

Sermon for Christ & Grace Church Petersburg, VA  
Christmas Day, December 25, 2017  
The Rev. Bill Queen  
“The Best Christmas Gift”

because of the focus on gifts that Christmas morning has, and since we are having a blessing of gifts in this service, I have been thinking about what might be the best Christmas gift ever; and I came up with a list of criteria that the best Christmas gift ever would have to have

the best Christmas gift ever would have to be unexpected; surprises are always more exciting than something expected

the best Christmas gift ever would have to be something that couldn't break, wear out, or get lost; no matter how nice something is to start with, it's no good to you anymore if it breaks, wears out, or gets lost

the best Christmas gift ever would have to change your life for the better; there may be some things we want that might actually not be good for us, or might change our life for the worse

the best Christmas gift ever would have to be small enough that you could have it with you all the time; you wouldn't want something that you would have to leave at home

the best Christmas gift ever would have to be something that you could share with other people; anything we enjoy alone can be enjoyed so much more if we can share it

the best Christmas gift ever would have to be priceless, and I don't mean extremely expensive; I mean priceless in a way that you could not put a value on it

last, I think the best Christmas gift ever would have to be something alive, not a thing; no material object could stack up against a living thing

after reviewing all of these criteria, I think I've come up with something that fits them all, and so qualifies as the best Christmas gift ever: how about a

puppy?; no, that's close, but it came in second place for me; first place for me as the best Christmas gift ever would have to be: (show - the figurine that just showed up in our nativity set last night) Jesus

Jesus was unexpected; the prophets thought the Messiah would be a warrior king to lead them into battle and defeat their enemies; instead, God incarnate came unexpectedly as one of us

Jesus can't break, wear out, or get lost; the relationship he promises with us cannot be broken or ended, ever

Jesus changes our life for the better; in fact, we can't truly have life, in its fullest, without Jesus

we can't leave Jesus behind because he won't leave us behind; he promises to be with us always, to never leave us; even if we forget him, he stays with us; he carries us everywhere

not only can Jesus be shared, Jesus expects us to share our knowledge and love of him with other people

you can't put any price tag on Jesus and our relationship with him; that is the most priceless and valuable thing in the whole world, and in the next world too

last, Jesus must be a living person to us, in a living relationship with us; our faith cannot consist of things alone--not church buildings, or Bibles, or anything else

as you return home and look over the gifts you have already opened, or as you continue opening gifts, remember why we give and receive gifts at Christmas in the first place: to remind us of the greatest gift ever--Jesus; to remind us of the gift that has already been given to us--Jesus; so, enjoy the gift of Jesus; use the gift of Jesus by keeping your relationship with him alive and vibrant; deepen your experience of the gift of Jesus through continuing learning about him, through continuing prayer with him, and continuing through service in this name to other people; share the gift of Jesus with everyone around you; give thanks to God for us having received Jesus as the greatest Christmas gift ever