

December 25, 2011

One day Jesus was at a big feast, and many tax-gathers and sinners were dining with Him and His disciples. The religious leaders saw it and asked the disciples, “*why do you eat and drink with the tax-gathers and sinners?*” (Luke 5:30 *)



Jesus answered them. “*It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means, I desire compassion, and not sacrifice, for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.*” (Matthew 9:12-13 *)

Thank God that He saw down through the ages and saw our need for the gift of the Spirit living within us. He knew about the need in us, and by the birth of Jesus; He prepared the only way to fill it.

He waits for us to come to Him and ask about our destiny. “*These things I have written to you...in order that you many know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*” (1 John 5:13-15 *)

What prevents us from asking for the greatest gift ever given to mankind?

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* (New American Standard Bible; i.e., NASB)*

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The Greatest Gift

“God gave gifts to men” (Ephesians 4:8*)

One of our customs is to remember the birth of Jesus by exchanging gifts on Christmas Day. Let’s leave our own gift-giving to the scholars for a moment to consider the greatest gift.

During the last month or so, we sang carols that told the story of Jesus’ humble beginning in a human body, and sometimes of His end. As we have learned, Jesus is the God-man that became the Christ. Why would the All-Powerful God put aside His heavenly position and agree to come to Earth, knowing His end?

One answer is that God wants to give us the greatest gift available to mankind. There is no present ever given to anyone, anywhere, that is greater than God’s gift. Understanding Him will help us receive the present that is worth all the silver, gold and wealth of the world.



We are told, “*For in Him (Christ) all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him, you have been made complete, and He is head over all rule and authority*” (Colossians 2:9-10 *). We can be assured all the fullness of the universes lived in Jesus.

At the same time, we are told that, without Jesus, we are not complete. Something is missing. Inside of every person there is a gap that only the Holy Spirit can fill. There is a search for something, anything, to fill the gap. We may not know what we are seeking; we only know that something is missing.

It has been said this way, "Only God can fully satisfy the hungry heart of man." Hearts cannot be filled by having physical possessions, nor can we be filled by telling ourselves that we are 'ok' in our present state. Mind games will not help fill the gap.



We will find as we progress through life that our possessions begin to lose their glitter. All that we have gained will be left behind for others. We will have no need of them when our own spirit is set free from our human body.

The gift that God wants to give is an intimate relationship with Him during our lifetime that will continue into eternity! He offers the relationship as a gift, yet it is priceless.

"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). To show mankind his love, God gave his most precious human possession-his Son!*

Many millions have accepted the gift. However, it has been said that if there was only one who needed God's gift, He would have come for that one! Almighty God is not willing that any should be lost.

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).*

Our struggle is to believe and act on the good news about God's great gift. God made no exception when He said, 'whoever'. All are welcome to come and receive the gift as we are called.

God wants us to live a victorious life every day, overcoming whatever the day brings. This we can do only with His indwelling Spirit. Even as the fullness of Deity lived in Jesus, God wants us to be filled with that same Spirit by the implanting of the greatest gift within.

If there is any doubt in our minds regarding the gift in our lives, let's stop what we are doing and invite, or invite anew, the Holy Spirit to come into us. As we receive the gift, we can enjoy the completeness in ourselves that only God can make possible.

*"God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him." (John 3:17 *)*

We may feel that our sin is too awful for God to forgive, but He doesn't see it that way. God is willing that we come, confess the sin, repent of it, make amends where we can, and receive forgiveness. Then we can continue to enjoy the greatest gift.

Lest we think we are the world's worse sinner, The Apostle Paul, reminds us, *"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. And yet for this reason, I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience"* (I Timothy 1:15-16 *)



When talking with the people, Jesus said, *"I came that they might have life, and might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep"* (John 10:10b-11 *).

Jesus came to earth that first long- ago morning to give us salvation and fullness within. Two thousand years later, as we await His second coming, we can enjoy a new life. The greatest gift is to know that our shortcomings have been forgiven, and God is working out His eternal will in our lives.