

The Gift

Isaiah 9:6; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 12-24-17

Christmas is a time for giving and gifts.

We all give gifts at Christmas. And this is because what we celebrate at Christmas is the greatest gift of all – the gift that God gave – His Son. This gift was promised hundreds of years before it was given.

For a **child** will be **born** to us, a **son** will be **given** to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. – Isaiah 9:6

We see the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6 in Luke 2:1-11.

The Nature of a Gift

On this Christmas Eve, I'd like us to think about the nature of a gift: What is a gift?

1. A gift is an act of grace.

A gift is not something that is not earned, not the fulfilling of a debt, not the payment of a wage. But a gift is motivated by the heart of the giver for the receiver. We should not feel obligated to give a gift. In 'The Gift' of His Son, God gives a salvation by grace not works. – Ephesians 2:8-9

2. A gift says something about the receiver.

A gift is given to someone in view of what their needs are, what will make them happy, etc. The Child, Jesus, received gifts from the wise men, maybe to recognize His roles as Prophet, Priest and King and maybe to provide for His trip to Egypt. (Matthew 2:11) Good gift giving requires some knowledge of the person receiving the gift – so that what is good is given (beneficial, blessing). (Matthew 7:11) In 'The Gift' of Jesus, God gave us just what we needed and what we desire.

She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name **Jesus**, for He will **save** His people from their **sins**." – Matthew 1:21

3. A gift says something about the giver.

A gift can reveal the giver's heart, the giver's care for you, the giver's sensitivity to your needs and desires, the giver's generosity, etc. The gift is an expression of love. (Ephesians 5:2) In 'The Gift' of His Son, we see God's heart of love being expressed.

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

4. A gift is meant to change your life.

A gift is meant to bring you a pleasure or experience you would not have otherwise had, to help you to do things you could not do without it, to inspire or enable you to live in new ways. We

can see this in God's gift of the Levites to the Priests. (Numbers 18:6) We can see this in Jesus' encounter with the woman at the well. (John 4:10) In 'The Gift' of His Son, God means to change your life. (John 10:10)

5. **A gift can have gifts within the gift.**

Children are a gift and there are gifts within this gift – musical abilities, care for us in our old age, etc. (Psalm 127:3) Children are like 'Christmas presents' – you have to unpack them to find out what God has given you in them – it's fun to see what they turn out to be and do! In 'The Gift' of His Son, God gives us the gift of forgiveness and righteousness and the Holy Spirit and eternal life! (Galatians 2:20; Romans 3:24; 5:17)

To **give** to His people *the* knowledge of salvation By the **forgiveness** of their sins, - Luke 1:77

Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the **gift** of the **Holy Spirit**. – Acts 2:38

For the wages of sin is death, but the free **gift** of God is **eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 6:23

6. **Only one gift in the history of the world has exceeded the value of the receiver.**

I always struggle with wanting to give a gift that actually reflects the value of the person to me that is receiving the gift – but this I can never do! In 'The Gift' of His Son, God does not give us a gift that shows us how valuable we are but far exceeds our value

Thanks be to God for His **indescribable gift**! – 2 Corinthians 9:15

The word 'indescribable' means 'unspeakable' or 'unable to fully put into words'! Jesus is the 'indescribable gift' not because we are indescribable in our worth. Jesus is the 'indescribable gift' because He is infinitely worthy and valuable.

7. **A gift is of no benefit unless it is received.**

But a gift does us no good unless we receive it.

¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who **believe** in His name, - John 1:11-12

How do we receive Jesus, God's gift to us? Agree with God about your sin (see your need for His gift). Believe the good news (see the Gift: who Jesus is and what He did). Call on God for mercy (ask God for mercy and trust in the Gift of His Son) Have you done that? Receive the Gift of Jesus and celebrate Christmas this year! If you have done that, rejoice in the Gift of Jesus – God loves you as much as He loves His Son - and celebrate Christmas this year!