

WEEK THREE

Give



DAY FIFTEEN: DECEMBER 14

*Little baby
I am a poor boy too
I have no gift to bring
That's fit to give our King
Shall I play for you
On my drum?*

(“The Little Drummer Boy” by Katherine Kennicott Davis, 1941)

While I didn't include the “pa-rum-pa-pa-pums” in the text, I imagine you are singing them in your head. This sweet and often overlooked hymn, tells the endearing story of a young boy responding to an encounter with the newborn Christ by giving what he had: music.

Christmas is known to be a season of giving. We give gifts to our loved ones, we give offerings to charity, we give our time through serving, and our talents through hosting. Our giving is meant to be a response to what has been given to us—a gift we could never purchase, earn, or negotiate. This gift is

summarized succinctly in John 3:16:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

Maybe this verse seems more fitting at Easter since it talks about the salvation secured through Jesus's death and resurrection. But, as we see in John 3:17, the gift arrived at Christmas:

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

It's remarkable to think of how many were drawn to the infant Jesus, resting in his meager manger. He was too little to preach. He was not yet commissioned to heal. He looked no different than any other newborn.

Those who gathered in the manger on the night of his birth didn't come expecting to get anything from him. They came to witness, encounter, bless, and receive.

I think this is why we are drawn to the nativity scene—it's pure and uncomplicated. Come, our newborn king to see (pa-rum-pa-pa-pum). No agenda or expectation beyond seeing receiving this most precious gift.



Give

DAY FIFTEEN: DECEMBER 14

READ: John 3:16-17

REFLECT: Jesus came for love and because of love. How can you let the truth Jesus proclaims in John 3:16-17 shape and influence this Christmas season?

PRAY: Lord, in this season of giving, help me remain focused on the great gift You have already given me.

Amen.



DAY SIXTEEN: DECEMBER 15

If you had to choose one adjective to describe the God's love, what would it be? For me, it would be generous.

Understanding generosity is imperative to truly understanding God. If you don't understand generosity, you can't comprehend the heart of the Father. And if you won't grasp and receive His generous love, it won't be hard for you to rebel against Him.

This tragedy is illustrated through Judas. While his most infamous betrayal was selling out Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, it wasn't his first.

But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.
(John 12:4-6)

Judas's issue with greed wasn't really about money but because he struggled to trust God.



Give

DAY SIXTEEN: DECEMBER 15

READ: James 1:17

REFLECT: The whole story of humankind is marked by the willing generosity of a loving and faithful God.

What do you learn from this passage about God's consistent generosity?

PRAY: Thank You, God that You are a generous giver.

Show me where I am reluctant to see Your generosity and lead me to greater trust in You.

Amen



DAY SEVENTEEN: DECEMBER 16

The Bible doesn't include a little boy with a drum playing for Jesus, but I love what his story represents in the song.

Our little percussionist is invited to come and see the newborn King Jesus by folks who have already selected their "finest gifts" to set before him. Then, he speaks to Jesus confessing he has no gift, "that's fit to give our King."

The boy offers to play his drum as a gift, but what he is really offering is his heart.

We know that we are loved by God exactly as we are, and that He invites us to come to Him as we are. Still, we can get caught up in thinking that we need to be seen as good or good enough.

God *is* concerned with your holiness—but He knows that it only through attachment to Him that you increase in holiness. He isn't asking for perfection, He is looking for a sincere and humble heart, given willingly.



Give

DAY SEVENTEEN: DECEMBER 16

READ: Psalm 51:17

REFLECT: Put yourself in the position of the Little Drummer Boy. What might go through your mind between the invitation to “come” and the moment you stood before Jesus, knowing your worldly treasures don’t compare to others?

The best gift you can give God today is a sincere heart to honor Him and acknowledge Him as Lord over your life.

PRAY: Thank You, God that You love me just as I am. You already know my innermost thoughts, my weakness, my doubts, and insecurities. Help me to open my heart to You and make You the Lord over my life.

Amen.



DAY EIGHTEEN: DECEMBER 17

“The Little Drummer Boy” demonstrates true worship in its recognition of Jesus as King—just as we read in Luke 2, the characters in the song are drawn to Jesus and compelled to honor him with gifts.

Giving is a biblical value. When it comes to giving of our finances it is the one area where God says, “test me in this.” (Malachi 3:10) The command to tithe has been consistent through God’s covenant with His people, and it’s no less vital than His commands to love, forgive, and repent.

It’s odd how people get offended when a pastor ministers to his congregation about tithing. If it’s important to God and commanded in the Word of God (which it is) wouldn’t he be negligent not to lead people into bringing their tithes?

Your tithe declares trust, honor, and worship. It demonstrates the lordship of God in your life brings you closer to Him—and closeness is what He desires most.



Give

DAY EIGHTEEN: DECEMBER 17

READ: Mark 12:41-44

REFLECT: Giving like God requires sacrifice and confidence in recognizing Him as your provider. How can you take a step towards sacrificial generosity today?

PRAY: God, I thank You that You are my faithful provider and that every good and perfect gift—every blessing in my life—comes from You.

Enlarge my faith today to increase in honoring you as Lord through acts of generosity.

Amen.



DAY NINETEEN: DECEMBER 18

Yesterday's devotional spoke about the importance of tithing as a declaration of worship and honoring God as provider and Lord over every aspect of our lives. Giving not only honors God it helps us resemble Him.

The generosity of God is breathtaking. He gives generously in taking care of your daily needs, and He gave His Son sacrificially to reconcile your sins and the impact of your sins because He desires to be close to you. His gift of grace is precious and confoundingly beautiful.

Grace is powerful and illogical in its ability to disarm, cleanse, and restore. It's not only God's gift to, us but a gift He has entrusted to us so that we can put it on display in a culture that seems eager to condemn.

Grace may be the best gift you can offer the people you encounter today.



Give

DAY NINETEEN: DECEMBER 18

READ: Proverbs 11:24-25 and Colossians 3:13

REFLECT: It can be difficult to show grace when we don't think someone deserves it, but that is the very point of grace.

Think of Proverbs 11:24-25 in the context of forgiveness. How can you take steps today to offer generous forgiveness?

PRAY: God, I am overwhelmed by Your generosity towards me. You love and forgive freely. Help me to love and forgive others in the same way.

Amen.



DAY TWENTY: DECEMBER 19

Jesus was born through earthly parents of humble means, but his heavenly Father—and yours—owns the cattle on a thousand hills and created a heaven where the streets are pure gold.

At Christmastime, we often participate in acts of generosity to serve those who we consider to be less fortunate. Whether buying a Christmas gift for a child in foster care or purchasing a holiday meal for a family that might not otherwise be able to afford it, we should be mindful that by heavenly standards we aren't serving someone "less than" — we are serving our equal.

There is no value differential.

We should love others because we acknowledge the object of our love as inherently beloved. Similarly, we should serve others because we acknowledge the beneficiary of our generosity is inherently valuable.



Give

DAY TWENTY: DECEMBER 19

READ: Matthew 25:34-40

REFLECT: How does it shift your view of serving and giving knowing that Jesus sees himself in those you serve?

PRAY: Lord, help me to renew my mind as I view my acts of service and generosity.

I want to see Jesus in every person I encounter and demonstrate true honor through my thoughts, words, and actions.

Amen.



DAY TWENTYONE: DECEMBER 20

The story of the “Little Dummer Boy” concludes with the sweetest scene:

*Mary nodded
The ox and lamb kept time
I played my drum for Him
I played my best for him
Then He smiled at me
Me and my drum*

The same boy who contemplated how he could properly honor the infant King was now the center of a blessed moment of worship.

Again, I realize this story isn't from scripture, but it does represent biblical themes—unity, reverence, generosity, and communion with Jesus:

Mary welcomes the gift on behalf of her child. The animals acknowledge the reverent offering. The boy plays his simple instrument the very best he can.

And the infant King smiles.



Give

*DAY TWENTYONE:
DECEMBER 20*

READ: Acts 20:35 and Luke 19:40

REFLECT: What does it mean to you to see Jesus gaze upon you and smile?

PRAY: Thank You, God that You delight in giving!

As I go about my day, I ask that You would show me new ways to express generosity—through kindness, grace, joy, and the material provision You have blessed me with.

Amen.

End of Week Three