

Boxing Day Message 2010: The First And Greatest Gift of All:
Luke 2:1-14 & Isaiah 42:1-9

As I look around this morning, I thank God in the knowledge that the **First and Greatest Christmas Gift ever, was the One** concerning whom this whole season of Christmas is all about. **Jesus—the Word** become flesh. **The Son of God born on earth in a stable.**

He Himself is the gift that transforms our world, yet at first that fact was far from obvious to the people to whom He came.

Isaiah had written of Him, and said that in His coming He would be **despised and rejected of men,** and that was so true.

From the very beginning hatred and suffering was part of His life. **Even as a young toddler** he was worshipped by the wise men from the East, but **also pursued by a wicked king** who would do all he could to murder the child born to be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Before he could fend for himself he was forced to flee with His parents to the **unsettled safety,** and **enforce** indignity of being a **refugee** in a foreign land.

Then as a man He proclaimed a message that caused the wrath of others to fall upon Him, **despite** the fact that **all He ever did** was to love, to care, to heal, **and to point to a heavenly Father,** who despised their sin, but **loved deeply** their souls.

But none of this was a surprise for the triune God. Centuries before Jesus walked this earth **God talked about the future coming** of His Son as a **servant.** Not as a **dictator or tyrannical king** but as a servant. He wrote of this coming one in **Isaiah 42:2-4**

***He will not shout or cry out,
or raise his voice in the streets.***

***³ A bruised reed he will not break,
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;
⁴ he will not falter or be discouraged
till he establishes justice on earth.
In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”***

That’s how this gift from God came to us. Packaged as a man. A man who was **horribly put to death** by other men on a cross, but who came **alive again**, because that man **Jesus, was also God the Son.**

That’s the fullness of the First and Greatest Christmas Gift.
To actually receive the Risen Lord Jesus **into one’s heart** and life forever.

To know His abiding presence with us in such a way that we **become One with Him in the sight of Almighty God.**

He will no more judge us now than He would His Son, for His Son has **taken that Judgment already upon Himself**, and we **stand alongside** Him before the Father as accepted and pure.

Cleansed from all wrong doing.

That’s the only lasting gift of Christmas and all we need to do with it is to **accept it for ourselves. For simply by accepting Jesus** into our life we receive the **power to be different.**
Different before God but also different to others.

That's what makes this Christmas Gift the greatest ever.
It not only safeguards our soul for eternity but it makes us a **nicer person.** An ambassador of His love and goodness to those around us.

So this morning as we thank God for His greatest gift let us who love Him, **set ourselves** to give the gifts to others that **flow from the presence** of Jesus in our hearts. **Gifts that are** beyond monetary value.
Charles Swindoll suggests Gifts such as:

A quarrel mended

A suspicion dismissed

Telling someone you love and value them

Giving something away—anonynously

Forgiving someone who has treated you wrong

Turning away wrath with a soft answer

Visiting someone in a nursing home

Apologizing when you were wrong

Being especially kind to someone with whom you work

To Give as God gave to you in Christ, without obligation, or announcement, or reservation. **Or hypocrisy.**

**For such is the outworking of God's Gift to you of Himself,
in the daily mission which is your life.**

