

Generosity: The Spirit of Christmas

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16, MEV).

During this Christmas season, you'll hear one word more than any other. It's not "merry," "tree," "Santa," or even-unfortunately—"Jesus."

It's "gift." Starting on Black Friday (and sometimes even before then), we begin a month-long dash to find the right gift for everyone on our list. The word "gift" consumes us for a month.

Many people think that gift giving at Christmas was started by the Wise Men when they brought gifts to the baby Jesus. But it was God who gave the first Christmas gift.

God so loved that *He gave*. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16, NIV). On the first Christmas, God gave the greatest gift of all – he gave his Son. He gave his Son to die on the cross so you can have your past forgiven, a purpose for living, and a home in Heaven. Jesus is the original Christmas gift.

We only give because God gave to us first.

Christmas is about generosity. It's not just about compassion. The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of generosity. Acts 15:11 says it like this: *"But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they"* (MEV).

If it weren't for God's generosity, we would have nothing. The air we breathe is a gift of God's generosity. The blood coursing through our veins is a gift of God's generosity. The fact that our hearts are beating is a gift of God's generosity. Every good thing in your life—including your life—is a gift of God's generosity.

But God's greatest act of generosity came on the very first Christmas when he gave us Jesus.

Talk It Over

- How do you respond to knowing that God gave the first Christmas gift?
- What are some gifts from God not mentioned in the devotional today that you are grateful for?
- What can you do this Christmas to better remember God's gifts to you?

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