

God's Gift to Himself

Scripture Reading — John 3:16-21

“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son ...”

John 3:16 —

When I was a boy, our family exchanged gifts in early December—around the old Dutch celebration of Sinterklaas. We kids loved the arrangement because we got our presents sooner than most everyone else did. But my parents established this tradition for another reason: it was a way for them to ensure that our imaginations were unhitched from thoughts of shiny packages and more fully joined to the important Christmas events to be celebrated later in the month.

Have you ever thought about the gift that God gave to himself on the first Christmas? By sending Jesus Christ to the world, God ensured that he would eventually have his beloved creation back in fully restored condition. Christmas, and the recreated, sin-free world that would eventually come through the work of Christ, was God’s gift to himself!

Jesus says that God loved the world so much “that he gave his one and only Son.” We often assume that the love Jesus is talking about here is like the love of a father who wants what is best for his children. But God’s love is all that and more. God also deeply loves and cares for the world he has made, the world he gave us to care for so long ago. And God wants that object of his love to be restored along with us. We are a part of the world God loves, and he wants to rejoin with us in it!

Prayer

Merry Christmas, dear Father! May our joy yesterday and today be a wonderful reflection of your joy, as your world is remade for your glory. In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

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