

THE _____ OF CHRISTMAS

John 3:16-21

Christmas, as is clearly made evident by the business world, is a time for giving of gifts to others as well as ourselves. There is a vast array of reasons why people give gifts at Christmas: well-wishes, fondness of giving, _____, pity, obligation, selfishness, conformity to the expectation of others, just to name a few. Yet Christmas itself is a _____ that was given out of selfless love for others; a gift that is priceless in its value, unlimited in its recipients, and _____ in its durability. "For God so loved the world that He gave"...

I. "For"-let's see what "for" is there for

- A. As a further explanation of an idea presented by Jesus Christ to a very _____ man
- B. Note the conversation preceding verse 16
 1. Conducted between a very religious man with " _____ " and the Son of God
 2. Conducted in _____ yet made known for all to read about
 3. Conducted to _____ a concept that has made an eternal difference in countless numbers of people of all ages and from all parts of the world
 4. Conducted to introduce a concept that would be fulfilled in a seemingly _____ event, yet would reveal the previously hidden faith of two followers

Cf. John 19:38-40 NIV

38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.

39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

40 Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

II. "God"

- A. The Sovereign _____ and Ruler of Universe
- B. The One _____ by His own created beings
 1. Adam and Eve betrayed Him _____
 2. And all of _____ has followed in that betrayal

III. "So loved the world"

- A. "This is the heart of the Gospel. Not 'God is love'—a precious truth, but affirming no divine act for our redemption. God so loved that he gave." (Eclectic Notes on the Bible)
- B. "The Jew was ready enough to think of God as loving Israel, but no passage appears to be cited in which any Jewish writer maintains that God loved the world. It is a distinctively Christian idea that God's love is wide enough to embrace all mankind." (Leon Morris)
- C. Here we have the _____ for our salvation—God loving the unlovable, betraying creatures whom He created

IV. "That He gave"

- A. The first gift of Christmas-God giving something to those who have _____ to give in return
- B. The Creator of the universe giving to those who ought to be giving to the Creator, but cannot because they exist in their betraying, _____, self-centered, uncaring condition

V. *"His only begotten Son"*

- A. The dearest One to His _____ Cf. Matt 3:17; Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22
- B. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son"* NIV
- C. *"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son"* NLT
- D. *"For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son"* HCSB

VI. *"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

- A. The _____ for the Gift
- B. The _____ intended by the Gift-whoever will believe
- C. The _____ for the Gift-escape everlasting punishment by receiving everlasting life
- D. The _____ of the Gift-everyone is responsible for their own decision

VII. Conclusion: 1 John 4:7-11