

## The Unopened Gift

Christmas is now a distant memory. Even Epiphany (the final of the 12 days of Christmas) has passed. All the gifts that were once under the tree have long ago been put away. That is, all except for one gift. It is still laying on the floor right next to where the Christmas tree had been. It was lovingly placed under the tree on Christmas Eve for the celebration of Jesus' birth. The package is addressed to someone, perhaps even you. For whatever reason, that someone refused to open it. The giver is wondering why this special present was never opened. Little did anyone know that it was the best gift of all.



Gifts come in all shapes and sizes. Some are purchased at discount stores or on sale while the most unique gifts are handmade. Some gifts are priceless because of the loving thought involved. One of the reasons why a gift is special is the sacrifice involved on the part of the giver. It may have been purchased at great cost. Other times it took a significant effort to create the gift. The unopened gift was both purchased at great cost and is priceless. Sometimes it took a superhuman effort to complete. It is a shame that such a special gift wasn't wanted by the person whose name was on the tag.

By now you are probably beginning to realize the nature of the gift. In the manger at Bethlehem God gave us all the gift of His son, Jesus Christ. It was intended for all of us and is given again and again to people specifically named on the tag. It was, and still is, the most special gift of all. The sacrificial part would become evident when Jesus was nailed to the cross. But, it accomplished exactly what it was supposed to do: be a life-changing gift for each of us.

Think back to Advent. The gift is a life of hope, joy, love and peace. It is the first step leading up to the sacrifice, which provides salvation for all believers. Because of salvation we will see our loved ones of the faith again in Heaven. But, it is not just a gift for the future. In the present, we can live a life without the burden of sin weighing us down. In our everyday lives it is the gift of Hope, Joy, Love and Peace that comes from accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. There is no gift you could ever receive of greater significance.

The gift of the Savior cost God His son, but is lovingly offered to you and me. It is a handmade gift by God that He specifically wants you to have. You may have already welcomed this gift, but if your name is on the package, open it, embrace it and let it change your life.

Will you accept this very special gift, wrapped especially for you?

**Question:** Have you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior? If so, how are you encouraging others to receive this gift?

**Scripture:** *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8).*

*Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord (Luke 2:11).*