

Have You Redeemed the Christmas Gift?

One of the most popular Christmas gifts that is given are gift cards. Some 39.2 percent of shoppers will purchase a department store gift card for friends and family, followed by 33.4 percent of shoppers opting for a restaurant gift card. Shockingly the Journal of State Taxation estimates that the typical American home has an average of \$300 in “unredeemed” gift cards lying around unused. These cards are often misplaced, accidentally thrown out, or only partially redeemed. According to this report, between 2005 and 2011, \$41 billion in gift cards went unused. That is amazing! What good is a gift card that is never used? What good is God’s gift of his Son if you have not opened your heart to His love?

God has come down in Jesus Christ. God humbled himself on our behalf. Humanity has been lifted and salvation has come near. Where The horizontal and the vertical intersect there is the Cross of Jesus Christ. A famous artist painted a picture of the Nativity. In his painting, across the crib falls the shadow of the cross. Salvation is God’s eternal plan for humanity. That is why He has come down. That is why we have been lifted. Heaven and earth have intersected at the cross of Calvary. We are the recipients of the greatest gift of all. The God of all creation has become the babe of Bethlehem. The babe of Bethlehem became the Lamb of Calvary. Because of the Divine drama of which the stable of Bethlehem was only a part, our salvation has been made possible. It was in our behalf that God humbled Himself, and the salvation that He offers is free to all who will receive it. There is no material gift that we can offer the Christ child in return for what God has done for us. When we try to offer something material to God, or something derived from our own accomplishment, God must smile with appreciation and understanding, but the gift He offers us is totally, unconditionally free. There are no strings attached. There is only one gift we can offer Him in return. That is to receive the gift that He offers us.

God has humbled Himself and come down in Jesus Christ. Humanity has been lifted up. Salvation has drawn nigh. All we must do is receive it joyfully and make it our own. Do not let the season, your life or your joy be unused like the gift card lost in your sock drawer. Live redeemed and this Christmas receive the fullness of what Christ has done! I pray that you have redeemed this sacred gift! I close with the last two verses of “O Little Town of Bethlehem” states, “How silently, how silently; The wondrous gift is given. God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven; No ear may hear His coming but in this world of sin; Where meek souls will receive him still; The dear Christ enters in! O holy Child of Bethlehem; Descend to us, we pray; Cast out our sin and enter in be born to us today; We hear the Christmas angels; The great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us; Our Lord Emmanuel” My friend will your meek soul receive him still? If so, the dear Christ will enter in!