

# The Greatest Gift

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 24 December 2017

Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[ 0 : 00 ] John 3 and verse 16 that's page 1071 if you're using the pew bible John 3 verse 16 and it says there for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life now boys and girls are you all listening who's excited for Christmas are you excited Jonathan

Anna's excited too and when is Christmas is it next week no next month no is it next year tomorrow it's not is it one more sleep to go one more sleep and I hope you've bought all your Christmas presents have you yeah I hope you've bought my Christmas present no Jonathan's shaking his head and so boys and girls are you all excited for Christmas yeah really excited are you getting excited to open all your all your presents yeah there's a lot of heads nodding here's your question are you going to stay up all night tonight so you can open them open all your presents really early tomorrow morning no you're not going to bed Isla's going to go to sleep are you going to stay in bed no yeah but I'm sure you've been buying lots of presents and especially my present and maybe you've been sending lots of Christmas cards to all the boys and girls maybe in the nursery or in school and you've received Christmas cards from them maybe and I'm sure you've put up your Christmas tree by now and you've got lots of decorations you've put your tinsel on it and you've put your lights on it and you've got all the other things too all the Christmas things that you do all these preparations for Christmas day and you've been preparing for Christmas you've been buying and sending cards receiving cards putting up your decorations all these things and everything you've been doing it's all for building up to this one day when is it to tomorrow tomorrow and so when you get to open all your presents and Christmas morning and then maybe family comes for dinner and you play games and you play with your toys that you get and you have fun you know there's so much excitement about Christmas isn't there lots and lots and it's good to get excited and it's good to give presents it's good for us to come together and spend time together as a family but you know boys and girls it's also good to remember what it's all about isn't it it's good for us to remember what it's all about it's good for us to remember Jesus in all our excitement and all our fun isn't it and I think it's good to use any occasion to make us think about Jesus because Jesus as you know and as you hear every week he is the most important person in all the world isn't he the most important person and he's the only person that I want everyone in here to know and to love and to follow and this morning

I don't know if you can see it I don't know if you can see it but I brought this Christmas present with me can you all see it yeah you can see it and I will confess I did wrap it myself that's why it's a bit shabby so it wasn't Alison that did it she wrapped everything else so I wrapped this present and I brought it with me this morning and I want to talk to you this morning about the greatest gift the greatest gift and I want to talk about the greatest gift under three headings the present of Jesus the person of Jesus and the promise of Jesus okay we remember those things the present of Jesus the person of Jesus and the promise of Jesus so we're looking first of all at the present of Jesus the present of Jesus and as I said boys and girls I've taken this present with me this morning.

It's a really nice present, isn't it? And you can see it, can't you? You can all see it, yeah? It's nice and big. But you know, I wonder, are you going to get a big present like this tomorrow? But if you don't, that doesn't matter.

Because it's not the size of the present that matters. It's why the present was given. That's what matters. It's not size. The size of the presents that matter. It's why it was given.

[ 5 : 02 ] That's what matters. Because the reason we give presents, it's not so that we'll get one in return. The reason we give presents to our friends and maybe to our family is because we love them.

Isn't that right? We give presents, we give gifts because we love our friends and we love our family. We love our mummy and our daddy and our brothers and sisters. We love them.

And that's how we express our love towards them. We give them a present. We give them a gift.

And boys and girls, that's what this verse, this special verse in John 3, 16 is reminding us.

It's telling us that about the greatest gift. It's reminding us that God has given to us the greatest present of all. The greatest gift of all.

The gift of his son, Jesus. And the Bible tells us why God has given to us the gift of his son. It says, God gave to us the gift of his son because he loves us.

[ 6 : 02 ] Do you know that? Because he loves us. That's what we're told. It says, For God so loved the world that he gave his only, he gave his only son. So God loves, it says, the whole world.

The whole world. God loves everyone in the world. Because we're all made in God's image. We're all made in God's image. That's how God created Adam, the first man.

He made him in his image. And everybody else is made in God's image. So that means you're made in God's image. Your mummy's made in God's image. Your daddy's made in God's image.

Your brother is made in God's image. Your sister is made in God's image. Your granny is made in God's image. Your shenner is made in God's image. Everyone is made in God's image. And

because we're all made in God's image, God loves us.

and God loves us so so so much and you know he loves us even though we're bad God loves us even though we say things that we shouldn't and God loves us even though we do things that we shouldn't God loves us even though we sin all the time God loves us so so much and because God loves us so so much he has given to us a present God has given to us a present and did you know boys and girls that God has given to you a present but the present God has given to you it's not a toy it's not a video game it's not a doll's house the present God has given to you is much much much better than that because God has given to you the gift of his only son Jesus that's what God has given to you the gift of his only son Jesus and as you know Jesus he was born into the world to die upon the cross to take away our sins God's gift to us is Jesus so that he would take away our sins and by trusting in Jesus as your savior you can be saved but do you know what's amazing about this gift that God has so lovingly given to us you know the amazing thing about this gift it's free absolutely free you know we don't have to pay for it we don't have to work for it we don't have to wash the dishes for it maybe you have to do that at home you don't have to tidy your bedroom in order to receive this gift maybe you have to do that at home you don't have to clean the floor maybe you have to do that at home we don't have to do anything or pay anything in order to receive

[ 8 : 34 ] God's loving gift of Jesus. We just have to believe in Jesus with all our heart and follow him. God's gift of his son Jesus that God has so lovingly given to us.

It's a free gift. It's a free gift. Now, tomorrow morning, when you all wake up, after seven o'clock, not allowed up before then, after seven o'clock, and I wonder that when you unwrap all your presents, when you rip off all the wrapping paper and it's all over the house everywhere and you've torn off all the paper and all the toys are out and all your presents, you can see them.

I wonder, will you turn to mummy and daddy and say, well, okay, how much? How much did it all cost you? Will you have to pay for your presents? No, Jonathan, no, you won't.

Will you have to pay mummy and daddy? Will you have to give them some pennies? Do you think? What do you think, Anna? Will you give pennies to mummy or daddy? No. Well, you will. That's very good of you.

Will you have to pay for your Christmas presents? No. Of course you won't. Why? They're all free. Free, aren't they? Well, not free to mummy and daddy, but they're free to you.

[ 9 : 50 ] It's a gift. They're a gift to you. And they're given to you out of love. They're not given because you were good, although I'm sure you are good. They're not given because you're tidy and you work hard, although I'm sure you are tidy and you do work hard.

But the gifts that you'll receive tomorrow morning, that you'll be ripping open and throwing paper everywhere, these gifts, you will receive them freely because you're loved.

And that's what the Bible is saying to us about Jesus. That's what the Bible is saying. God loves us so much that he has given to us the best gift, the greatest gift, and it's a free gift, the gift of his son, Jesus Christ.

And you know, by simply trusting in Jesus and believing in Jesus with all your heart, the Bible says you can be saved. And so that's why God has given to us the present of Jesus, because you're loved.

You're loved by God. But this very special verse, John 3, 16, I'd say it not only talks about the present of Jesus, it also talks about the person of Jesus, the person of Jesus.

[10:59] If you read the verse again, it says, for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

And so in this verse, we see that God loves us so, so much, so much. And he loves us so much that he gave to us this present, a present of Jesus. But Jesus, as you know, he's a person.

Jesus is a real person. He is Jesus Christ. But what kind of person was Jesus? What kind of person is Jesus? Well, the Bible says that Jesus is a loving person because he loves lots of people, including me and including you.

Jesus loves us and he wants us to be saved. But Jesus, he's not only a loving person, he's also a kind person. If you remember when Jesus fed the 5,000 people, he fed them with, what was it? Five loaves and two fish. So, and we see there Jesus is kindness. Jesus is a kind person. But Jesus is also a caring person. He cares for those who are sick.

[12:09] He cares for us when we're sick. The Bible tells us that Jesus healed a little girl who was dead. And he also healed a little boy who was sick. So Jesus is a caring person.

But Jesus, he's also a powerful person. Because you remember he calmed the storm. You remember when the disciples, they were in the boat. And the boat was rocking back and forth. And there was water pouring inside the boat. And they thought the boat was sinking. And they started shouting to Jesus to help them. Don't you care that we're sinking? And Jesus gets up and he just says to the waves and the wind, Peace be still.

And immediately it all stopped and there was silence. And so Jesus is a powerful person. But Jesus is also a wonderful person. Because he did many, many miracles.

He healed sick people. He turned water into wine. He walked on water. He calmed storms. He raised the dead. He cleansed lepers. Jesus did so many wonderful miracles.

[13:12] And so boys and girls, what kind of person is Jesus? Jesus is a loving person. Jesus is a caring person. Jesus is a kind person. Jesus is a powerful person.

Jesus is a wonderful person. But the reason Jesus is so amazing is because he is king. Jesus is king.

Now looking at the present I've brought with me today. See this nice present? Do you think it's a present that a king would get? I have no idea what the queen will get tomorrow.

But do you think it's a present that a king might get? It's nice and gold and it's got bits of red on it. What do you think? What do you think Jonathan? Do you think a king would get this? No. Okay.

Well I don't know what kind of present a king would get. But you know I know that when Jesus was born, and that's what we were reading, when Jesus was born he received three presents. Didn't he?

[14:10] I'm sure you'll get lots of presents tomorrow. But when Jesus was born he received three presents. He received a present or a gift of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Now I'm not going to explain all of them. But when Jesus was born he was given three presents. By who? By wise men. And the wise men they brought these gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh because Jesus is a king.

Jesus is a king. But when Jesus was born, was he born in a palace? No. What do you think Alicia? No. No. You're not even answering me. Well that's where kings live isn't it? They live in a palace. But Jesus wasn't born in a palace was he?

No. Jesus wasn't even born in a hospital like you or me. You were born in a hospital weren't you? Yeah. Jesus. King Jesus.

[15:10] Where was he born? Jesus was born in a barn. Jesus was born in a barn. Jesus was born in a stable which is a barn. And Jesus was placed in a manger.

Wasn't a cot. Nice cosy cot. But it was a feeding trough. Where all the animals would be eating out of. So King Jesus. The king of all the earth.

He was born in a barn where there was hay. And there would have been cows. Mooing. There would have been sheep. Maying. And there would have been donkeys.

Naying. I'm sure you can make all these noises can't you? Cows and sheep and donkeys. But Jesus. King Jesus was born in a barn. And if you've ever been to a barn.

I'm sure you've been into a barn. It's not a very clean place is it? Not at all. It's very dirty. Very smelly. And very cold. It's not the place for a little baby to be born.

[16:10] And it's not the place for King Jesus to be born either is it? Even though Jesus is king. Jesus chose to be born. In a barn. And King Jesus chose to be born in a barn.

Because when he came into the world. He didn't come to be a king. He came to be a servant. When Jesus came into the world. He didn't come to be a king.

He came to be a servant. Because King Jesus. He came not to be served. But to serve. Not to be served like a king. But to serve like a servant.

And the way in which Jesus came to serve like a servant. Was by dying upon the cross. To take away our sins. And so boys and girls.

King Jesus was born in a barn. Because he came not to be served. But to serve. And he came to die upon the cross. For our sins. And you know.

[17:09] Isn't King Jesus a wonderful person? You think about it. King Jesus. He's a loving person. King Jesus is a kind person. King Jesus is a caring person.

King Jesus is a wonderful person. He's a powerful person. He's King Jesus is this wonderful person. Because he was born in a barn.

And he came not to be served. But to serve. By dying upon the cross. For our sins. But you know boys and girls. This present of Jesus.

It not only reminds me about. The person of Jesus. It also reminds me about. The promise of Jesus. The promise of Jesus.

And that's what. This special version. John 3.16. Speaks about. It speaks about. The present of Jesus. The person of Jesus. And last of all. The promise of Jesus. What's the promise of Jesus?

[18:05] It says. For God so loved the world. That he gave his only son. That whosoever believes in him. Should not perish. But have. Eternal life. Now if you look at this present.

Boys and girls. It has a name tag on it. Can you see the name tag? It's got a wee name tag on it. Doesn't it? And I'm sure that tomorrow morning. You'll be checking all the name tags. You'll be opening them all up.

Is this mine? And if it's not yours. You'll probably. No. Not mine. No. Not mine. But when it is yours. You'll know it's yours. Because it has your name on it. And it'll say. Well. To Michael.

Love. Lots of love. Mummy. Or it'll be. To Alicia. Lots of love. Lisa. And it'll be. To Anna. Lots of love. Rachel. To Jonathan. Lots of love.

Sarah Ann. To David. Lots of love. Finley. We'll see. And you know. You'll know who the present is to. And who the present is from. Because of the name tag.

[19:00] The name tag that's on it. But this name tag. On this present here. It just says. Well it says. Whosoever. That's all it says.

Whosoever. But who is whosoever? Are you whosoever? No. Are you whosoever? Who's whosoever?

Well. Whosoever. Boys and girls. It means. Everyone. Absolutely everyone. Whosoever.

Whosoever. Includes. Everyone. And excludes. No one.

Whosoever. Means. Everyone. It means. Every boy. Every girl. Every man. Every woman. Every mummy. Every daddy. Every granny. Every shenner.

Every great granny. Every great shenner. Every brother. Sister. Auntie. Uncle. Friend. Neighbour. Teacher. It means. Whosoever. Whosoever. Means. Everyone.

[19:57] Absolutely. Everyone. That includes. You. It includes. You. Which means. That this present. Is yours. If you want it.

Well. That's what it's saying. Isn't it? It's addressed to whosoever. So it's yours. If you want it. Do you want this present? Does anybody want it? No takers at all?

Shall I start the bidding? No takers for the present. Nobody wants to take this present home with them. I know it's badly wrapped. But. It's got something inside it. I assure you.

It's got something. Something heavy inside it. So nobody wants it. Michael doesn't even want it. That's fine. Well. It's yours if you want it.

Because it's addressed to. Whosoever. Whosoever wants it. And you know. Boys and girls. That's what the present of Jesus. Is all about. The present of Jesus. It's lovingly and freely offered.

[20:57] To. Whosoever. Whosoever. Jesus. Is offered to. Whosoever. Will believe in him. And follow him. Which means that Jesus. Can be your savior. If you want him to be.

All you have to do. Is ask him. And it's just like the sweeties. That you were offered at the door. You were offered. Sweeties. They were in two boxes.

I'm sure you saw them. And all it. All the signs said. Was please take one. Please. Well not just one. You could put a. Take a handful if you wanted. You didn't have to pay.

For the sweeties. Did you? No. Did you have to do anything. For the sweetie? Apart from put your hand in. Did you have to do anything else? No. And so I hope you took one.

Did you? Did you take one? Did daddy let you take one? Jonathan. He didn't let you take one. That's terrible. You could have just taken it. And you know.

[ 21 : 52 ] Well if you took the sweetie. If you didn't take the sweetie. Well you missed out didn't you? You missed out. And that's what it's like with the present of Jesus. Jesus is offered to us.

Jesus is offered to. To whosoever. To everyone. And if you want Jesus to be your saviour. All you have to do is ask him. But like the sweetie. If you don't take it.

You'll miss out. And. And. Well you'll miss out. But what will you miss out on? If you didn't take a sweetie. Well you just missed out on a bit of chocolate. You can pick one up on the way out. But if you don't make Jesus your saviour.

If you don't ask Jesus into your heart. You'll miss out on the promise of Jesus. You'll miss out on the promise of Jesus. And the promise as we're told here. Is the promise of eternal life.

Eternal life. Because this special verse. It says to us that God has lovingly given to us. The present of Jesus. And he's given to the present of Jesus. In the person of Jesus.

[ 22 : 54 ] And whoever believes in Jesus. Will receive the promise of Jesus. The promise of eternal life. For God so loved the world. That he gave his only son.

That whosoever believes in him. Should not perish. But have eternal life. Life. And we might think. Well it can't be as simple as that. Is it? But it is as simple as that.

Because that's what the Bible is telling us here. That whosoever believes. In the present of Jesus. And confesses that the person of Jesus. Is their Lord. And their King.

Then they shall receive. As it says here. The promise of Jesus. That whosoever believes. They shall not perish. But have eternal life.

And that promise of Jesus. It's a wonderful promise. Because it includes our sins being forgiven. It includes being made righteous in God's sight. It includes being made children of God.

[ 23 : 55 ] The promise of Jesus. Is eternal life. The promise of Jesus. Is eternal life. And you know how to get it. Just ask.

Just ask. It's all you have to do is ask. And so if you don't ask. You won't get it. It's as simple as that. If you don't ask. You don't get it. So boys and girls. When you're opening your presents tomorrow morning. And you're ripping off all the wrapping.

And you see what people have lovingly given to you. Remember to be thankful for all the gifts that you receive. Remember to say thank you. To whoever gave it to you.

But also remember the greatest gift that God has given. Please remember the greatest gift. That God has given. Because God has given to you. You.

[ 24 : 51 ] He has given to you the greatest gift. The present of Jesus Christ. And it's lovingly given. Lovingly given to you. And God is asking.

To come. And love him. Trust in him. Follow him. Follow the person of Jesus. Because when you do. When you follow the person of Jesus.

You receive the promise. The promise of Jesus. You shall not perish. But have eternal life. And so I hope you all have a lovely Christmas.

I hope you stayed behind for tea. And I hope especially that you all receive the greatest gift. By trusting in the present of Jesus. By following the person of Jesus.

And by receiving the promise of Jesus. That you shall not perish. But have eternal life. Okay. You did so well.

[ 25 : 51 ] So thank you for listening. We're closing a word of prayer. Lord we give thanks for that reminder this morning. That thou art a God who has so loved the world.

That thou hast given to us the greatest gift. In thy son Jesus. And help us Lord to trust him. Help us to cast every care into his hand. Help us to follow him.

Because he is the one who promises to us eternal life. Oh Lord bless us together. Remember us as homes and as families. That thou Lord would speak to us each and every day.

And remind us that thou art a God who loves us with an everlasting love. Bless us together we pray. Bless the tea and the coffee and all that's prepared for us. Bless it to our body's use.

Help us Lord to enjoy these things. These things to thy glory. Go before us and cleanse us. For Jesus sake. Amen. So we're going to sing in conclusion.

[ 26 : 48 ] The words of Psalm 23. Now I know some of the boys and girls have been learning these words in Sunday school. Psalm 23.

Page 229. In the Scottish Psalter. It's the blue book. We're singing the whole Psalm. And this Psalm.

It speaks about the person of Jesus. He is the shepherd. And also the promise. The promise of eternal life. That's what we're told in verse 6. Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me. And in God's house forevermore. My dwelling place shall be. So we're singing Psalm 23. We'll stand to sing to God's praise. Amen. Lord, my shepherd.

I'll not want. He makes me down to lie.

[ 28 : 01 ] In pasture stream. In pasture stream. He liveth me.

That quiet waters by. My soul he does.

Restore again. And me to all the faith.

Within the path of righteousness. myös sin.

He's not ill. soul may say though I walk in death's dark veil yet will I fear none ill or foul art with me and I know and stop me calm or still my take good love hast furnished it in presence of my force my head the dust joy and night and my cup overflows goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me shall surely follow me follow me follow me and in

[ 30 : 43 ] God's house forever more my dwelling place shall be the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore Amen Amen