The Greatest Christmas Gift Ever Given  
*John 3:16*

**Introduction:**
1. I’m sure that in a couple of days some extraordinary gifts will be given. Some gifts will make the person jump up and down, some will cause the person to cry, some may cause the person to lose his breath and be overwhelmed.
2. But what is the greatest Christmas gift ever given? You have to go back 2,000 years ago to Bethlehem. There in Bethlehem was a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
3. This was Jesus, the Son of God – the greatest gift ever given in the world. And the only reason we give gifts is to commemorate the greatest gift ever given – Jesus Christ.
4. Without Christ, there would be no Christmas, no gift-giving, no reason to celebrate. He is the greatest gift ever given. Why is He the greatest gift ever given? Let’s look at *John 3:16*.

**First, because the gift of Jesus came to us from the hand of God.**
1. Notice who the giver is in this verse – it is God Himself. God Almighty gave the greatest gift ever given – His Son, Jesus Christ.
2. God the Son had always been with God the Father from eternity past. They were never apart and never out of fellowship (*John 1:1-2, 14*). Yet God gave His only begotten Son…
   - Some of you have lost a spouse and you were together 40 or 50 years. You know how tough it is. Think about God giving His Son who had been with Him from eternity past.
3. Who did God give His Son to? To the world, to us. The greatest gift ever given, and God gave it to us. What an honor!
4. This is why *2 Corinthians 9:15* declares, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."
5. **Illustration:** ham in the freezer - God didn't do this. When He gave, He gave His best. He didn't give one of the cherubim or an angel or a saint from the past. He gave the greatest gift ever given - Jesus Christ. *Romans 5:15-18*

**Second, because the gift of Jesus was given out of pure love.**
1. In two days, many gifts will be given, but it would be foolish for us to assume that they will all be given out of pure love.
   - Some will give because they feel obligated to give a gift.
   - Some will give in order to impress somebody else.
   - Some will give in order to be recognized.
   - Some will give because they don't want to be embarrassed.
   - Some will give in hopes of getting back something better.
2. What am I saying? We don't always give with 100% pure motives, do we? Yet God the Father gave His Son to this world out of pure love. He loved us.
3. Christ, in turn, gave His life out of pure love for the Father and for lost mankind. *Galatians 2:20*
4. Isn't it good to know that God loved the world? He didn't just love an exclusive group of people, a certain race, or a certain nationality. He didn't just love the wealthy, the powerful, or the influential.

5. Jesus Christ was God's gift of love to the world. Christ gave His life on the cross as a full payment for sin and He did this for every man. Hebrews 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 John 2:2

6. Are you part of the world? Then God gave the gift of His Son to you!

Third, because the gift of Jesus brings everlasting life.

1. Most of the gifts we give have no awesome or incredible results. Most of our gifts either wear out or rust out or get thrown out eventually.

2. But not so with this gift that God gave to us. The results of this gift are life-changing. Notice the verse says, "...should not perish, but have everlasting life."

3. How long is everlasting? That is forever. How would you like to live forever and never die? You can - John 11:25-26

4. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but the story doesn't end there. As you read the life story of Jesus, you discover that Jesus was born to die. Jesus knew this.

John 10:11, 17-18

5. When Jesus was 33 years old, He gave Himself to die on a cross. Why did He do this? Christ was paying for the sins of all of mankind. The Bible declares that "...the wages of sin is death." Sin has created a barrier between mankind and God.

6. Christ stood in the gap that existed because of man's sin. There on the cross, He made a full and complete payment for our sins. Romans 5:6, 8
   - He made it possible for you and me to be reconciled back to God. Colossians 1:20-21

7. God gave the Son, and the Son gave His life. This was all part of salvation's plan so that we could receive forgiveness of sins and everlasting life.

8. But in order for a gift to become yours, what must you do? Simply receive it. God will not force this gift upon you. He allows you to decide.

9. The moment you believe with your heart that Christ died for your sin - the moment you trust Him alone to save you, God gives you the gift of eternal life.
   - In Acts 16:30-31 a man asked the apostle Paul, "...what must I do to be saved?" Paul answered, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."

10. Romans 6:23 is very clear. We deserve death, but the gift of God is eternal life and He gives this gift through His Son, Jesus Christ.
   - Imagine giving a gift to somebody in two days and they immediately take out their wallet and try to pay you for it. This would be an insult wouldn't it? A gift must be accepted, but it can't be bought or earned.
   - Webster's Dictionary defines “gift” as, "Something voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation."
   - Some people think they can earn eternal life in heaven, but you simply cannot.

11. God desires to give you the gift of eternal life. God has already paid the price for this gift on the cross of Calvary. Now the ball is in your court.
   - You either receive the gift by believing on Jesus Christ to be your Savior.
   - You reject the gift of eternal life by rejecting Jesus Christ.

John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."