

Thank God For This Day

Well here we are at Christmas Eve. We have begun winter, but the shortest day of the year is past and from now until summer, the days will get longer. While weather will remain cold for a while, the promise of the warmth of spring has already begun. As I prayed to God for a Christmas message this year, I thought about the meaning of Christmas. I thought about the Christmas story with Mary and Joseph, the shepherds, the angels and the wise men. I thought about gift giving, and the message began to emerge. We are all about giving and receiving gifts at Christmas time. We make lists, we shop, we double check to make sure we haven't left anyone out. We give to charities like the Salvation Army and we give to our church. But if Jesus was here, now, and we could give him something, what could we give Jesus?

The Bible tells us that Jesus is destined to become ruler and essentially owner of all creation. We know from scripture that he will come as king to set up God's kingdom right here on earth and that the earth and heavens will be made new. When you think about it there really isn't anything physical that Jesus will not own. He won't need a new car, or cell phone or video game. Jesus won't need new clothes or a watch or cologne. Jesus will have no need for a big screen TV or a home theatre sound system. He won't need cookies or candy, fruitcake, or Hickory Farm beef-stick. What could we give to Jesus that he doesn't already have or need?

Then I thought about what Jesus has done for us. Jesus gave up heaven, to come to earth. As Paul writes in his second letter to the Corinthians, **2 Corinthians 8:9** For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich,

yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. Jesus risked losing everything in order that we might gain everything. He came to show us the Father. He came to show us the way to eternal life, and to give us salvation. His life showed us the way, and his punishment and death paid the price for our sins. His birth, which we begin celebrating tonight, changed the course of history for all humanity.

So what can we give to the one who has already given us so much? We can give him our belief, our trust and our faith. I am here to tell you that it's all true. Jesus was the son of God. Jesus really did come down from heaven, and was born as a human being just like us. He really did perform miracles, and he really did die for our sins. He was resurrected and now sits with God in heaven waiting for the right time to come again in Glory to rule the universe from his throne that will come to this earth. It's all true. And that's what you and can give Jesus on this Christmas Eve 2015. Believe in the gospel, believe in Jesus. As Jesus told his disciples and through them Jesus tells us: **John 14:1** Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.

The greatest gift you can give Jesus will also make it possible for you to receive the greatest gift Jesus can give you—eternal life.

AMEN