

A Special Christmas Gift

As the calendar flips to December, the official countdown starts. Everywhere we look, we see reminders of how many days it is until Christmas. We keep lists of people for whom we have yet to select a Christmas gift. Sometimes it isn't easy to think of something that would be meaningful to certain people on our list.



One gift that we can't purchase in a store or online is the gift of faith. A person's decision for Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior is a personal choice – not something we give someone. It is an important decision that people don't take lightly, and some are hesitant or even resistant to the idea. They need our reassurance and to see us as an example of giving their heart to Jesus. We know its importance. The Bible reminds us, *For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:13)*. We probably all have friends or loved ones who haven't made the decision yet. God still loves them. *But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)*. And, even though we are followers of Jesus, we are still sinners, too. (Just, forgiven.)

You won't find the gift of faith in any catalog or website because it is God's gift to give. *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8)*. Our role is to encourage people by telling them about Jesus' love for them. Be willing to share your faith. Only when a person is ready can they receive the Holy Spirit in their heart.

For us, it may not happen as soon as we want. It takes patience, persistence, and unconditional love. God does the hard work, but we lay the groundwork. God is at work even while we are waiting, and His timeline may be beyond our timeline.

We set the stage for the Holy Spirit to do its work. Christmas is when people are more open to attend a church service. Perhaps this is your opportunity. Who are you going to invite to worship with you at Christmas? Our prayer is that our friends and loved ones will be open to receiving the Holy Spirit.

Question: Who will you invite to worship with you at Christmas?

Prayer: Dear Lord. We pray that the people we know and love will open their hearts to receive you this Christmas. Amen.

