

Christmas, 2016

**Dear Family of Bible Fellowship,**

Our Christmas Eve service was a beautiful time together singing carols and reading scripture. We have so much to be thankful for and mindful of to run the risk of missing Christmas like so many did as we saw in the Christmas story. Thinking of the inn keeper and Herod and the religious leaders of that day. They all missed Christmas. It was good to witness this message of the greatest miracle of all time.

That miracle—the good news that we celebrate at Christmas, is that God “demonstrated His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Proclaimed by the prophets of the Old Testament, God taking on human flesh and then dying for sinful man on the Cross is indeed the perfect gift (Hebrews 1:1-3). In fact, God planned to give us this gift before the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8).

Jesus Christ came into this world to reveal the Father’s love and grace as well as His plan to redeem mankind. That is why we celebrate Christmas: Jesus came to give us the full and final revelation of who God is and the depth of His character. It is because of this revelation that we can see how much God loves us. Whether you are discouraged, defeated, dismayed, or distraught this Christmas, remember this great antidote—God loves you, and He wants you to be a part of His family through the sacrifice for sin made at Calvary. But that is not the end, He also wants us to trust Him to guide us into His perfect will for our lives as we keep living (Colossians 1:9-10).

Thinking it over, we in a real sense can deliver this perfect gift to our loved ones as we proclaim to them the Good News of Christmas—there is a Savior who has taken their place on the Cross and now offers them eternal life if they but repent and believe.

Delivery of the perfect gift is also our responsibility at church. Our message of hope goes out not only on Sundays, but throughout the week in personal contacts, Bible studies and in special meetings. Many lives are being touched through this ministry, and your faithfulness makes this possible.

Gifts are great and Christmas is a great time of gift giving. You have overwhelmed my family with gifts of love and cards and we are so grateful. But Christians know that Christmas has never been and never will be about the presents. It is about the presence of God in the person of Jesus. Christmas is all about the incarnation of Christ, the reality that the “Word” became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.

My challenge to you this Christmas is that whatever else you’re giving people, give them Christ. Present Christ in your words and deeds and songs and holiday happenings.

May God bless you and your family at this Christmas season,  
Pastor Cal, Joan, John, Joy, and Gracie VanderMey