we suggest the general truth that whatever reluctance we feel to die—no matter whence it arises—is closely connected with Sin. 

Let us look. This reluctance to die is the sting of death; if we were willing to die—glad to die—joyful in the prospect of dying, we should not feel any sting. But the reluctance is the sting. And as Paul says that Sin is the Sting—
we conclude that this reluctance is the true.
There are three things that make men unwilling to die — that give death its power to sting.

1. The bare idea of ceasing to be, gives an inexplicable sadness to the thought of death. The love of life — of being — existence is a most intense and passionate principle. Since therefore death clashes with it, since death comes to dash out this being, it is just for that reason — terrible. You can see this love of life — this shrinking from death — illustrated in all animated things around, and you cannot account for, or explain many facts on any other basis. Why does yonder aged b--
gar struggle on through long years of misery, poverty, contempt, oppression; amidst  the utter destitution of hope and banishment from society, and yet prefer to live thus, + think from the approach of death? It is because he must cease to be; it is simply dreadful to the human mind to cease to exist; life under any circumstances is eagerly clung to, rather than to lie down + die.

Chap X. gives us deliverance from this sort of sting, by revealing to us that it is not a cessation of being to die, but on the other hand, that it is the beginning of a new + endless Life. That
it is "the gate to endless joy;" that while "to live is X, to die is gain." But again,

2. Another consideration which adds to the sting of death, is the disemption of tender ties and earthly affections which takes place at death. The young feel this when death comes, reckless as they may be of life when buoyant with hope and vigor. But it is a feeling which does not weaken in its power as we grow older; it deepens, and becomes more intense in its influence. For when one has lived a long life surrounded by happy earthly endearments, and when life has been greatly absorbed in the pleasures of this world; oh, it is hard for such to
loosen their hold upon life; death's sting is sharp and bitter. In the destruction of Lot's wife we see this exemplified. It was not Lot the child of God—it was not his young daughters, but it was the aged wife lingeringly who clung to the memory of her long life passed amid the simple pleasures of Sodom, and looking back, pines.

The thought of breaking off Earth's ties sharpens the sting of death. (Hobson) Now X.t.S.'s redemption delivers us from this sting by telling us of the brighter joys, the purer pleasures, the higher holier circles of companionship which form the bliss of Heaven.
3. But the sting of death is intensified by the fact of its utter loneliness. We suppose we have some conception of what loneliness means. An emigrant leaving his native shore alone to seek a home on some distant foreign shore, when he finds himself losing sight of the last familiar headland and standing a stranger on the deck of the ship that bears him away feels desolate and lonely; but he will soon be relieved by new society and new scenes, which banish his loneliness. But no one has returned from the grave to describe the loneliness of death! This sting of dying must be done alone! We may be surrounded by friends—but there
is a point at which we must part with them to go down into the valley alone,—to pass thro' the cold waters of the Jordan of death—alone!

These are the prominent points in the sting of Death; and the only reason why they do give to death a sting is simply because they are the result of Sin; "The sting of death is Sin."

For the reason why earthly being—life here is so delightful to us is because Sin hides from us the brighter glories of Heavenly life; the only reason why we cling to earthly joys, is because Sin blinds us to the view of Heavenly bliss; and the only reason why we tremble to die
alone, is because Sin deprives us of the blessed consolation, that a Christian does not die alone—that Jesus is with him as his feet touch the cold waters of death, and his rod and staff sustain his footsteps as he traverses the valley.

Now these evils twoes only sting the man who being spiritually dead, is called on to meet temporal death, and then is certain to suffer eternal death. From all these we are delivered by "the unspeakable gift." By it—by faith in the Lord Jesus, "the unspeakable gift," we are delivered from all doubt. Without this we should sink into despair amid the dark doubts which throng around the
dying bed. But when the fact of His resurrection is revealed to us in the grand words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life" etc., then doubt is scattered, and all is clear. By this "unspeakable gift," we are delivered from all fear! Danger of mistake here. Not necessarily Rapture. Some have it. Martyrs. This depends upon temperament, to a great extent. Many descriptions are imaginary. "Rapture is a rare thing except in books."

"A man conqueror dies calmly. His courage modest, unconscious of itself. It's people are constantly dying in triumph, but because no noisy demonstration is
made or witnessed, the world takes no note
of such deaths. And yet, after all the
victory thus achieved thro' the unspeakable
gift over doubt & fear, which are
indeed great deliverances, it must
be conceded that Death gains, for a
time at least, the victory over the
body—Death is not conquered. He is the
conqueror. Still the victory comes at
last, and it is infinite consolation to
the soldier of the Cross, that his victory
is only delayed & is by no means
doubtful. A day is coming which shall
abundantly compensate the Xian for
all the pains, groans & dying strife,
the darkness, the worm, the coffin.
the loneliness of the grave, and when the countless multitude of the Lord's saints shall rise to meet him in the clouds, then shall the redeemed of the Lord return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; sorrow and sighing shall flee away!"

When we consider that all this is the result of "the unspeakable gift" of Jesus Christ to die for us the redeemed sons and daughters of Adam, we may well join the Apostle in his words, "Thanks be to God!"
demands our liveliest gratitude when we consider the vast benefits it confers upon us. These are threefold: (1) The blessings it confers in this life. (2) The happy results of death. (3) The glories to which we are introduced at the judgment day.

(1) In this life, it secures to us what the spirit of fallen man needs most of all, assurance of God’s love: “God is angry with the wicked.” It secures to him peace of conscience—Oh, what a boon! It secures joy in the Holy Ghost. It secures growth in grace. It secures perseverance in all this unto the end. And then
2. When death has done its work upon our bodies, the moment that the separation takes place between the soul and body, it secures the immediate passage of the soul into glory, because it is then made perfect in holiness—never before—and the vital union which is established between X.t. and the Christian at the time of his salvation, still unites the crumbling dust to X.t. and "angels shall watch the sleeping dust till X.t. shall bid it rise." And so.

3. When the glorious morn shall dawn upon the earth when X.t. shall come again the second time.
without Sin unto salvation, then the long
burnt dust shall rise, re-animate with
glorious eternal life, and "changed in
a moment—in the twinkling of
an eye" shall once more enter in
to union with the Soul, and openly
acknowledged and acquitted in the
presence of the assembled millions
shall be made be made "perfectly
blessed to the full enjoying of God and all eternity." "Thanks be unto God for
his unspeakable gift!"—We vindicate
the claim of this gift to be esteemed
by unspeakably precious, from
It, the fact that it opens a fountain
of remission for all sins however intense.
multiplied and aggravated they may be. Were it not for this, we could not have any share in the benefits just enumerated in life, death, and judgment. Were it not for this, Death would overwhelm us with doubts, fear, and plunge us into love inconceivable. But such is the precious nature of this unspeakable gift that no aggravations, multitude and long continuance in sin can be in themselves so enormous as to be beyond its power to deliver us, if we will but accept it as it is offered in the gospel. It saved a bloody Monasscher, a persecuting Saul.
and millions more and still is “able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by it. You may have blasphemed God’s Holy name, you may have worshipped and loved the creature more than the Creator; you may have been a reckless sabbath-breaker; you may have been a thief; a defrauder; an oppressor of the poor, the widow and the Orphan; you may have been a vile adulterer, debaucher, a drunkard, a murderer; a liar; a covetous man, all this and a thousand times more you may have been; and these sins too may have been aggravated by resisting all the calls and invitations of God’s mercy.
counted the blood of X as worthless, despised the Spirit, scorned the message of the pulpit; angrily insulted your best friend who rebuked you, (perhaps a pious wife); you may have broken your mother’s heart, by your wickedness; and brought down your father’s “gray hairs with sorrow to the grave;” and you may have persisted in your wickedness for 30, 40, 50 years, and thus have hardened yourself in iniquity; yet if you turn now unto God humble yourself under His mighty hand, and cast yourself upon His mercy thru’ J.C. for salvation, such
is the virtue of this "unspeakable gift," that pardon shall be at once secured, peace & reconciliation with God shall at once be brought about. "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as wool, & tho they be red like crimson they shall be white as snow." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" Then we make still more manifest how precious it is, by a consideration of its freeness of the blessings it bestows. It is a "gift"—it is offered without money and without price; it cannot be bought. Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain, could give the guilty conscience peace, or wash away
death of
the stain!" Your death, and the millions
such as you can never purchase it. All your works, are worthless
e all your tears unavailing, all
your prayers would fail; it is
too precious to be bought; and
hence God says to you;—"He, every
one that thirsteth come ye to the
waters, and he that hath no money,
come ye, buy and eat; yea, come
buy wine and milk without money
and without price!" You cannot
insult God more deeply than
by coming and attempting to
buy His favor; All the morality
that it is possible for human beings
to attain in this world amounts to nothing in the sight of God; worse than nothing and vanity, a stench and an abomination before Him when offered to purchase your salvation. The violation of an infinitely Holy Law of an infinitely Pure and Holy God cannot be atoned for by the feeble & defective obedience of a finite mortal; and I warn you again that if you attempt to do it, you insult God and incur His hot displeasure, and His wrath and curse. Instead of requiring this at your hands— which you can never do— God gives it to you. It is His free gift. And if the
pride of your wicked heart revolts at
the thought of receiving the great
boon of eternal life as a gift—
if you feel that it is degrading
to your dignity to become indebted
to God for your salvation, instead
of to your own good works, it is
only on account of the blindness
of your minds that you do not see
yourself as a lost helpless ruined
sinner; that you do not see that
in you—that is, in your flesh
dwelleth no good thing; that you
fail to discover that your sins are
crying to Heaven loudly for the
dreadful vengeance of a Holy God.
and if you continue in your blindness and obstinacy, and perverseness and pride of heart, you must perish in your sins! O Sinner, sinner, come and take the gift so freely offered and realize Paul's meaning in the words, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

I shall present only one more consideration to show the unspeakably precious nature of this gift and that is

VI. It is an everlasting gift. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." God is not a man that He should change. The word calling here
is equivalent to election. Now election is the purpose of God from all eternity to choose certain persons to everlasting life, and the means whereby this purpose is carried into effect are just as certainly, and eternally purposed as the end itself. These means are all included in "the unspeakable gift." Were we always conscious to ourselves of this fact viz.: that God is immutable in all His nature, and that His purpose, His mind, is a part of Himself; it would tend firmly to fix the belief in our minds that the much abused doctrine of the Saints' final perseverance
is true beyond the possibility of a doubt.
It would serve to remove much of the
prejudice which have been heaped
upon it by those who identify it
with Fatalism, were it understood
that the end—viz. salvation—is not
more certain than the mean, and
that we hold no such doctrine that
the end can ever take place
without the mean. The whole plan
of salvation through "the unspeakable
gift" was devised from all eternity
and the subjects of this Salvation
were identified, selected and chosen
of God, and the gift of Jesus Christ
was designed to be applied to them.
specifically for the purpose of securing their individual salvation, without this gift they could never have been saved. Confirmation of the statement that the gift is irrevocable — that it is never to be recalled, or taken from those to whom it has once been given, we offer some considerations based upon the character of God and the nature of the gift.

1. It is inconsistent with the infinite dignity of the character of Jehovah that He should recall His gift. Let it be supposed that He has adopted a plan including this gift.
as the Central idea, that by His Omnipotence He has fully grasped the plan in all its details; that He foresaw that the subjects would be in themselves utterly unworthy; that He foresaw that they would not only be impotent to devise a plan, but would even after conversion would often offend His Holiness by the manifestations of the unsunged remains of their overt depravity abiding within; let it be supposed I say, that God, knowing the end from the beginning and all the possible, & conceivable accompanying circumstances of each particular case, should nevertheless determine in
His Wisdom to grant this gift to the Human race and "in the fulness of time," should actually make by His Holy Spirit a personal application of the benefits of this gift to the persons chosen, in such a case as this; I cannot but feel that it is degrading to indulge the thought that any recall of God's gift will ever be made. God chose no man for any foresight of good works; "God is no respecter of persons;" but He chose you for His own free sovereign good pleasure, and for His own glory, in order that He might magnify the riches of His
grace in your salvation. He did this knowing all about you—all that you would ever do, and be; He will never change. He will never suffer His purpose according to the election of grace, to fail just because of the efforts of Satan to thwart this purpose. I cannot conceive that if He should recall this gift whereby alone the purpose can be accomplished, He would be acting in a manner wholly inconsistent with the glorious and exalted dignity of His Divine Character, and would be characterized by such fickleness, and mutability among men, there is always with the name of childishness and folly. It is perilous for one to speak in this manner of the
impeccably glorious and adorable God, since it borders upon blasphemy. So then we repeat, 'Thanks be to God for the unspreakable gift' because it is an everlasting possession.

2. It is never to be recalled because the nature of the gift itself is eternal. Its eternal Life; it is rescue from eternal death. The Saviour is the Eternal Son of God. The gift is through the Eternal Spirit. The results are eternal glory to God. The home to which it admits the sinner is the presence of God through Eternity. So that there seems to be a most unaccountable inadequacy of means eternal in their tendency to produce eternal results.
yet failing to save, liable to be withdrawn at any time—not only an inadequacy—but an inconsistency that means so great a eternal should be only temporary and transient in their effects.

I present one additional argument to close the case. It is drawn from the testimony of Scripture: "He that hath begun, I give unto them eternal life: they shall never perish, neither shall any man take it." "My Father which gave them me is greater than all and no man is able." "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." "Who shall separate us from the love of God? Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword?" I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come—heights depth..."
1. Let the consideration of this subject stir up the minds of God's children to a higher appreciation of, and a deeper gratitude for "the unspeakable gift."

2. Let God's love in giving us His Son to die for us, attract the attention of the imperious rebel, and lead to the consideration of the amazing depth of his own iniquity and the peril of his own case. Seeing that pardon the blood was needed, and to save him from hell, this precious blood was needed. And if he refuse to come to the Lord Jesus, let him hear the curse pronounced, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema, Maranatha."