 Rocky Mount Baptist Church

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December 2021 Rev. James Ellis, Pastor

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

A Christmas present may help us visualize the wonderful example of God's most precious gift and the true meaning of Christmas. Families and friends come together and give gifts to one another to celebrate their love for each other. There’s not a more exciting feeling in the world than when a loved one opens the gift you gave them and smiles. Christmas serves as a great reminder of why we come together as friends and family.

Hold up a wrapped Christmas gift. Did you have to work or pay to receive this gift? Why were you given this gift? How do you know who the gift is for?

John 3:16. God sent us a special gift that is for everyone. This really means EVERYONE - all people, you, them, me - anyone that would like to receive it. We don't have to earn the gift or do anything other than receive it.

Ephesians 2:8: *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--"*

However, the gift is not really ours until we choose to receive it. It is of no use to us unless we take it for ourselves, unwrap it, and make it our own.

God's gift of salvation through Jesus Christ is the same. It is not ours automatically. We must first choose to receive it.

Matthew 7:8: *" For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."*

Christmas is about the gift of giving of ourselves; giving of our time, our talents so that we might touch the life of another. And the reason why we give of ourselves is to honor the gift God gave us — His Son.

What gift we will give this Christmas? Not only this Christmas but every day of the year? Will it be the gift of love by telling our family and friends how special they are to us? Will it be the gift of support by remembering those who have no one else to remember them; will it be the gift of visiting those who have no one to visit them? Let us bring the gift of laughter to those who are in sorrow and demonstrate the gift of faith by keeping Jesus Christ as the focus of our Christmas.

John 3:36: *"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."*

May you be filled with hope, love, light, joy and peace and pursue a relationship with the greatest-gift giver of all.

*In the Love of Christ,*

*Rev. James Ellis, Pastor*