

# **CHRISTMAS SERIES**

## **God Gives Good Gifts**

A Bible Study Series of The Mt. Zion Church

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**Introduction:** As the sparkle of Christmas lights and the promise of a fresh New Year draw closer, many of us find ourselves thinking about gifts—both the ones we’ll give and the ones we hope to receive. And let’s be honest: some people are just naturally great gift givers. They pay attention. They notice what brings us joy, what we reach for, what we talk about, and what we need. They tailor their gifts so well that when we open the box, we feel seen.

Then... there are the other gifts. The ones that make us tilt our heads and wonder, “*Was this meant for me—or did something get mixed up in the wrapping process?*” Maybe the gift doesn’t fit, or it’s not something we enjoy, or it seems like it was really chosen with someone else in mind. And in those moments, many of us have quietly tucked the item back into its packaging to pass along later, hoping it will find a home where it truly belongs.

In this lesson, we’re taking a joyful look at a vastly different kind of gift—the gift of Jesus. This is the one gift perfectly chosen with us in mind, given by a Giver who knows us better than we know ourselves. Every detail of Jesus’ arrival points to the truth that He was never meant to be hoarded or hidden. Unlike those awkward gifts we quietly re-gift, Jesus is the gift we’re *supposed* to share.

And the beautiful twist? When we give Him away, we don’t lose Him—we actually experience Him more deeply. So go ahead—grab your gift bag, fluff the tissue paper, and get ready. It’s time to joyfully “repackage” the gift of Jesus and share Him with the world.

### Activity: “The Gift I Did *Not* Need...”

Take 60 seconds to think of a gift you’ve received that you absolutely did *not* need. Maybe it was socks that felt like sandpaper, a gadget you already had three of, or a sweater that made you look like a decorative throw pillow. **Share it with the group**—keep it friendly, keep it festive, and remember: the goal is to laugh *with*, not *at*, the gift-givers in our lives!



This simple exercise reminds us that even the most well-intentioned gifts can miss the mark. But here’s the wonderful part: **God never misses.** He always gives

exactly what we need, exactly when we need it—even when we don't yet recognize how much we need it.

**Key Verses:** *John 3:14-16, Numbers 21: 4-9*

I. **Who Do We Need This Gift?—**  
*John 3: 14-16; Numbers 21: 4-9*

To understand the gift of Jesus, we revisit a moment Jesus Himself brought up during His conversation with a man named Nicodemus where He shares a truth many people overlook—**Everyone has the universal need for salvation.**



Jesus pointed Nicodemus back to a powerful story in *Numbers 21:4–9*. Read it together, then answer:

1. **What caused the people to be in trouble?**
2. **How did God save them?**
3. **Why were some people unable to live?**

When Jesus pointed Nicodemus to the story in **Numbers 21:4–9**, He wasn't just giving a history lesson—He was showing him a picture of humanity's deepest need and God's generous provision. In the wilderness, the Israelites were dying because of their own rebellion, and no amount of effort or determination could save them. Their only hope was to look at the bronze serpent God provided—a simple act of trust that brought life. Jesus used this moment to explain that the problem of sin works the same way: we cannot cure ourselves. And this brings us into today's focus: Jesus is God's perfect, intentional gift—the one given precisely because He knows what we truly need long before we recognize that need ourselves.

Just like the Israelites who suffered from poisonous serpents, humanity is in trouble and suffering because of sin. The people needed rescue—something they could not achieve on their own.

In the same way, God provided Jesus—**the Savior we needed before we even understood our danger.** The solution? The world needs **Jesus lifted up.** God provided the cure, and all that is needed is to accept Jesus and live eternally.

## Deeper Thinking Questions:

1. *How does the image of the Israelites having to “look and live” in Numbers 21 help you understand Jesus’ teaching in John 3 about belief, faith, and dependence on God rather than on yourself?*
2. *In both passages, God provides a way of rescue before the people fully grasp their condition. What does this reveal about God’s character, and how should that shape the way you respond to His gift of salvation today?*

## II. **An Unforced Gift**—*Luke 16: 19-31*

One of the most remarkable truths about God’s love is that He never forces Himself on anyone. Even though He offers the most meaningful, life-giving, eternity-shaping gift imaginable, God still honors human freedom. His gift—Jesus—is extended with open hands, not closed fists.

Scripture reminds us of God’s perfect giving:

- *“Every good and perfect gift is from above...”* — **James 1:17**
- *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* — **Romans 5:8**

**God doesn’t give halfway. He doesn’t give at random.** He gives with perfect timing, perfect understanding, and perfect love. Remember the gift that did not seem to be for you? God is a giver who knows what we need and gives us what we need!

**And that freedom, as beautiful as it is, carries a sobering weight.**

Jesus illustrated this reality in a vivid way in the parable found in **Luke 16:19–31**, a story about two men whose earthly lives couldn’t have been more different. One lived in luxury and comfort, the other in poverty and pain. But when their earthly days ended, their situations reversed completely. The rich man, who had spent his life ignoring God and ignoring the needs around him, found himself separated from God—conscious, aware, and without hope of crossing over. The poor man, Lazarus, found comfort in God’s presence.

What makes this story so striking is not simply the contrast—it's the finality. The rich man suddenly realized the magnitude of his rejection of God's offer, yet no second chance was given. His pleas were heartfelt, desperate, even compassionate—he wanted his family warned—but the response he received emphasized what is true for all of us: **God's invitation has to be accepted in this life. Everyone has to make their own choice!**

This is the hard part about an unforced gift: people can say no. They can turn away. They can choose a path that leads them far from God—not because He pushes them away, but because they refuse what He lovingly provides. Hell is not the result of God withholding grace; it is the result of a person rejecting it.

Yet even in this sobering truth, there is hope. God continues to offer salvation to every person, every day, with patience, compassion, and perfect love. He wants all to come, all to live, all to receive. But He will not take away the dignity of choice.

The gift is extended. The decision is ours.

### **Deeper Thinking Questions:**

- 1. How does understanding the finality shown in Luke 16:19–31 affect the way you view the urgency of accepting—and sharing—the gift of Jesus?*
- 2. In what ways does honoring human choice demonstrate God's love, even when that choice leads someone away from Him?*

**Conclusion:** As we wrap up today's lesson—much like we'll soon be wrapping presents—we've seen that God isn't just a good gift giver; He's the *perfect* one. While we've all received gifts that missed the mark (looking at you, neon reindeer socks), God's gift of Jesus is the one gift that fits every heart, fills every need, and arrives right on time. We were reminded that His gift is unforced, freely offered, and powerful enough to save anyone willing to “look and live,” just as the Israelites did in the wilderness.

And even though the weight of human choice is real—and sometimes heartbreaking—God continues to extend His gift with patience, kindness, and hope. Jesus isn't a gift meant to sit untouched, tucked away, or admired from a distance. He's meant to be received, enjoyed, shared, and lived out.

As we move into the week ahead, take a moment to marvel at the incredible love wrapped up in God's offering to us. Let it warm your spirit the way a good cup of cocoa warms cold hands. Then get ready—because our journey isn't over yet.

Next week, we get to celebrate what might be the best news of all: **Jesus isn't just the gift we need... He's the gift that keeps on giving.** From salvation to guidance, from grace to daily strength, His presence continues to pour into every corner of our lives.

So come ready, come joyful, and come expecting—because the greatest part of the story is still unwrapping itself!

