

Introduction

All over the world people receive gifts at Christmas time.
It is not just children who like to receive gifts, adults like to have gifts too.

Nobody really knows how the tradition of gift giving started.
Some people believe that it started with the 3 wise men who brought Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh as gifts to Jesus at the first Christmas.

When we receive a gift at Christmas we usually like to know 3 things.

1. Who is the gift from?
2. What does the gift do? How useful is it?
3. How much did the gift cost? Quite often if the cost is high we value it more!!

Today I would like to focus upon the most important gift that you will ever receive.

1. The first question I would like to ask is, who is the gift from?

At Christmas most of us will know the person who gives us a gift.
It will probably be a friend or a relative or a husband or wife.

We would be surprised if Queen Elizabeth from England sent us a Christmas present.

We would also be surprised if Prime Minister Abe or Donald Trump the new president of America sent us a gift this Christmas.

Hopefully it would be an expensive present that we would value.

This Christmas somebody much more important than these people is offering to give you a gift.

That person is your creator, the God of the Bible.

There is a verse in the Bible that informs us that the greatest gift is not from a human, but from God Himself.

Romans 6: v. 23.

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

The Christmas gift from God available to you this Christmas is not wrapped up in a parcel, it is wrapped up in a person.

That person is God's Son Jesus Christ.

So the best gift that you can receive this Christmas is a relationship with your creator.

This relationship comes in the person of Jesus Christ.

2. The second question is what does the gift Do, or what is the purpose of the gift?

This Christmas we might receive a present that we can't use, or it could be something we have to make.

I always have problems buying presents for my wife.

I used to buy things that I thought she might like but she didn't like them.

I then discovered the solution.

I now take a woman with me to the shops and she chooses the present that she thinks my wife might like.

This method always seems to be successful because women know what women like.

God has chosen the best gift for us because He knows us very well.

He knows our hearts and our lives, in the past, in the present and also in the future.

The gift that God is offering us this Christmas is a gift that deals with the sin in our lives.

Basically sin is everything we think, say or do that offends our creator God.

God is 100% Holy and He can't stand sin.

God must punish sin and has chosen to introduce death as a punishment.

Romans 6: v. 23.

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

The Bible tells us that God loves us very much and He doesn't want us to receive the punishment for our sin. Therefore, the gift that God would like to give us this Christmas is a gift that will deal with the sin in our lives.

The purpose of the gift is to deal with our sin.

3. What did the gift cost?

We often value a gift by the amount of money spent in the purchase of the gift.

If I received an expensive gift I would feel very honoured.

However, God is offering us a gift that is so valuable, we can't even put a price on it.

God paid for this gift 2,000 years ago when He sent His Son Jesus Christ into this world to be our Saviour.

Matthew 1: v. 21.

²¹ And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

A gift is only a gift if somebody else has paid for it.

God paid for this gift by allowing His Son Jesus Christ to take the punishment for our sin.

He was our substitute. He died in our place.

It was the only way that we could be forgiven and receive a Holiness that allows us to be in God's presence.

Quote 2 Corinthians 5: v. 21.

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

This Christmas you can reject God's gift or you can humble yourself and receive God's gift.

To receive this wonderful gift from God, there are 3 things you must do.

1. Realise – You need to realise that you are guilty of offending God.
The things that you have thought, said and done have offended a Holy God.
2. Repent - The word means to turn around and go in another direction. This means to follow Jesus in a relationship with Him. It means to stop going your own way and go God's way.
3. Receive - This can be a difficult step because you can't see Jesus and you can't see a tangible gift. However Jesus is here today and He wants you to receive Him into your heart. He is the gift.

If you are ready to receive God's gift this Christmas, please stay behind and talk to someone about this.