

Precious Heavenly Father help us to
be gentle today with every person
we meet, in thought, word, & deed.
May recognize that others are
facing difficult situations that
we know nothing about. Let us be
compassion with them when we
meet them. Make us aware of
the needs of others around us
help us to be grateful for what
we have & let us be willing to
share. Let us be compassionate
with every one we meet today.
I ask this prayer in Jesus
precious & Holy name, Amen &
Amen.
Our brothers & sister in
Christ

2/24/24

Opening Prayer

*Dean - 2 Songs

THE GREATEST GIFT

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*THE POINT OF THE LESSON IS

~~3x4x~~ Last month we celebrated Christmas by exchanging gifts with one another. When you choose a present for someone, you give it a lot of thought. You choose lovingly - What does that person need? What would they enjoy? What will they treasure? And you choose individually for that person and that person only. And you wrap it with care. And you delight in giving.

At the turn of the Century, the Author O'Henry wrote a Christmas story entitled "THE Gift of the MAGi". The story tells of a poor young couple. They each wanted to surprise the other with a special Christmas gift.

Her prized possession was her beautiful long hair - She had often wished for a pretty comb to wear in her hair.

His favorite possession was a gold pocket watch passed down through his family. He often longed for a gold chain for his watch.

The story tells that she had her hair cut and sold to buy him a gold chain. He sold his watch to buy a comb for her hair.

- A story of Love and Sacrifice

But today we will talk about a greater gift - A greater Sacrifice

- THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL -

★ Genesis 1:1

IN the Beginning, God created the Heaven and the Earth.

And God created man and woman to be in Fellowship with Him

Then SIN separated man from God. Because God is Just and Holy, He cannot merely overlook sin.

★ Ezekiel 18:20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die

★ 1 John 1:8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us.

★ 1 John 1:10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar, and His word has no place in our lives

★ Genesis 6:6 And the Lord regretted that He had made man on the Earth, and His heart was deeply troubled.

So God destroyed the Earth by Flood. The only ones saved were Noah, a righteous man and his family.

But after Earth WAS restored, sin still existed.

Man tried to appease God with the blood of animal sacrifices

★ Hebrews 10:4 - It is impossible for the blood of Bulls and Goats to Take away sins.

IN order to redeem mankind, God, in His great Love and Mercy, came to Earth in the person of Jesus Christ to live among us.

He looked like us - He felt both Joy and Sorrow. He WAS tempted in every way like we are but Never sinned.

God came to us, Not as a King, but as a humble baby lying in a manger.

Isaiah prophesied the Birth of Christ 700 years before His Birth

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Read Isaiah 9:6-7

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Read Isaiah 7:14

When we read the beautiful account of Christ's Birth, Let us turn our eyes to the Cross - He WAS Born to suffer and die for our sins

★ John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life

When you look upon or think of the Baby in the Manger - - -

Think of Him as "Emmanuel" - God With us
Think of Him as "The Lamb of God" that takes away the sins of the world

Think of Him as Lord of Lords and King of Kings

Think of Him as The Great Physician

Think of Him as THE GREATEST GIFT of ALL

God the Father gave us the gift of His precious SON, Jesus Christ.

God the SON → Jesus Christ gives us the gifts of grace, mercy - forgiveness of sin and the promise of Heaven (and The Gift of The Holy Spirit) when we obey Him in Baptism

God the Holy Spirit gives us gifts of Comfort, guidance, and the Fruit of the Spirit

(3) Read Galatians 5:22-25

So the question is - IN view of all that we have been given -

What gift can we give in return?
We cannot give God anything for everything is already His, and all we have comes from Him.
We can only give Him praise, thanks and Honor.
ALL He wants is you - Romans 12: 1, 2

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Read
Romans
12: 1-2

And in closing, I want to leave with you a verse of Scripture that is near and dear to my heart

These words of Jesus are my wish for all of you for the New Year and always

* John 14:27

Peace I leave with you, - My Peace I give you
I do NOT give as the world gives,
To you

Do NOT Let your heart be troubled -
And do 'NOT' be afraid

AMEN

- Happy New Year -