

James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

During Christmas time, there are two types of gifts that people give. First and foremost are those gifts that you think long and hard about, because you love or care about that person so much that you want to make sure that you give them that perfect gift, and show that person how much he or she really means to you. A lot of times it's not something that they ask for, but it is something that you know that they really want or really need, and they would never ask for such a extravagant gift.

The second gift that you buy or give during Christmas is not one that is thought out at all. It's usually something you buy because you have to, not because you really want to. That's where the stores make their big bucks, because they put together these so-called gift sets of perfumes, colognes, coffee or hot chocolate and a mug to drink it from, etc.... A lot of these gifts cost anywhere from \$5 to \$20 bucks, because they know you don't want to spend a lot of money on that person, but want to get something because "you have to".

Now I know Christmas ended over six months ago (my, how time flies) and this is not a Christmas teaching, but it's more of a heart teaching. Look at what James, the half brother of Jesus said in today's verse, ***"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above."*** And just reading that, we could associate it with what I already said about two types of gifts, that perfect gift, verses that gift you have to buy. But it doesn't end there, because James also says that it, ***"comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."***

So we are not talking about a Christmas gift, by giving to others because we want to, or because you feel that we have to. No, God, sent His Son, Jesus to this earth as that perfect gift to only those that He loves.

"Wow, Steve, I thought God sent Jesus for everyone?" and you are 100% right. You see, when God sent His Son Jesus to this earth, did you realize that there was not a white elephant gift, or a cheap gift set that God sent for those that He didn't love? Why, because God loves everyone of His creation who are made in His image, which is every single man and woman.

"But there are so many bad people, so how can you say that doesn't God hate those people?" you may be wondering. Nope, God loves them all, and He sent His Son Jesus to die for all. Didn't Jesus teach us to, ***"love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you"*** Matthew 5:44 and if God is telling us to love, not like or tolerate them, but to love our enemies, how much more does He, as God, love His creation that is made in His image!

So today's devotional is not really about you giving more, but realizing that God gave His all, His everything, which is His Son Jesus for us, because He loves each and everyone one of us, whether you feel like it or not. Because once again, there is not a second gift that God sent for those that He didn't love, because He loves all, and that mean YOU TOO!!!

† **Romans 5:8** *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*