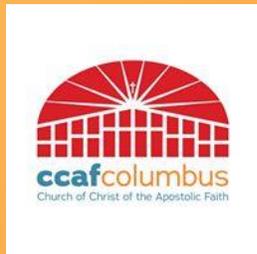


The Gift Exchange



***Sunday School Lesson
Middle School and High School
December 20, 2020***



The Church of Christ of the Apostolic Faith

THE GIFT OF EXCHANGE

THE GIFT EXCHANGE

The greatest gift we can receive and share is the Spirit of God.

Matthew 7:11; Galatians 4:4-7; James 1:17



Scriptures

Matthew 7:11

¹¹If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Galatians 4:4-8

⁴But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

⁵To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

⁶And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

⁷Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

James 1:17

¹⁷Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

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Discussion

1. What was the best Christmas gift you have ever received?
2. What was the worst gift you have ever seen given?
3. What was the most useless gift you have ever received?
4. If money was not an issue and you could give one gift to anyone, what would you give and to whom?



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The Best Gift Ever

Read Matthew 7:11; Galatians 4:4–7; and James 1:17.

- These verses of Scripture let us know there is no better gift giver than God.
- Most people would agree there are good gifts and bad gifts.
- **God's gifts are always good and always exactly what we need.**
- No one gives gifts like God.
- The gifts God gives transform our lives and our relationship with Him.
- We should seek and desire His gifts more than any others.



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The Gift Exchange

- Though God is the best gift giver, we are not exempt from giving gifts to Him in return.
- We see an example of gift giving in Matthew 2:10–11.
- Only the best gifts were presented to the newborn King.
- While we do offer our tithes and offerings to God, our greatest gifts are not monetary.
- God is not impressed with our riches and valuables.
- *Read Psalm 49:6–7. God desires one thing: us.*



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God Gave the Best Gift Ever

Read Galatians 4:4–7 and John 3:16.

- God gave His Son as a gift for the world.
- No greater gift could be given, and no greater love could be shown than the redemption of humanity through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- **Because of the gift of Jesus Christ, we have access to eternal life and access to God Himself.**
- Jesus offers the best exchange possible.
- We are all sinners and come short of the glory of God.
 - King David, in Psalm 51:5, declared he was born in sin.
 - The apostle Paul gave a similar description to the church of Rome in Romans 3:23.
- The best gift exchange is found in Acts 2:38 where the apostle Peter explained what we can do to receive this amazing gift—the gift of God’s Spirit, the Holy Ghost.



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All I Want for Christmas Is to Experience God's Spirit

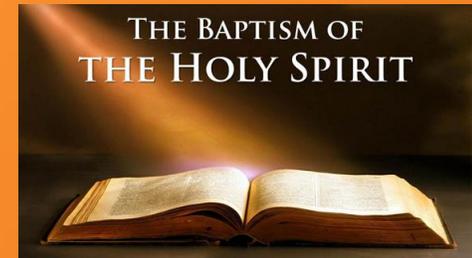
- With all we want and will be getting this season, being filled by and experiencing the Spirit of God would be the most amazing gift.
- Whether we are a new to Christianity or have been a Spirit-filled Christian for some time, we all need to be filled and led by God's Spirit.
- **The gift of God's Spirit is free of regret and is available for all.**
- This gift is available not just at Christmastime or during special services throughout the year, but God stands ready to offer this gift right now and at any time a person sincerely follows Peter's direction in the Book of Acts.



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A True Blessing

- During this Christmas season, you may be going through a rough time.
- Maybe you feel lonely, like you have no friends.
- You may be discouraged by a family situation or difficulty in school.
- You may be disappointed at how your life is turning out.
- This Christmas, realize the one gift that can change all of that in you and others is readily available.
- *While receiving God's Spirit will not magically take away all life's woes, His Spirit gives the power to overcome and live a life of purpose and hope*



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The Gift Exchange

- **God's Spirit living inside of us, giving us power to overcome, is an amazing gift.**
- What can we do in return to honor Him and express our gratitude for such an amazing gift?
- One response would be to share our faith and the impact of God's Spirit with someone who needs to hear our story and the story of Christ.
- People want to know they can experience something greater. By sharing our faith with others, their lives could be forever changed by exposure to the King of kings.
- From a classmate stressed during exams to a friend questioning if this is all there is to life, we are surrounded by daily opportunities to share the best gift of all: Jesus Christ.
- **Share Jesus Christ with someone by telling your story; your testimony may be the catalyst to change someone's life.** You can do it.

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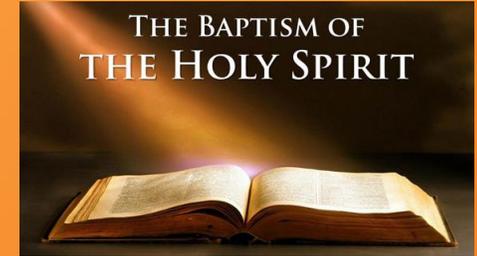
The Only Gift We Really Need This Holiday Season



- While there are many things on our lists this holiday season, the one thing we need most of all is God's Spirit at work in our lives.
- Look at your life and see what is keeping the Spirit from leading you every day.
- God gives the greatest gifts. I want the greatest of those gifts at work in my life; how about you?

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Challenge



Have you received the gift of the Holy Spirit? If you have, you have received the greatest gift in the world.

Challenge yourself this holiday season to share your experience with someone who has never received God's gift. See what God can do through your testimony.

If you have not received the gift of the Holy Spirit, it is available to you. Challenge yourself this holiday season to ask God to fill you with His gift.

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Expand

Do you remember when you were a small child your parents threatened you around Christmastime? Perhaps they told you if you did not behave, you would not get any presents. Did it work? Most likely, no matter what your behavior was like, you got presents on Christmas Day anyway. Similarly, Jesus offers us a gift we do not deserve. Even if we started right now and from this day forward never sinned or made a mistake again, we would still not be worthy of the Holy Spirit. As the name describes, God's Spirit is holy, and we are far from His holiness. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit is a free gift. We cannot earn it, but we don't have to. Jesus died so we could have His Spirit. The old saying is true: "You don't get good to get God; you get God to get good."

Jesus offered everything He had for us. The same Spirit that empowered Him while He was on Earth to do the work of God has been invested in us. How are you giving back to Him for that sacrifice? Could you be doing more? If so, what?

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