

MAX LUCADO

A
LOVE
WORTH
GIVING TO
YOU

at Christmas



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MAX LUCADO



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

A Love Worth Giving to You at Christmas

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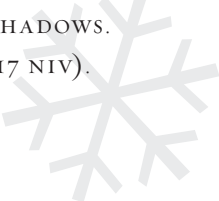

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THE SEASON OF GIVING



EVERY GOOD AND PERFECT GIFT
IS FROM ABOVE, COMING DOWN FROM
THE FATHER OF THE HEAVENLY LIGHTS,
WHO DOES NOT CHANGE LIKE
SHIFTING SHADOWS.
(JAMES 1:17 NIV).



Extravagant Giving

We delight in giving our loved ones extravagant gifts, don't we? Especially at Christmas. Yes, we give gifts throughout the year—birthdays, anniversaries, and other special occasions—but at Christmastime, we put a little more effort into finding that extra special gift for that special person, or persons, in our lives. An engagement ring. A family portrait. A special edition leather-bound book. A set of golf clubs. Diamond earrings. A puppy. Whatever

the gift might be, we want it to be a bountiful expression of our love.

Maybe it has something to do with the lavishness of the gift that first Christmas morning, the extravagance of love that came in the form of a tiny, helpless newborn. Consider the gift for a moment, what Jesus *really* did. He swapped a spotless castle for a grimy stable. He exchanged the worship of angels for the company of killers. He could hold the universe in his palm but gave it up to float in the womb of a maiden.

If you were God, would you sleep on straw, nurse from a breast, and be clothed in a diaper? Christ did.

If you knew that only a few would care that you came, would you still come? If you knew that those you loved would laugh in your face, would you still care? If you knew that the tongues you made would mock you, the mouths you made would spit at you, the hands you made would crucify you, would you still make them? Christ did. Would you regard

the immobile and invalid more important than yourself? Jesus did.

He humbled himself. He went from commanding angels to sleeping in the straw. From holding stars to clutching Mary's finger. The palm that held the universe took the nail of a soldier.

Why? Because that's what love does. It puts the beloved before itself. Your soul was more important than his blood. Your eternal life was more important than his earthly life. Your place in heaven was more important to him than his place in heaven, so he gave up his so you could have yours.

And that's what extravagant giving is all about—love, God's love, a love that knows no bounds, no limits, no end. The Christmas kind of love. The type of love we are commanded to give to others: "So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other" (John 13:34 NLT). A love worth giving to others. To you.

There's a problem, though. How can you give something that you never truly received?



A LOVE WORTH GIVING



WE LOVE EACH OTHER AS A RESULT
OF HIS LOVING US FIRST.



(1 JOHN 4:19 NLT)



The Party

The Bible provides insight into what I call the 7:47 principle, “A person who is forgiven little shows only little love” (Luke 7:47 NLT). The setting is a party in Capernaum. Jesus is the guest of honor, and well, you’ll pick up the rest as we enter the room.

Could two people be more different?

He is looked up to. She is looked down on.

He is a church leader. She is a streetwalker.

He makes a living promoting standards.
She’s made a living breaking them.