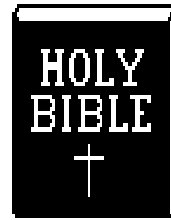


# SERMON NOTES

**Speaker:** James E. Rogers  
**Date:** December 21, 2014  
**Place:** Smyrna, Cookeville, Tennessee  
**Subject:** Great Gifts



## I. INTRODUCTION

A. Gift-giving is known from early days.

1. Abram gave tithes to Melchizedek. Genesis 14:20
2. Wise men brought gifts to Jesus. Matthew 2:11
3. Mary anointed Jesus' feet. John 12:3
4. Barnabas sold land and gave. Acts 4:36,37

B. Christianity is a religion of gifts.

1. "A preacher wrote several letters to a wealthy man asking for a donation. Finally the irate wealthy man wrote to the preacher, "All you think about is asking for money. Christianity is just giving, giving, giving." The preacher wrote a letter of appreciation or the excellent definition of Christianity."<sup>1</sup>

a. Acts 20:35

b. Ephesians 4:28

2. Christianity's existence is dependent upon great gifts.

3. The perpetuity of Christianity is dependent upon great gifts today.

C. Let us notice three great gifts associated with Christianity.

## II. GOD'S GREAT GIFTS

A. God gave and sustains life.

1. Genesis 2:7

2. Joshua 14:10
3. Matthew 19:4
4. Acts 17:25,28; 14:17
5. 2 Corinthians 9:10,11

B. God gave his Son. John 3:16

1. Jesus was given because God is love. 1 John 4:8
  - a. God's love is unselfish love.
  - b. The measure of love determines the greatness of the gift - the greater the love, the greater the gift.
2. Jesus was given when we did not deserve it.
  - a. Romans 5:6-11; 8:32
  - b. 2 Corinthians 5:21
3. God's love revealed itself in action.
  - a. 1 John 4:9
  - b. “An African boy listened carefully as his teacher explained why Christians were such giving people . . . . A couple of days later the boy brought the teacher a seashell of lustrous beauty. ‘Where did you ever find such a beautiful shell?’ the teacher asked. The youth told her that there was only one spot where such extraordinary shells could be found.  
  
“When he named the place . . . the teacher was speechless. She knew it would have taken the young man hours to walk to the bay. Also, he would have faced many dangers from the jungle and rocky cliffs of the seacoast along the way.  
  
“‘Why, it’s gorgeous and wonderful, but you shouldn’t have gone all that way to get the gift for me,’ the teacher joyfully exclaimed.  
  
“His eyes brightening, the boy answered, ‘Long walk part of gift.’ (Story adapted from *Preaching* Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 88, 2007).”<sup>2</sup>

### III. JESUS GAVE HIS LIFE

A. He left glory to give this gift.

1. John 1:1,2,14
2. Philippians 2:7,8
3. 2 Corinthians 8:9

B. He died a shameful death on the cross.

1. At that time, the most shameful way to die.

- a. Crucifixion was reserved for criminals. Matthew 26:66
- b. The cross became powerful. 1 Corinthians 1:18

2. His death was to benefit me.

- a. Luke 22:19,20
- b. 2 Corinthians 5:15
- c. Galatians 1:4
- d. Hebrews 2:9

C. His death was a redeeming sacrifice for sin.

1. Man was under the sentence of death. Romans 3:23; 6:23

2. Jesus redeemed man from destruction.

- a. Hebrews 13:12
- b. Acts 20:28
- c. Matthew 20:28
- d. 1 Corinthians 6:20
- e. 2 Corinthians 5:21
- f. Titus 2:11-14

g. 1 Peter 2:22-25

h. 1 John 2:2

3. "Thaddeus Bruno, a preacher from the Caribbean, once stated: 'When God washed my sins away, He cast them on the sea of forgetfulness, and put up a sign saying, 'No fishing.'"<sup>3</sup>

D. His gift was the greatest he could give.

1. He knew his cross would bring men to God.

a. John 12:32; 3:14-16

b. Romans 1:16

2. He gave it voluntarily. John 10:11-18

#### **IV. MAN IS TO GIVE HIMSELF**

A. What is required of me? Micah 6:8

B. Man must obey the will of God.

1. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

2. John 14:6,15,21,23,24

3. Hebrews 5:8,9

C. What will result from this gift?

1. We crucify self.

a. 2 Corinthians 5:15

b. Galatians 2:20

2. We seek purity of life. 1 Peter 1:13-25

3. Our minds (affections) are on eternal things. Colossians 3:1,2; Philippians 3:17-20

4. We are concerned about others.

a. 2 Corinthians 8:5

b. Galatians 6:1-10

c. James 1:27

d. 1 John 4:11

5. We learn to give. 2 Corinthians 8,9

6. We live above the world. Romans 12:1,2

## **V. CONCLUSION**

A. All of these gifts are prompted by love.

1. God loved and gave his Son.

2. Jesus loved and gave His life.

3. Man loves and gives himself.

B. Will you give your gift in response to the gifts of God and Jesus?

C. Obey the Gospel.

D. Live faithfully.

## **ENDNOTES**

1. Ralph Burris, "The Three Greatest Gifts," Sermon Outline, p. 284

2. Mark T. Tonkery, "Long Walk Part of Gift," Glad Tidings, Good Things, Volume 12, November 15, 2007

3. James Long, "Gifts," Lake Hills Bulletin, Vol. 29, No. 47, December 13, 1998, p. 3