

The Gift that Keeps on Giving
The Christian Life – Part 6

Acts 2:37-41; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 12-6-2020

The Question of Gift Giving

Something like this is involved in thoughtful gift-giving:

- How can I say ‘I love you’?
- How can I meet a need?
- How can I bring them joy? (Luke 2:10-11)

Christmas as Giving and Receiving

We celebrate Christmas with giving and receiving gifts for a reason:

- God gave us the gift of His Son, Jesus. – John 3:14-16
- We can either receive the Lord Jesus Christ or not. – John 1:9-13

The Gifts Within the Gift

In Matthew 2, we have the record of the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus. The Magi give three gifts to baby Jesus (These gifts point to Who He is and also to What He gives.):

- Gold* = most likely highlighting royalty: the king and the kingdom
– 1 Kings 10:18; Esther 8:4; Daniel 3:1; 5:29; Revelation 21:18, 21
- Frankincense* = most likely highlighting Godhood: God and the Priests of God
– Exodus 30:34-38; Leviticus 2:1-2
- Myrrh* = most likely highlighting Manhood: humanity and help for humanity.
– John 19:39; Esther 2:12; Psalm 45:6-8; Mark 15:23

So, what are we ‘receiving’ when we ‘receive God’s Gift’?

- ▶ *God’s Gift gives us the answer for our past.*
- ▶ *God’s Gift gives us the answer for our present.*
- ▶ *God’s Gift gives us the answer for our future.*

1. God’s Gift gives us the answer for our past: *forgiveness for the inexcusable.*

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. (38)

The biggest issue regarding our past is the issue of guilt. What will we do about our guilt?

- Deny it. (‘I haven’t done anything that bad.’)
- Suppress it. (‘I just don’t think about it.’)
- Project it. (‘It’s your fault.’)
- Do penance. (‘I’ll make up for it.’)
- Remove it. How?

What Justice Requires

- Someone has to pay the price for the crime!
- When crimes are committed, justice always requires a payment.
- Therefore, true forgiveness always requires a payment as well!

– Exodus 34:6-7; Isaiah 53:10; Psalm 32:5; 103:12; Micah 7:19; Jeremiah 31:34; Hosea 8:13; Zechariah 3:1-5; Matthew 26:28; Luke 24:47; Acts 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:16-18; Romans 4:7; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 2:12; 3:20

The Affliction

Dr. Karl Menninger, a well-known psychiatrist, once said that if he "could convince the patients in psychiatric hospitals that their sins were forgiven, 75 percent of them could walk out the next day." (Psalm 38:3-4; Proverbs 5:22; Isaiah 53:5)

The Inexcusable

"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you." — C.S. Lewis (Matthew 6:14; 18:35; Mark 11:25; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13)

Application: Joy to the World ... why or how?

Guilt robs us of joy.

"If I could believe that God was not angry with me, I would stand on my head for joy." – Martin Luther

The Wonderful and Sober Christmas Reality

What if we don't receive God's Gift of His Son or don't receive the 'gifts in the Gift' as we should?

- We don't have the answer for our past. *We stand guilty.*

Are you resting and rejoicing in the gift of forgiveness in the Gift of God's Son?

- Do you believe that God that has forgiven the 'inexcusable' in your life?

Do you need to give the gift of forgiveness to others this Christmas?

The Gift that keeps on giving ... God continues to forgive us because of the Gift of His Son. Have you received the gift of forgiveness? Are you continuing to forgive others?