

The Greatest Gift Of All

By Denise Bostic

Tis the season once again. It's that time of year when most people are focused on decorating their homes with holiday décor and busily shopping for gifts for family and friends before that special day arrives. Even though Christmas is not a biblical observance commanded by Christ for the New Testament Church, this day has long been adopted by Christians and transformed into a celebration in which we honor the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ into the world. Although in recent years Christmas has become too commercialized, there are many things that we can learn from this most special time of year.

The surrounding events that have been recorded concerning the miraculous conception and birth of our Lord are awe-inspiring indeed. (*Luke 1:26-45, 2:1-40*) Upon studying the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ, it is impossible to comprehend or fully grasp the love that caused the Word of God to come down from his pristine and heavenly abode and live among his corrupted creation and then to go on to suffer such an excruciating and agonizing death on the Cross for all humanity. (*John 1:1-14 and chapters 19 & 20*)

The Son of God's humble entrance was heralded by angels, revered by wise men and despised by those that were evil. (*Matthew 1:18-25, 2:1-18, Luke chapter 2*) However, for all that have come to believe in the Lord and his message since his earthly walk, he has become the greatest Gift that has ever been given to them by God. Throughout the entire gift giving that goes on during this time of year, the most important gift that we could ever receive personally -or give to others is to lead them to Jesus and the plan of salvation.

Tradition has taught that the legend behind gift giving at Christmas began with Saint Nicholas. Although this story depicts the charitable deeds of a very real person from long ago, his character eventually evolved into a modern day figure that is fictional (Santa Claus). Although the history behind all of this is interesting, the Bible teaches us the truth that the idea of gift giving does not really originate with "Old Saint Nick" but with God. It is written in the Book of James:

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." (*James 1:17*)

Although God the Father gives us innumerable good gifts the greatest gift that he has given us according to the word is his Son. He sent him into the world to live and die for us so we could receive not only eternal salvation but also all of those good things that

accompany salvation. (*Hebrews 6:9*) In the Book of John we are told about God's greatest gift. It is written:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes on him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (*John 3:16*)

God “gave” his Son so that we can have *eternal life*. Even though we are able to purchase gifts for others and them for us, none of us are able to purchase the gift of eternal life personally because this precious free gift could only be bought and paid for by the Lord Jesus Christ through the atonement on the Cross. This gift cannot be bought by man for a price because it is *priceless* and can only be received as a free gift that God only gives by his grace. The good news though is that anyone can *receive* this free gift by God's grace when they have faith in his Son Jesus Christ and receive him as their Savior from sin and death. (*John 14:6, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:6-13*)

Although this gift is given freely to you and me by God, it was not free for our Savior. He paid the full price by giving his body as a living sacrifice and by shedding his own blood upon the Cross as a propitiation for our sins. (*Hebrews 10:9:11-28, 10:10, I John 2:2*) He tasted death for you and me and paid the penalty or “wages” that we had earned through sin. The Lord came to be the repairer of the breach that came between God and man due to sin. He did this to reconcile each of us back into a personal relationship with God, the kind of relationship that he intended for us to have with him to begin with. (*Genesis 1:26-28, II Corinthians 5:18-19, Hebrews 2:17*) Not only did he come to reconcile us back to God but also came to restore everything that we had lost through the fall of man. (*Acts 3:19-21*) God's love is demonstrated to us by the fact that his Son came to die for us while we were in a sinful state. The Lord was not forced to lay down his life but came to lay down his life of his own free will. (*Romans 5:8, John 10:15-18*)

It's ironic that there are many today that observe Christmas as a traditional holiday yet have not yet received or personally know the One whose birth is being celebrated. In today's materialistic world, some are more interested in acquiring the things of this world rather than those things that are truly eternal or lasting. The Lord Jesus had something to say to those however that were only interested in obtaining the things of this world. He said,

“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his own soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.”

Material goods are temporal and will eventually fade away. This present life is also temporary because we all die. Eternity stretches out before us and begins at the moment of death. Nothing of this present world will help us to obtain the gift of eternal life which lasts forever. We cannot gain eternal life with wealth, by doing good works or being a good person. The only way to eternal life is through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*John 14:6*) He has given his life as a ransom for every person on earth. He exchanged his life for yours and mine. In this age of grace, he extends an open invitation for any and all to come to him to receive the free gift of eternal life.

God's love is so fathomless! Only time and eternity will teach us of how great that love truly is. During the hubbub of this holiday season and the giving of temporal gifts that last only for a short time, it is good to be reminded of a much greater gift that lasts for all eternity. If you have already received this precious gift, why not help the Lord to give out this wonderful gift to others by sharing the love and Gospel of Christ with them this holiday season? Those that receive this gift are receiving the gift that lasts forever. If you have not yet received this greatest gift of all, please [click here](#) to learn more. Merry Christmas!