

December 25, 2016

The Perfect Gift  
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This is the day that we honor the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. When we think about all that He has done for us, how could we not want to honor Him this day, celebrating His birthday. He left the glory and riches of heaven, humbled Himself and became a man, coming to earth in order that we might know the Father. He came for you and me!

The following scriptures give an explanation of who and what Jesus did for mankind. He is the true light that shines in darkness but not all see Him that way and He is the one that gives life to us all. Darkness could not put out the light, His light blazed and darkness fled from Him. Jesus is the light and life to us.

John 1:1-5,9 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." KJV

His life is on the inside of everyone born, but until we reach the age of accountability, knowing right from wrong, making the choice to receive Him or not. When we accept Him that light and life will become reality to us. He has come to give us not only life but hope as well.

After Jesus returned from the wilderness and the temptations that He overcome there, He went into the synagogue to preach, declaring that He had been sent to bring life and light into the world and those who had been in darkness began to see the light and have hope. It does not matter what challenges have come our way, Jesus has come to bring light and hope to each of us. He is our hope!

At this time of the year we all are aware of the giving of gifts, remembering other people, other than ourselves, being kind to each other. Why are we that way? It is because of Gods life and nature on the inside of us, to give as He gave to us His very best and we are the light. Life is light!

What does it mean to be the light of the world? The following scriptures explain how light shines out to the world. This passage is part of the Sermon on the Mount, the message of the beatitudes that Jesus taught the people.

Matt 5:14-16 "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." KJV

We are the light of the world, giving hope to those out in the world setting in darkness with no hope. By being a believer we express hope to the world, we are the light that they see and we cannot be hid, that same light and life that was in Jesus is now in us and we cannot be extinguished. We have a challenge set before us today by Jesus. He has come as a light to the world and He is empowering us to be a light to the world also.

How do we let our light shine before men? How do we give acquaintances or others hope? It begins by having a servants attitude toward others, being able to serve and minister, that was how Jesus came. What would be a bushel or covering over the light that is in us that would stop the light from shining? Unforgiveness is a bushel which will cover the light, if we are unable or unwilling to forgive. The light is still in us, but others are unable to see it if it is covered with a bushel. The greatest gift we can give to ourselves and others is the gift of forgiveness regardless of how long it has been or how bad we were offended or hurt. God sent His only Son, gave us the greatest gift possible, by forgiving all those who

had wronged Him. The heart of Christmas is to bestow forgiveness. We must let go of unforgiveness, it is obscuring the light and life that is in us.

A true story was shared in the 1970's, regarding a man who had turned against his family, beating his wife and children because of heavy drinking, he stole everything that his wife had saved, left them and moved to a large city, while living there he became involved with people who were breaking the law and he ended up in prison. After serving his time, he was ready to be released but during his stay in prison he had a change of heart, realizing all the damage that he had done to his wife and family, he wrote a letter to them, expressing his remorse and asking forgiveness. He stated that he would be traveling through the town where they lived and asked them, if they were willing to forgive him, would they tie a yellow ribbon on a tree that was in the middle of the town. Asking the bus driver to make the necessary turn into the town in order to see if there was a ribbon, to his amazement and all the people on the bus who had heard his story, they saw that many, many yellow ribbons had been tied to the tree. His family had truly forgiven him and was ready to accept him back into their lives. The story later became a hit song on the radio.

The Bible admonishes us to forgive based on how Jesus has forgiven us, where would we be without God's forgiveness? Many of us probably wouldn't be here today without His forgiveness; God forgives that is why He sent Jesus. Let the bitterness and resentment go, tie a ribbon on your tree to let people know that you have forgiven, show forgiveness by doing something nice for someone else, making meal for them, writing a letter or giving them a call. Just let go of unforgiveness in order that our lives will continue to be blessed.