



CrossRoads Notes:

Title: Eternal Gifts of Christmas

Theme: What Will You Find at Christmas

Series: Grasping the Truths of Christmas

Introduction: *There are eternal gifts for those who grasp the truths of Christmas with their hearts.* Understanding those gifts and walking in the free grace by which these gifts come will completely change a person's attitude toward the season which we now celebrate.

Proposition: *I would propose to you that there are wonderful benefits for those on whom God's favor rests.* Most people including church attendees quote only part of the angel's message from the Lord in Luke 2:14, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace to men..." However, the Holy Spirit leads the Children of God to understand the rest of the verse, "...on whom His favor rests." It is Christians with a heart after God that are the ones that express a life that walks in the grace and mercy of God.

Pastor Rick Warren was 100% correct when he said, "You are going to find what you are looking for this Christmas." For those who have the heart of Pharaoh, He is going to give them that hard heart they so want. (Exodus 8:15; 9:15; 10:1,20,27; 11:1; 14:8; Joshua 11:20; 2 Chronicles 36:13) For those who want to believe the lies of those brought forth by the devil, the Lord will cause them to believe those lies. (2 Thessalonians 2:11; 2 Timothy 3:3-4)

Interrogative Sentence: *The Holy Spirit has this question for all today,* "What will you find this Christmas? What will be the expression of your life for all to see?"

Transitional Sentence: *There are many benefits for those who grasp the truths of Christmas, one being forgiveness.* "All the prophets testify about [Jesus] that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name." (Acts 10:43)

Illustration: A little boy wrote Santa Claus

If we could tap into the brains of Christians and recall all they thought and did this last year and project it upon our big screen there would be some extremely embarrassed Christians. There are no Normans in this world.

Christmas card: Pastor Rick Warren said, "If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent an educator. If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent an economist. If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent an entertainer. But our greatest need was forgiveness so He sent a Savior."

"Forgiveness" (*apheseoes*) in Acts 10:43 means to release one's sins from the sinner. This required Jesus coming as man so the sins of the world may be cast upon Him so

He can take on the punishment of sin upon Himself, which He did because His Father sent Him and He came voluntarily. The reason this forgiveness needs to be a continual forgiveness is because the children of God are not being delivered from the presence of sin when they get saved. Thus, Christians will slip into sin, however, sin will not have dominion over them because the Holy Spirit will convict them of sin and draw them to repentance and in Jesus' Name they will be forgiven. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary; 1 John 1:8; Hebrews 8:24)

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)
Christians who think that they no longer sin deceive themselves.

Illustration: Dr J. Vernon McGee

“Savior” (*soter*) is Jesus Christ who delivers and preserves at saving sinners from the danger of and destruction of sin and puts sinners in a state of prosperity and happiness. Jesus as Messiah, the Savior of men, saves the repentant sinner from the guilt of and the power of sin and from eternal death, from punishment and misery as the consequence of sin. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

Illustration: Walter B. Knight wrote about an African pagan

Transitional Sentence: *Christians who find the Christ of Christmas are sinners who are saved by grace and they depend upon the forgiveness that is given in Jesus' name. And this brings them a great peace.*

(Psalm 119:165)

“Law” (*torah*) is used twenty-five times in Psalm 119 in parallel with various other words with the same meaning. The word in it self is an active verb meaning to love the instructions in a general way from the Lord. It means loving the ways, customs and directions from God as David so long to know and love the Lord's ways. (The Complete Word Study)

Illustration : Pastor Rick Warren very rightfully observed that there are three things that rob people from enjoying Christmas. They are guilt, grief, and grudges.

(Ezekiel 18:21-22)

(Micah 7:19)

It is like the Lord takes those sins that have been confessed and turned from. He calls them up on the computer screen, and highlights them, and pushes the delete button. The list of sins goes blank. Repented sin nor unknowns sins will not be recalled by the Lord.

Christmas time is that time of the year when grief haunts many. Loved ones that have passed on, broken relationships lurk around each corner and expectations not obtained hit hard at this time of the year. Every Christian has a cross to bear and they must bear it daily (Luke 9:23) however, because of Christ they do not have to bear it alone. Jesus said, “Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” (Matthew 11:28-29)

Illustration: Roy Fowler

So many Christians are carrying a big load and they refuse to lay it into Jesus’ hands. They live miserable lives and carry unnecessary burdens, hoping to hold on until they get to heaven. As afflictions in Christ abound and are prolonged, consolations abound and perseverance is given by Jesus as long as Christians go to Him as teacher for He invites them to become His student. (Matthew Henry Commentary)

As Christians throw off the yoke of the flesh, the world and the lies of the devil, they find that Jesus’ yoke is easy and fashioned just for them to make them Christ-like. Jesus said “My yoke is easy.” (Matthew 11:30) “Easy” (*chrestos*) means well fitting. It is not harsh or galling nor will it put a callous on the spiritual heart. (The Complete Bible Dictionary; William Barclay; The Preachers Outline & Sermon Bible)

The yoke refers to oxen’s yoke. The yoke was a wooden collar-like instrument placed on the neck and shoulders of the oxen. It was extremely important that the yoke be fitted for the shoulders of the oxen to prevent rubbing the flesh raw and causing sores. Measurements were taken, the yoke was roughed out and then oxen were brought back to have the yoke tailor-made. According to some traditions, some carpenter’s shop may well have carried signs like “My yoke fits well.” (William Barclay; The Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible)

The yoke refers to a man’s life and task as he lives on this earth. Jesus is saying take on His yoke, not the yoke of the flesh, the world or the devils lies. For His yoke will fit Christians perfectly for making them useful to the life and task that He has planned for them down here. (The Preacher’s Outline & Sermon Bible)

Whatever God has you facing right now is made to fit you perfectly and you have the Spiritual gifts, talents and abilities to handle everything that He allows you to go through. Therefore, lay your grief into His loving hands and surrender to His will for you.

Grudges or being resentful is keeping many from enjoying Christmas. People, who have been hurt, hurt others by what they say, do and even with their presence. This, done intentionally and unintentionally, and how Christians respond to that hurt will determine their level of happiness in this life and especially around Christmas time. Very few people walk continuously and victoriously over the sin of resentfulness. It so easily entangles and can grip you in a moments notice.

(Matthew 6:14-15) This passage of Scripture is found in the teaching of Jesus Christ about prayer and just before His teachings on fasting.

Illustration: Dr. Bill Bright, "The Holy Spirit has given me the ability to not hold grudges, there is absolutely not one person or circumstance in my life that I am resentful over."

The Holy Spirit wants Christians to know the joy of Christmas by becoming like Jesus and let Him clear their hearts of any guilt, lay all their grief out before Him for He cares about them, and be freed from all grudges so that they can have a joyous Christmas spirit.

Transitional Sentence: *The Christ of Christmas most certainly wants Christians to know His peace and He wants all to have the gift of eternal life.*

(Hebrews 9:27)

Everyone who has ever been conceived in their mother's womb has eternal existence and it is up to each individual where they are going to spend it in heaven or hell. The fact is everyone is going to spend more time on the other side of this life than is spent here. Some will live fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety and maybe even a 100 years on this side. However, the other side is forever.

"the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Christianity is not the stage that someone has reached but always the direction of life that a saved man is heading. Instead of living a life that is bondage to sin, it is a life reaching out to and obtaining righteousness. A life fed by the Word of God, Illuminated by the Holy Spirit. A man's talents, abilities, possessions and Holy Spirit gifts are spent for the glory of God and not on self and expended to gain worldly wealth.

In Closing: Receiving the Gift of God, Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord offers three wonderful gifts. He clears the Christian's past, takes care of them in their present state in life, and secures their future here and in eternity.

Illustration: The Baptist Standard

What will you find this Christmas? Jesus offers forgiveness, empowerment for all of life situations and circumstances. He offers a life of true satisfaction and life spent forever with God the Father, Jesus the Son and a fellowship in the Holy Spirit. What will you find this Christmas?

Let us pray!

Visit our Free Website

www.standatthecrossroads.com