

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY NOTES

— December 3, 2017 —

Pastor Les Smith

SERIES: The Greatest Gift

SERMON: The Gift Worth Giving

Text: John 3:16

Central Message:

It has been said that "familiarity breeds contempt." 'Contempt' may be too strong a word, but it is true that when something becomes too familiar, it often loses its significance for us. We become accustomed to it, we become indifferent toward it, and we cease to be affected by it. After a while, we can lose the excitement in our jobs, in our marriages...even in our church. It is like you know that the bacon is cooking, but you no longer hear the sizzle. John 3:16 is the most ubiquitous verse in the whole Bible. It is everywhere...but it may surprise you how few people know the words were spoken by Jesus. Even fewer people know to whom these words were spoken. We hear them, we read them, we quote them, and we know them - but somehow they seem to have lost their impact in our lives. John 3:16 is one of the most loved, most memorized, most impactful verses in Scripture because it gives us the gospel in a nutshell. As we unpack this incredible verse, we will see four reasons why Jesus Christ was "The Gift Worth Giving".

God gave us Jesus Christ, "The Gift Worth Giving", because He is a clear *MANIFESTATION* of God's sacrificial love for us. (John 3:16)

As we study Scripture, we come to an indisputable truth...real love is sacrificial. 1 John 4:9-10 tells us, "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In

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this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Jesus Christ came to reveal God’s love to us, but He also came to show us how to love one another. It is only as we love others do we demonstrate that God has indeed given us His greatest gift.

God gave us Jesus Christ, “The Gift Worth Giving”, because Jesus shows us how *MAGNANIMOUS* God’s sacrificial love is for us. (John 3:16)

We begin to grasp the magnanimous nature of God’s love when we realize that His love is all inclusive. Jesus told His disciples to make disciples of all the nations. He did not exclude any nationality or ethnic group. God so loved the whole world...every unsaved individual on the planet was included in God’s love, and His expectation is that, as the season of Christmas approaches, we will reflect that all-encompassing love.

God gave us Jesus Christ, “The Gift Worth Giving”, because Jesus represents the *MAGNIFICENCE* of God’s sacrificial love for us. (John 3:16)

Over and over again, Scripture informs us that “greater love has no man than this, that he would lay down his life for a friend”. God gave mankind His very best...the magnificence of His only begotten Son. We see this in the sacrifice of Abraham. God demanded that Abraham sacrifice his only son as evidence of his love and faithfulness. God was so moved by Abraham’s willingness, that He accepted his intend, and did not require the actual sacrifice. I believe that Hallmark must have comprehended Scripture when they chose the slogan for their company: “When you care enough to send the very best.” That is how we can describe God, Himself. He cared enough to give His very best.

God gave us Jesus Christ, “The Gift Worth Giving”, because Jesus shows us the *MEANING* of God’s sacrificial love for us. (John 3:16)

God, the greatest being; ***so loved***, the greatest love; ***the world***, the largest number

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of people; ***that He gave***, that is the greatest sacrifice; ***His only begotten Son***, His greatest possession; ***that whosoever***, the greatest invitation; ***believeth in Him***, the only plan of salvation; ***should not perish***, that is the greatest condemnation; ***but have everlasting life***, that is the greatest gift. The greatest gift at Christmas time is the gift of God to this world!