



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



The Best Gift Ever!

Recently my wife, Rebecca, and I were reminiscing over childhood Christmas memories. She shared a story about one Christmas which was especially meaningful to her.

Rebecca had a big family, so Christmas morning never failed to bring excitement in her house. On this Christmas, she and her 15 siblings awoke with their usual enthusiasm in anticipation of the pleasant surprises that had miraculously appeared under the Christmas tree. With so many kids at home, even if each child only received one gift, the tree would be surrounded with presents.

The Mystery Gift

As the gifts were quickly distributed, Rebecca impatiently waited to receive hers. Perhaps it was a new doll hidden among the other gifts, a new purse, or a new garment that would make her the center of attention upon her return from Christmas Break. What could it be?

One by one, the gifts were claimed. Only a few were left under the tree, including one larger item that became more visible as the other gifts were removed. It looked like a large box. The shiny red color drew Rebecca's attention. She had not received her gift yet, and wondered which one it would be.

Most of Rebecca's siblings had received their gifts. Now she could see that the red box was a piece of patent leather luggage. It shined in the glow of the Christmas tree lights. Whose was it?

As her mother pulled it from behind the tree, she quickly looked around to see who was still waiting for their gift. Rebecca wished her mother would move faster so she could finally get the gift that belonged to her. To her surprise, her mother walked over and handed the luggage to her.

This was a terrific gift, but there was more. When Rebecca opened the piece of luggage, she found two matching pieces inside.

It was the best gift ever! All that day, she opened and closed the luggage. She picked out her favorite dresses and blouses and packed them inside. She dressed up and pretended to go on exotic trips. She imagined how fun it would be to visit nieces and nephews and show off her fancy gift.

Love Sometimes Fades with Time

Unfortunately, with a large family these dream trips were few. But that didn't matter — she was always ready to go. In fact, every year when Christmas came, she would pull out her luggage and set it under the Christmas tree. After Christmas, she carefully put it away until the next Christmas so it always looked brand new!

As much as my wife loved her childhood gift, her love faded over the years. This is common of many of the things we value in life. Over time, we simply lose interest and replace these items.

At Christmastime, many homes throughout the world treat Jesus like a gift that fades with time and can be outgrown and replaced. They only pay attention to Him on Christmas Day. And yet, those who have received the good news of Christ see Him as the best Gift ever. Which one are you?

How to Have Christmas Every Day

Luke talks to us about the angel's Christmas announcement to shepherds who were watching their sheep: "And the angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.'" (Luke 2:10)

The good news refers to God's love for us — love that caused Him to send . . . [Read Full Story](#)

Christmas Is Worth the Wait

Part of the thrill of Christmas lies in the anticipation of what's coming. Part of the challenge of Christmas lies in waiting for it. (Three hundred fifty-eight days, to be exact.) But when Christmas Day finally arrives and we open our presents, most of the time we realize the gifts were worth the wait.

What's true of Christmas applies to the rest of life. But few realize how much the long-awaited Gift of Christmas can change the way we wait in other areas of life.

The Great Christmas Wait

The Great Christmas Wait began in the Garden of Eden when God told Eve her offspring would bruise the serpent Satan's head in Genesis 3:15. From that point on, the world has searched for a messiah, a deliverer, a savior. Capable leaders have risen and fallen over the years, but none have been worthy to wear the mantle of Savior of the World. So the wait continued.

While the world waited, God gave clues about the Messiah to the Jewish nation of Israel. In 735 B.C., the prophet Isaiah gave this description: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)

Hundreds of years passed, with no one making a legitimate claim to the title of Savior. So Israel — and the entire world — waited.

The Gift of Christmas

The world had waited so long, it nearly forgot what it was waiting for. Then one night, a virgin (remember Isaiah 7:14?) in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) had a baby. She called Him Jesus. This sparked a chain of events which could only be explained as divine: An angel proclaimed His birth to nearby shepherds (Luke 2:8–12). God told Simeon, who had waited his entire life for the Messiah, that he would not die until he saw the newborn (Luke 2:25–32). On Jesus' first visit to church, the elderly prophetess Anna told everyone that He was the Messiah (Luke 2:36–

38). A star alerted astrologers in another country of His birth, and they crossed national borders to visit Him (Matthew 2:1–2).

Were these coincidences? I think not. The Apostle Paul wrote, "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son. . ." (Galatians 4:4a). The timing was right. Hundreds of years of waiting had built up to these priceless moments. The Great Christmas Wait was over; the Gift of Christmas had come. Period. End of story — or was it?

Not so fast.

The Beauty of Christmas

The best Gift of Christmas wasn't Jesus' birth. It was Jesus Himself. The name Immanuel in Isaiah's prophecy means God with us. The Messiah the world had waited for is the God who was close enough that He could reach them. He was wise enough that He could understand them. He was strong enough that He could carry them. He was capable enough that He could provide for them. He was human enough that He could die for them. And when they faced difficult seasons of waiting, His presence was enough to give them peace.

Just as we are challenged to wait at Christmas-time, we will also be challenged to wait in life. Jesus' presence is not a charm that magically reduces our wait times at mall checkout lines, airports or theme parks. It doesn't guarantee instantly restored relationships or trouble-free health. We will not get everything we have hoped for right away. It will take time for our circumstances to change. Or they may not change at all. The beauty of Christmas is that it reminds us Jesus is enough. This long-awaited Gift of Immanuel promises the peace of His presence in every season of life. And that Gift is worth the wait.

- Cam Edwards

