

Christmas Eve 2010  
*The Most Unselfish Giver*  
12-24-10

**My hope is that God has blessed all of you with people in your lives who you can be “in the red” with**

- People you can be in the red, with are people in your life who continue to love you, reach out to you, and pour out blessings on you even when you don't return the favor.
- I praise God that He has blessed me with lots of people in my life who I can be in the red with
  - Tante Judy
    - Cards, gifts, and loving words
  - My good friend Dan
    - Phone calls, e-mails, and birthday wishes
- It's AMAZING to me that despite all the times I've failed to say thank you, failed to return their calls, and failed to give back to them the way they have given to me, they continue to love me, reach out to me, and pour out blessings on me like nothing ever happened.

**God is the same way**

- There is no one we're more in the red with than God.
- God has given us *absolutely everything* we've got
  - **James 1:17 (ESV)**  
<sup>17</sup>Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,  
...
  - **1 Corinthians 4:7 (ESV)**  
<sup>7</sup>...What do you have that you did not receive?...
- And yet how often do we fail to thank God, fail to give back to God, or fail to return God's loving call?
- Yet despite the way we treat Him, God continues to love us, reach out to us, and pour out abundant blessings on us day after day.
- I am constantly AMAZED by the grace of God!

**But that's not all God does!**

- Imagine if, instead of simply failing to adequately thank, acknowledge, and give back to those we are in the red with, we began to mistreat, abuse, and reject them as well?
  - Imagine if you became so busy and enamored with other things in your life that you began to blow off and completely ignore your loving benevolent friends, to want nothing to do with them, and to treat them as though they didn't even exist.
  - Or imagine if you took it a step further and not only ignored your loving benevolent friends but began to ridicule, malign, and slander them as well, to tear them down, spit in their face, and go against all that they stood for.
- For how long would they continue to love you, reach out to you, and pour out blessing on you?
  - For most of us, the obvious answer is, not too long.

**But what is not so obvious to most of us is that this is exactly what we've done to God.**

- The Bible teaches clearly teaches that not only have we failed to adequately thank, acknowledge, and give back to God for all He's done for us, but we have mistreated, abused, and rejected Him as well.
  - The Bible describes all of us as spiritual adulterers and rebellious children

**Yet AMAZINGLY, despite our mistreatment, abuse, and rejection of Him, God continues to love, reach out to, and pour out blessing on us.**

- Nowhere was this more apparent than on Christmas Eve, 2,000 years ago, when God sent His One and Only Son Jesus Christ to be born in a manger and to die on the cross 33 years later as the propitiation for our sins.
  - **Philippians 2:5-8 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in

human form, <sup>8</sup> he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

o **1 John 2:1-2 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

<sup>2</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

- This gift makes God, BY FAR, the most unselfish giver of all time.

**So what does God ask of us in return?**

- In one sense the answer is nothing.
  - o God isn't looking for you to pay Him back. He knows that you can't. His love for you is unconditional and His gift of salvation through Jesus Christ is absolutely free. All you have to do is believe in Him.
- But in another sense the answer is everything.
  - o God wants all of your love, all of your trust, and all of your devotion. He wants you to be His and His alone and to leave all your idols behind. He wants you to trust and obey Him fully and to stop rebelling against His good and loving commandments. He wants you to devote your whole life to knowing, loving, and serving Him, not because you have to, but because you want to. God wants all of you.

**So as you go from here tonight to celebrate Christmas with your families I want you to consider this question, "Have you given God your all?"**

- Have you given Him all your love, all your trust, all your devotion? Have you given Him everything?
- If your answer to that question is no, I want to encourage you to start doing so tonight.
- Every good and perfect gift comes from above. Everything you have is a gift from Him. He sent His One and Only Son to take the wrath of God for your sins so that you don't have to. The least you can do is give your all back to Him.

**Let's pray**