

The Gifts that Keep on Giving

The Book of Jude

It's Christmas Day! How many of us have already opened our gifts? Was Santa good to you this year? What is your favorite gift so far?

Maybe there were lots of gifts underneath your Christmas tree this morning. Maybe there were only a few! **Maybe you got exactly what you wanted, and maybe you got socks & underwear (the things you needed).**

But one thing is for sure... **Everything underneath your Christmas tree is temporary!** It won't last! The excitement will fade! It's usefulness will cease

I'm not trying to be a scrooge on Christmas! And actually, if you chose to be here this morning, then you probably agree with me! **There is more to Christmas than the gifts we give and receive underneath our Christmas tree!**

Now with that being said, there is another kind of tree that brought with it a different kind of gift(s)! Gifts that never lose their necessity in our lives, and gifts that can satisfy us in ways that nothing else in this world ever could!

These gifts may not be as shiny or fashionable! They may not give us instant gratification! But they are greater gifts, more costly gifts, eternal gifts!

These gifts are found at the foot of the cross (beneath Calvary's tree)!

- This tree may not be covered in lights like your Christmas tree, but the Light of the World does shine bright through it!
- This tree may not be alive like those in our homes at Christmas, but this tree does bring life, everlasting life!
- This tree may not have ornaments hung from it, but what was hung from it was the Son of God, the Savior of the world!

Because of Jesus, this tree has presents beneath it as well, presents that are offered to all of us today! **Are we willing to gather together around another tree this morning, & open the gifts that are under it on this Christmas day?**

Come, there is a gift for you beneath this tree! But for you to receive it, you must first come to the cross! You must get beyond the shiny frills of this season & get to the true heart of Christmas – the birth of our Savior!

The true meaning of this season often gets covered up by holiday wrapping! And even Christians begin to see what the world wants us to see, rather

than what this day truly represents! Sometimes we too need reminding! So come and be reminded! Come & get your gift underneath the Calvary tree!

What did you receive?

- Joy - Luke 2:10-11, John 15:11, 1 John 1:4
- Peace - Luke 2:14, John 14:27, Romans 5:1, Phil. 4:5b-7
- Love - John 15:13, Romans 5:8, 1 John 3:1a

These gifts are more than just signs, they are reminders of what is truly ours because of what this day truly represents - **God giving us the gift of His Son!**

But what does all of this have to do with the book of Jude – the book we are looking at today in our “Through the Bible” sermon series?

This book has really nothing to do with Christmas, but everything to do with Jesus! And since this day is all about Jesus, I guess Jude makes for a great Christmas day message! Who was this man named Jude?

Jude was Jesus' brother, but he doesn't identify himself in that way. He says, ***“Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James...”***

Why introduce himself in such a way? Because leading with, “I'm the brother of Jesus” makes it more about him, then about Jesus!

Jude wants all the focus, all the glory, to be on Jesus! We can learn some things from Jude, especially in how we celebrate this day!

He goes on to say, ***“To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ...”*** We are not the only ones who receive gifts at Jesus' coming! **Jesus receives gifts too... us** – Those whom God has called to be subjects in His Kingdom – servants, like Jude, under Christ's eternal rule!

It's starting to sound a lot like Christmas isn't it, with all this gift giving and receiving? We get to receive Jesus, and all His gifts (joy, peace, love, etc.), and He gets to receive us – servants in His glorious kingdom!

But the gift giving is not done. Jude says, ***“May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.”*** We don't just gain by the addition of these gifts, but by the multiplication of them, in us & through us to others! These are truly gifts that keep on giving! Jude, contends for the one true faith in Jesus Christ (**Jude 3-4**)! May we do the same this Christmas, and always!

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