Christmas 2025 | David Vinyard

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Preacher: David Vinyard

[0:00] Welcome. I'm glad you're here. It's good to have you here on Christmas. It's a pleasure really. It always is to have an opportunity to share, but especially around this time, I know it's a busy season.

I know there's folks who are home sick. I know there's people who may have come as visitors. So we're glad to have you. We appreciate you making the effort to be here, despite the crazy of the season and of Christmas.
I was thinking about Christmas. It could be a great time. You know, it really can. It could be, hopefully you have a little bit of time off work. Oh, sorry. Got tangled up. Maybe you're visiting family. Maybe family's coming to see you.
For me, I really enjoy a little break from work. It's nice to disconnect a little, be a little more intentional with my conversations and time spent with the kids and family and all of that. It's really nice. But I know Christmas can be a lot of things to a lot of people. It can be a challenging time.
It can be a time where you miss loved ones. It can be a time of loneliness. It can be a time of hardship through the winter. It can be a distraction. It can be a craze of events and materialism and, you know, maybe even a competition.
[1:09] I feel like this time of year is a little complicated. Who has the best decor? Who has the best lights? Who has the best everything? We recently moved. And I can tell you, of all the neighbors we have, we have the least lights.

Everybody has these really nice setups and ours look like the basement threw up on the front yard, you know, something like that. But I was thinking about that and I was thinking about hopefully we don't miss what Christmas is really about.
It's the Christ in Christmas. It's the son of God that matters. Who came as a baby to live and to die for our sins. And it's that simple. And not the lights, thankfully. Not the gifts, not the fanfare, not Christmas spirit, which is a phrase you'll hear all the time.
But it's about Christ who was given as a gift. And so I was thinking about that. I was thinking about gifts and Christmas and presents. And I feel like in Christmas circles, it's pretty common to hear that phrase.
It's not about the gifts or it's not about the presents, which is right. I agree with that. But it also got me thinking about the concept of a Christmas gift or God's gift.
[2:11] And so I was looking that up and just conceptually thinking about the gifts at Christmas. So I asked my kiddos, I full, full intended to survey the, all the young ones and get a little quote from each of them.

But I, I missed that. And so my two had to suffice, but I, I grabbed their quotes. I said, what do you think of when you think of a Christmas gift? You can advance that slide. There you go. Oh, the message today.
If you knew the gift of God, there's the title. You can go to the next one. So what do you think of when you think of a Christmas gift or a present? I asked him. So Benjamin came up first and he said something you've been wanting or a surprise or that someone loves you.
I thought that was pretty appropriate. Isaac said a box, which I was like, okay, maybe fun thing. Maybe fun things. And that it's Christmas day to celebrate Jesus.
So I was like, that's pretty good. I was looking for a little bit more, uh, temporal base, but they, they did okay. But anyways, that got me thinking just, you know, all of all the distractions, the presents, the gifts at Christmas.
[3:16] What does God have to say about it? What does God have to say about what does the Bible have to say about the word gift or giving or the gift of God? This phrase gift of God kept

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coming up when I was searching it.

What God gave. So I thought maybe, you know, maybe there is good reason to think about gifts at Christmas. Maybe there is something we should consider about the gift this time of year. So that's the topic for today.
That's the hope. We're hoping to cruise through this and share some things with you. And then, uh, we'll transition to the next phase. So let me pray for a minute. God, thank you for the season. Thank you for this year.
Thank you that we have your word in the Bible to learn, to understand, and to know the truth. I just pray for the message this morning. I pray for those who are sick and can't make it today. And I pray for, um, just the opportunity to be reminded about what matters most in Jesus name.
Amen. All right. So this concept of the gift of God, I'll give you a few examples. One of the neatest things about the Bible is that it's made up of eyewitness accounts. It's people who were there. They saw things that Jesus did.
[4:20] They heard the words of God and they wrote it down. So we know the Bible is true. Men and women watched miracles. They saw things and, and proving that Jesus and God, Jesus is God, that he's more than just a man.

Right? So one example of the gift of God or the concept of God giving is a very popular verse in John 3. And we read that God so loved the world that he gave his only son, which is really what we celebrate at Christmas.
And it's not just one of his sons. It's not just the son that annoyed him that day. So he got the ax. No, it was his only son, the one that he loved dearly. I've admitted this in a prior message.
I, I've thought about that concept of giving up your son and I don't think I could do it in any circumstance, but God chose to do that. He handed his son over to be tortured and to die because he loved this world.
It's a pretty good reason to celebrate Christmas. It's a pretty good reason to be joyful. But that's just one example of the gifts at Christmas. Here's another one. This comes from James 1. The Bible talking about gifts or the gift of God.
[5:24] It says James 1 17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and it comes down from the father of lights. And so the more you look, you think about Christmas gifts or you think about giving, you think about the gifts of God.

You can do a little word search. It's actually more prevalent in scripture than you think. One of my favorite examples of that is actually in John chapter four. It's kind of the phrase for the title of the message.
If you go to John four and you look at what's going on, Jesus is walking across the countryside. He sends his disciples off to find some food and to run a few errands.
And he takes a little break in the heat of the day and he sits down next to this well. He doesn't have a bucket. He doesn't have a cup. He doesn't really have anything. I don't know what he went to the well for, right? Other than this conversation.
But a few moments later in John four, a woman walks up. We know about this woman from the text that she is a little bit troubled. She's got a little bit of a past. Maybe she's a little bit disregarded, but she approaches Jesus.
[6:26] They have a short little conversation and she's kind of surprised that Jesus is even talking to her in the first place. But look how Jesus responds. This is in verse 10 of John chapter four. He kind of gives her this mysterious question before they engage further.

He says in John four, verse 10, if you knew the gift of God and who it is that is asking you for this drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.
And so that question stood out to me. If you knew the gift of God. I don't think I ever really picked up on that from before and studying that, but it stood out as I was doing this word study. What's Jesus referring to?
Why would he use that phrase? Is it himself? Is he referring to himself? Or is it the life that he came to offer? Perhaps a little bit of both. It's such a simple question, but I think it's a timeless question for all of us, right?
Do you know the gift of God? It's something each of us has to answer at some point, whether we do it now or sadly, after you pass. The question will, the reality of that question will come to present itself at some point in your life.

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[7:40] So do you know the gift of God? The Bible talks about the gift of God all over. I mentioned that. Most often it is referring to the life, the salvation offered through Jesus Christ.

And it's given through the death, burial and resurrection of God's son. Some of you may know that. That's okay. I know it's a very simple message. We call that the gospel, but it's worth reminding ourselves of on Christmas.
The Apostle Paul explains this gift of God later in Romans, actually. In Romans 6, he says, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God, there it is again, is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.
So show of hands, we'll have a little fun with this. It's not all business today. Who enjoys receiving gifts at Christmas? Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Some of you Grinches out there, I didn't see every hand raised.
Who enjoys, so, so who enjoys giving a little more than receiving? Let's see that. Okay. That's good. It's okay to be honest.
[8:51] This is a safe space. I love giving a good gift. I don't think it's something I'm phenomenal at, but I enjoy a little bit of both myself. And I've learned things over the years.

I also enjoy receiving gifts, but I've learned that not all gifts are created equal. Some gifts are fantastic. And some people are really good at giving gifts. Some gifts are not as fantastic.
I think of myself. I think of my wife. No one's received more gifts from me than her. If you think about all the occasions, the birthdays, the anniversaries, Christmas, the randoms, you know.
And honestly, sometimes my ideas land. And sometimes they bomb. It's a miss. I think of one year, she probably knows where I'm going with this. Early on, we weren't married.
My mom and sister picked out something that they thought she would really like. It was a set of boots. And so we ordered them, shipped them to the house. We opened the box as a family, you know, part of the thing.
[9:53] And what was in the box was just one boot. I think it was the left boot, right? And so there's an example of a terrible gift, right? Not only is a single boot useless, right?

I mean, unless the right individual acquires that boot. But think of the message it sends your girlfriend. Like, here's the boot on the holidays, you know. I think, did we eventually get the second one?
It never came. I think she broke up after that. Thankfully, I've given some better ones than that.
I think she's had a few better things come her way since that time. But the point is, I was thinking about the reality that not every gift is a great gift. Most gifts, in fact, are not perfect.
Most gifts will fall short, despite the best of intentions. But the gift of God is unique. Look how the Apostle Paul describes this at the end of chapter 9 of his second letter to the Corinthians.
[11:02] He says, thanks be to God. On the next slide, if you want to advance it. He says, thanks be to God for his indescribable gift. God's gift is so good that words can't do it justice.

It's perfect. And so in all the noise, all the busy hustle, and I'm guilty of this between work and school events. I mean, it can be calendar mayhem, right?
But I'd like to remind us the significance of the gift of God. And how often the Bible refers to this and how impactful it really is. It's not just any old gift. It's not a boot.
It's not a miss. It's not a bomb. And just to kind of help drive that home, I want you to think about the best gift you've ever received. Some of the young ones, you might have like a most recent item.
I don't know what my boys would say, probably like a football card or something, you know. But think about the best, the greatest gift you can remember. It's probably something you either really wanted, desperately wanted, had to have it.
[12:13] Or it's something you really needed. I have to have it, right? In one of those two circumstances. And I was thinking about that. Thinking about the fact that the greatest of gifts, the most perfect of gifts, is probably a combination of both, right?

So I want you to think about that. I want you to picture the perfect Christmas day. This is the part where I won't be offended if you close your eyes. I want you to think about this scenario. Don't close them too hard, right? I mean, it is the end of a week.
If your head starts to bob, you know, that's the slippery slope. So imagine the perfect Christmas day. We're thinking about this. Maybe it's the perfect Christmas morning. Maybe it's snowed.
So you wake up, super bright outside. Maybe the trees are a little bit of white and brown, right? Think about this perfect Christmas thing. If it's my house, we typically have a little bit of coffee

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brewing right away.
Kids will be in their PJs. Amy will be working on breakfast. It's just this peaceful, hopefully, scenario, right? A little bit of music on the mix. My parents might be on their way over.
[13:18] Maybe we'll share what we're thankful for, share a set of verses. And for me, that's as good as it gets on Christmas. If I'm thinking about my perfect Christmas morning. But think about that for yourself for a minute. You're at your house, you've got your family.

Everyone's gotten through breakfast and presents. And now imagine the morning settles down just a little bit. And you look over by the mantle or by your tree, wherever the gifts happen to be. And imagine seeing just one more gift.
Imagine seeing one gift that's remaining. And you think, that's odd, I didn't notice that before. But imagine walking over and you look down. And it's from your closest someone, whoever that is.
And it's to you. Like, wow. Where did this come from? And you look down and on the inscription, you pick it up and it says this. Everything you truly want and everything you need.
What would you do? Would you rip that bad boy open? I've always been on the more cautious side. I'd probably take my time. Carefully unwrap it.
[14:26] Maybe you'd call the family around. Maybe you'd assemble. Like, guys, what is this? I gotta see it. I gotta have it. Hang on to that scene. We're gonna come right back to it. There's a verse in the book of Isaiah predicting this perfect gift of God.

Here's what it says. Isaiah chapter 9, it says, For unto us a child is born. And it says, Unto us a son is given. And the government shall be on his shoulder.
And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor. Maybe you've seen that verse. Maybe it's on a church marquee. Maybe it's on a Christmas card. You probably don't think much of it. Probably it seems less than significant 2,000 years later.
But a son was given. A son was given. And that son came offering himself and the perfect gift of God. Check this out. In Romans 5, the Apostle Paul also explains this concept again.
Look what he says. In, um, next slide, Romans. There we go. Romans 5, 15, he says, But the gift, okay? But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of one man.
[15:32] That's the concept of original sin. Adam's sin. We don't have a choice. We are going to fail. For if the many died by the trespass of one man. How much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man.

Jesus Christ overflowed to many. Everything we need. And through Jesus, all the things we really want. They didn't quite get it.
But the Apostle Paul was saying, Guys, this is the gift of gifts. This is it. The gift of God that can save the world for those who believe the truth. It's not the money.
It's not the stuff. It's not the car wrapped in a bow. It's not the jewelry or the gadgets. The gift was eternal life. It is eternal life through a person, the Son of God. Given as a sacrifice.
To take on the penalty that our sin deserved. That my sin deserved. And I thought about that just thinking about the concept of the gifts at Christmas. We'll wrap up here in a second.
[16:36] All those phrases. Peace. Hope. Love. Good tidings. Grace. You see those all over the place at Christmas. Probably more than any other time of the year.

None of that is possible without the gift of God. You can't have those things. You might think you have those things. Temporarily you might feel those things. But you can't have those things without the gift of God.
Without the Son of God. Galatians 1 reads this. Grace and peace to you. From God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Who gave himself.
For our sins. To deliver us from this present evil age. Go back to your Christmas morning. Just for a minute. Imagine a gift that has the capacity to take away all your pain.
And give you hope. I know you might be thinking that's a day at the spa. And I get that. The older I get the more the bones hurt a little bit. I think yep that sounds nice. But I'm talking about a gift that takes you from death row.
[17:41] To an heir and a child of God. From a state of confusion and pain and futility. To a place of joy and purpose. So think about that Christmas morning right.

Think about you've got your gift. You've got that inscription. Everything you want and need. Now imagine holding that. And thinking you know what. We'll come back to this.

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And you set it back. Or you just put it up while you clean up the rest of the house. You're thinking here. I'll deal with this later. I'll think about that later. We'll get to it later. Imagine what that would look like.
I know it's a Christmas message. I know some of you thought he's not going to do his typical AI picture. I decided I would keep the trend going. So here's a picture of me.
I inputted a few things. It's not really me. Opening that perfect gift. So I. This is crazy. I've never had a polo fit that well by the way.
[18:43] But the hairline. The ears. Pretty spot on. Even the feet. So here's. None of the pictures I submitted had bare feet. So how. Do they know. Why do they know.

I don't know. It's concerning a little bit. But just imagine. Imagine sitting there with that perfect gift. And you think you know what. Yeah.
It can't even be real. It can't be real. There's nothing in this. Nothing in this for me. No one cares about me that much. No one. This is a. This is a practical joke. Could you imagine. Setting that aside.
Could you imagine disregarding such a gift. Who would do that. I think for so many on Christmas. That is the reality of what's happened. That. Discarding of. Of the reality of the perfect gift that God gave. This world changing gift that we celebrate here at Bethel.
[19:40] It's just. It's not taken seriously. And there is nothing. Maybe we'll. We'll just end this here. And then we'll go to a song. There is nothing more important. Than.

Knowing the gift of God. That son that was given. The grace that offers us eternal life. Ephesians 2. This is a popular verse. But it says for by grace. You have been saved through faith.
And not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. Not of works. So that no one should boast. So the next time you get a gift. Maybe the next time you give.
Receive or give a gift. I want you to think about that question. That Jesus asked the woman. If you knew the gift. Of God. If you knew the gift. Of God. And I want you to think about what that means. What it means to believe.
That an all powerful perfect God. Could allow his son. To die. And exchange those things. For the life of a sinner.
[20:36] And you know what? You might already believe that. You might already know that today. You might be sitting here thinking. I've. I've been there for a long time. Not perfect. But I get it. And I'm grateful for it.

Here's a challenge for you. If that's you. And that is me as well. Do we appropriately value that gift? As we should.
Does that gift. Does that reality define us? Does it. Does it make us live in such a way. That gratitude. And purpose. And meaning. And generosity.
Are what come forth. Not just at Christmas. Right? It's easier to do it. When everyone else is doing it. But how about all the other times? I'll be the first to admit. I've got a lot of work to do there. I'm forgetful.
I'm skeptical. I'm annoyed. I'm critical. I'm things that I shouldn't be. But imagine. If I lived in such a way. That that gift was just resonating from the person that I am.
[21:35] What if my attitude showed. What if my attitude showed. And reflected the fact that a sinful person. The God that knows all the mistakes I made. The God that sees the bad decisions. And the terrible thoughts.

And the misses. And still chose. To save me. What if my life reflected that. If that's you. I would challenge you with that for the new year.
I'm going to close with a song. It's a song you might have heard. It's not a traditional Christmas song. It's one of my favorites however. You'll see the words here in a minute. But just remember those things we talked about. Think about those things this Christmas.
Think about knowing the gift of God. Knowing the gift of God. And what that looks like. Go ahead. You can play.

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