

Christmas Gifting

John 3:16; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 12-22-2019

*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

1. The Giver is the Father.

A. The Father's Gift to the World

The 'world' in John is dark and evil and rebellious and deserving of God's wrath. (John 3:17-19)

'And he has employed the universal term *whosoever*, both to invite all indiscriminately to partake of life, and to cut off every excuse from unbelievers. Such is also the import of the term *World*, which he formerly used; for though nothing will be found in *the world* that is worthy of the favor of God, yet he shows himself to be reconciled to the whole world, when he invites all men without exception to the faith of Christ, which is nothing else than an entrance into life. – John Calvin on John 3:16

B. The Father's Gift of Love

'Christ opens up the first cause, and, as it were, the source of our salvation, and he does so, that no doubt may remain; for our minds cannot find calm repose, until we arrive at the unmerited love of God. As the whole matter of our salvation must not be sought any where else than in Christ, so we must see whence Christ came to us, and why he was offered to be our Savior. Both points are distinctly stated to us: namely, that faith in Christ brings life to all, and that Christ brought life, because the Heavenly Father loves the human race, and wishes that they should not perish. – John Calvin on John 3:16

Every good thing comes from the Father including the greatest of all good things: saving grace. (James 1:17-18)

2. The Gift is the Son.

A. The Father's Gift of the Son (John 3:35; Isaiah 9:1-7; Isaiah 53:4-6)

'This, he says, is the proper look of faith, to be fixed on Christ, in whom it beholds the breast of God filled with love: this is a firm and enduring support, to rely on the death of Christ as the only pledge of that love. The word *only-begotten* is emphatic, (ἐμφατικὸν) to magnify the fervor of the love of God towards us. For as men are not easily convinced that God loves them, in order to remove all doubt, he has expressly stated that we are so very dear to God that, on our account, he did not even spare his *only-begotten* Son. Since, therefore, God has most abundantly testified his love towards us, whoever is not satisfied with this testimony, and still remains in doubt, offers a

high insult to Christ, as if he had been an ordinary man given up at random to death. But we ought rather to consider that, in proportion to the estimation in which God holds his *only-begotten Son*, so much the more precious did our salvation appear to him, for the ransom of which he chose that his *only-begotten Son* should die. – John Calvin on John 3:16

B. The Father's Gift of Salvation (John 3:14-15; Numbers 21:4-9)

C. The Father's Gift of LIFE (John 17:1-3; Genesis 2:8-9; Genesis 3:8; Psalm 16:10-11)

The Father gave us His Son so we could be loved by the Father like He loves the Son and so we would love the Son like the Father does! (John 17:20-26)

3. The Receiver is the believer.

Gifts can be given. Gifts are either received or rejected. To receive the gift we must receive the whole package. To receive the gift of the Son we must receive who He is and what He offers.

‘Let us remember, on the other hand, that while *life* is promised universally to *all who believe* in Christ, still faith is not common to all. For Christ is made known and held out to the view of all, but the elect alone are they whose eyes God opens, that they may seek him by faith. Here, too, is displayed a wonderful effect of faith; for by it we receive Christ such as he is given to us by the Father — that is, as having freed us from the condemnation of eternal death, and made us heirs of eternal life, because, by the sacrifice of his death, he has atoned for our sins, that nothing may prevent God from acknowledging us as his sons. Since, therefore, faith embraces Christ, with the efficacy of his death and the fruit of his resurrection, we need not wonder if by it we obtain likewise the life of Christ. – John Calvin on John 3:16

A. The Father's Gift of the Spirit

We won't come to God on our own. The gift of the Spirit enables us to see and enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:1-8)

B. The Father's Gift of Faith: Turning and Trusting

In order to receive all the gifts of Christmas, we must receive the Gift: Jesus. If we are willing to turn from sin and trust Him, we will receive Jesus. If we receive Jesus, we will be received. (John 1:1-13) We must turn from sin to God for happiness. We must trust in Jesus to save us from sin and satisfy us in God. (John 4:10)

‘The Lord is giving Christ away to-night. Oh, that thousands of you may gladly accept the gift unspeakable! Will anyone refuse? This good gift, this perfect gift,— can you decline it? Oh, that you may have faith to lay hold on Jesus, for thus he will be yours. He is God's free gift to all free receivers; a full Christ for empty sinners. If you can but hold out your empty willing hand, the Lord will give Christ to you at this moment. – Charles Spurgeon, *Immeasurable Love*