

GIFTS THAT MONEY CAN'T BUY

TEXT:

Isaiah 55:1-2:

1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

2 Corinthians 9:15: Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

Acts 20:28: Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His Own Blood.

1 Peter 1:18-20:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the Precious Blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in these last times for you.

INTRODUCTION:

Are you thinking about presents? Wondering what in the world you can get for so and so? You think of friends and loved ones who are so hard to shop for. You can't think of anything they need. Maybe there is nothing in the store that they need. But what about some token of love . . . what about love itself? You have it to give it! The love of God is available . . .



Romans 5:5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of

God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.



You can give love, faith and faithfulness, understanding, consideration, kindness, a helping hand, even a smile. And what about your prayers?

You can't buy these things in the store, you know. These are the very things people need. We all need them. It is more blessed to give them than to receive a present, because they are more lasting and heart satisfying. I recommend these to be included on your gift list. There will be no quibbling about how much they cost or how

much you paid for the gift. To have this genuine LOVE, the price is total surrender to Christ.

God dispatched angels from Heaven saying:

Luke 2:10-11:

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:12: And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Most people look for their gift under the Christmas tree, look for the prettiest packages or the biggest ones. ONE, however, God had wrapped in swaddling clothes, plain burlap. Most people would pass God's gift by. Why did He do it this way? Because it is the contents of the gift that has its greatest worth, not the wrapping.



REAL CHRISTMAS is not in the stores, but in the hearts of people. Some give way to sarcasm and sneer out, "Christmas is too commercialized". It never will be... unless you have done so with it. I've heard some say, "Christmas belongs only to the children". That means they have never truly understood the REAL Christmas. Christmas is often misunderstood.

What is Christmas for? It is God telling the whole wide world: "*I LOVE YOU*". How have you responded to celebrate that love? THANKS BE TO GOD FOR HIS UNSPEAKABLE GIFT!

Have you been saying, "*I just can't feel the Christmas spirit this year?*" That's too bad. It is nearly like saying, "*I feel no joy that Jesus came into the world*". You are confessing that His Presence in your heart is not a living reality to you. Maybe you need all the more to hear anew the Christmas message.

I thank God for Christmas. I would that it lasted all year. Perhaps a cynic is thinking, “Yes, you would, after the wonderful offering you got last week”. I look past the gift to the LOVE that motivated that wonderful tangible expression, for on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, all the world is a much better place. It seems men and women are more lovable. There are more friendships renewed, more glee, more laughter, more excitement, and more togetherness. Yes! And there is more giving . . . of ourselves to one another.



It seems like love seeps into hearts everywhere, and miracles happen.

When Christmas doesn't make your heart swell up within you until it nearly bursts, fills your eyes with tears, and makes you feel all soft and warm inside, THEN YOU MUST KNOW SOMETHING IN YOU MUST BE DEAD.

I hope that God will make it “COME ALIVE” in you again this Christmas.

Christmas comes every year whether or not the world seems to be ready for it or in tune with it. Christmas comes every year with its annual reminder that the God Who made us and loves us NEVER LEAVES US TO STEW IN OUR OWN JUICE, even though the stew may be of our own cooking. Rather, He chooses to share this LOVE OF HIS WITH US in giving us His Son into our hearts which will make a TRANSFORMING influence to bear upon our whole personality. Evil and corrupting passions will be changed to love, joy, and peace to bloom within all our hearts.

CHRIST WAS BORN IN A MANGER, but that is not the real place. Christ wants to be BORN IN OUR HEARTS. That's the only real place. When He is there, we have PEACE.

Colossians 1:20: And, having made peace through the Blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in Heaven.

Paul tells us Jesus made PEACE through the Blood of His Cross. That's the price Jesus paid so you can have it free. PEACE — the gift that can't be purchased with money. The absence of PEACE in the world is caused by the absence of the PRINCE OF PEACE in the hearts of its people. Where sin reigns, PEACE is driven out.

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PEACE IS A GIFT THAT CANNOT BE PURCHASED WITH MONEY. PEACE is free as a gift — but only if we go to the only True Source.

We are trying to force peace on warring nations by building up our military hardware. We have a stockpile that is costing the tax-payers billions of dollars. Still we have to

flex our muscles and tell the world's despotic rulers, "If you don't behave yourselves, we will have to box your ears."

PEACE HAS TO COME INTO THE HEART before we can be peaceable towards others. The wicked are like the troubled sea . . .

Isaiah 57:20-21:

20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

THERE ARE SEVERAL THINGS WHICH I REALLY MISS AT CHRISTMAS (at our home)

- The little manger scene in the window, the shed, the little figures of the Holy Family lovingly arranged on the mantle. (which we don't have now).
- The Christmas tree with all its decorations from yester year. (My wife gave them all away to the children).
- The floral arrangements for the dining room table with all the little doodads with which my mother would carefully pretty up the living room.
- Getting the Christmas tree would be a family event. There was always that closet into which you were forbidden to look. Dad or mother used to move through the house mysteriously with bundles under their coats, and our out-stretched necks nearly got a crick from being out of shape.



- There was the fragrance of homemade cookies, fruit cakes, and candy being made by mother.
 - There was the soft Christmas music played on our Victrola. You would have to crank it up by hand to rewind the spring.
- We had Christmas bells on the door and holly wreaths in all the windows.
 - The Christmas stockings were all decoratively fixed on the fireplace.
 - Finally, Christmas morning would arrive. It was hard to go to sleep.

We didn't have to try and catch the spirit of Christmas . . . IT CAUGHT US.

I WANT TO LET YOU KNOW THAT THE REAL CHRISTMAS CAN'T COME TO YOU IF YOU ARE ASLEEP. You have to be wide awake inside. Christmas is the beginning of Christianity. It is "God sending His Son into the world that we might have everlasting life, the greatest gift of all gifts."

EVERLASTING LIFE CANNOT BE BOUGHT WITH MONEY. It is a gift! This is God's promise to the trusting heart.

John 3:16: For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHRISTMAS is to be a joyous occasion — good tidings of great joy is what the angelic throng announced. Do you have it? Jesus is the joy giver. If you have Him, then you are supposed to have this JOY. I think we all need more of Jesus, don't you?



1 Peter 1:8: Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with JOY UNSPEAKABLE AND FULL OF GLORY.

THIS KIND OF JOY IS NOT FOR SALE. It is a GIFT OF GOD, and God wants you to have it. Then we will not observe or spend Christmas with an imitation joy or a temporary joy found in drinking, overeating, or indulging in drugs, etc. When the Lord Jesus has His rightful place in your heart, you will have Christmas in your heart. I wish you all the LOVE, JOY, and PEACE found only in the True Source — the Lord Jesus Christ.

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