

The Greatest Gift

BE ENCOURAGED this Christmas season as you recall what God provided for us on that wonderful night when He came to dwell among us and changed human history. Only when we keep our focus on Him can we truly enjoy the inspiring blessings of Christmas. If we truly understand the gift we were given on that momentous evening when Jesus was born, we will have the hope we need to sustain us even in the most difficult times.

There are three important aspects that reveal how truly wonderful this gift is. When we meditate on them we can unlock the joy God offers not only at Christmastime but all through the year.

1) The gift of the forgiveness of sins—

John 3: 16 states, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have life eternal." (NASB).

There is no higher, more wonderful gift we can receive, than the one He has given at Calvary. He bestows what nobody else can and what we need the most—forgiveness of our sins. He is the only offering for salvation that is absolutely acceptable, perfect, priceless, and everlasting.

2) Our gift is motivated by God's awesome, unconditional love—

Romans 5: 8 says God demonstrated, "His own love toward us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us."

Stop and think about the depth of affection this verse conveys; how much he sacrificed and the pain He endured on our behalf. He willingly emptied Himself and humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death on a cross—all because of His love for us. Note Philippians 2: 6-8 (NKJV): God, who is the great I AM of all creation is always thinking of us, understands us inside and out, and longs to lead us in the best path possible. He gives Himself wholeheartedly so your joy may be absolutely complete. "These things have I spoken to you...that your joy may be full" (John 15: 11).

3) Our gift is priceless because of Whom we have been given—

The Father has given us no less than One "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named" (Ephesians 1: 12)

His only Son, Jesus. Romans 8: 32 reminds us, "He did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also freely give us all things?"

Therefore, keep your focus on the greatest gift of Christmas, Jesus, and your whole perspective of the season will be so much more enriched. MERRY CHRISTMAS!

the **word**

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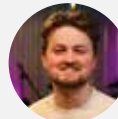
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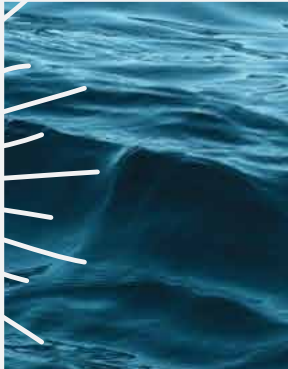
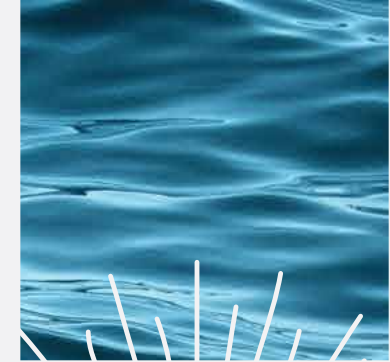
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December 7th

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