

The Greatest Gift of All

Theme

God's Grace

Object

A gift-wrapped package

Scripture

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8 (NIV) For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)

Activities + Resources

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Look at this beautifully wrapped package. As you can probably guess by the way it is wrapped, there is a gift inside. Do any of you like to receive gifts? Of course you do! I can't imagine anyone saying that they don't enjoy receiving a gift. If I were to give this package to you and ask you to give me five dollars, would it be a gift? No, if you have to pay for it or do something to receive it, it isn't a gift. When someone gives you a gift, it doesn't cost you anything. It doesn't come with any conditions. All you have to do is accept it. That's what makes it a gift.

What was the best gift you have ever received? Was it your first bicycle? Maybe it was an Xbox 360® or a Sony Playstation®. For some of you it may have been a battery-operated remote control car or, for others, it might have been a favorite stuffed toy. In a group like this, we might have a lot of different ideas

about what makes a great gift, but today I want to tell you about a gift that is, without question, the greatest gift ever given.

What is that gift? It is the gift of eternal life. It is the gift of God and it was given to anyone who wants to receive it. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Whoever -- that's you and me. The greatest gift of all is for you and me.

When someone gives you a gift, it is never polite to ask, "How much did it cost?" But in this case, the Bible tells us how much God's gift cost -- and the cost was great. It cost God his only Son. Can you imagine how much God loved us to send his one and only Son to earth to die on a cross so that we could have eternal life? Can you imagine how much Jesus loved us to be willing to die on that cross so that we could have eternal life in heaven?

Eternal life -- what a gift! And all we have to do to receive it is believe and accept Jesus as our Savior.

Thank you, Father, for the greatest gift of all. Thank you for Jesus, who loved us so much that he paid the price for our sin to give us the gift of eternal life. Amen.