

MYSTERY AND MAJESTY GOD WITH US

STUDY TWO

Jesus . . . What a Gift!

2 Corinthians 9:15; Philippians 2:5–8

If you think Jesus' conception and birth were amazing, then look before the conception. Realize who they held in their arms and you'll see the baby in a whole new light.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

CHILDREN unwrap Christmas gifts with uncontainable delight. Their eyes widen, their jaws drop, and their voices squeal excitedly over the gifts they receive. However, as days and months go by, the happiness that accompanied the gifts fades.

Every Christmas, we hear the story of God's gift of Jesus to humanity and sing carols about His wondrous love. The jingle bells, decorated trees, and twinkling lights announce *Christmas is here!* Yet, the elaborate displays and flashy productions might have the opposite effect of their intent—keeping us so preoccupied and stimulated that we miss out on letting the true wonder of Christmas into our hearts.

In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we'll quietly let the wonder in and recapture the joy of Christmas by unwrapping God's gift, Jesus, and seeing Him for who He truly is: God in the flesh who humbled Himself to carry out the rescue operation called salvation. The joy of receiving this Gift never fades!



PREPARE YOUR HEART

As you begin your Bible study, pray like the psalmist prays: “Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions” (Psalm 119:18). Ask the Lord to illuminate His Word so that the eyes of your heart can catch a fresh glimpse into the greatness of His Gift.



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TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

In his book, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs*, Pastor Chuck Swindoll highlights the necessity of checking the context of our Bible passage, which means examining what comes before and after.

Second Corinthians 8–9 provides the general context for 2 Corinthians 9:15. Paul addressed generosity as it relates to individual believers, churches, and God—urging generosity in the Corinthian church. *Second Corinthians 8:7–8* provides the specific context for today’s passage. According to *2 Corinthians 8:7–8*, write the reason Paul gave for talking about generosity.



Observation: Generosity Exemplified

Observation is carefully reading and thinking about what the Bible actually says.¹ So, carefully, slowly, and repetitively read *2 Corinthians 8:7–9* in different translations. What subject did Paul turn to in 8:9 and why?

Note Paul’s two statements: “He was rich” and “He became poor.” What did Paul emphasize with these descriptions, and what did these descriptions illustrate?

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Now, let's turn to our second passage, Philippians 2:5–8. *Philippians 2:1–4* sets the context. Begin by reading these first four verses and summarize Paul's point. What mind-set did Paul ask his readers to have in their relationships with one another?

Next, read *Philippians 2:5–8* carefully, slowly, and repetitively in multiple versions. Paul illustrates a mind-set of unselfishness with Jesus. Reread verses 6–8 carefully. Observe who Jesus was before birth.

Jesus did not consider equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, what did Jesus do, according to *2:7*?

How did Jesus humble Himself according to *2:8*?

Look at the last part of verse 8. Observe the kind of death Jesus experienced.

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Now observe *2 Corinthians 9:15*. First, note the one who does the giving. Second, look at whether the word *gift* is singular or plural. Record what you see.

Reread *2 Corinthians 9:15* in different translations. What did Paul exclaim about God's gift, Jesus?

Paul, one of the brightest minds that's ever come onto this earth, a theologian among all theologians. The man with an enormous vocabulary comes to the gift and he says, "There are no words." —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Generosity Illustrated

In *interpretation*, we seek to know the author's intended meaning of the passage so we can understand timeless truths for us today. From *2 Corinthians* and *Philippians*, we observed that Paul wanted his readers to be unselfish in their interactions with each other. He used Jesus as the perfect illustration.

In *Philippians 2:6–7* (NASB), Paul used the word *form* twice in the English translation. However, there are two Greek words for "form"—*morphe* and *schema*. Look up *morphe* and *schema* in the Greek lexicon available for free at billmounce.com. Summarize the difference between these terms and then explain why that difference is significant for your understanding of *2:6–7*.

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The Greek word *harpogmos*, used once in the New Testament (Philippians 2:6), speaks of clinging, holding on to, grasping. What did Jesus release His hold on? Why is this release significant about His character?

When Paul says in *Philippians 2:7* that Jesus “emptied Himself” (NASB), what does this mean?

Find in your *Bible dictionary* the meaning of *cross* and *crucifixion*. Describe the humiliation and pain of this kind of execution.

“A cross,” not “the cross.” . . . He died on a cross, even a cross-kind of death, which was the lowest form of death! It’s where the sorriest criminals on earth wound up. . . . What a gift from God to all of us. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Why is Jesus’ generosity the foundation of believers’ generosity? How can understanding and gratitude for His sacrifice fuel wonder and generosity in our own hearts? Don’t forget to consult your resources if you need to! Check out Chuck Swindoll’s commentary *Insights on Philippians, Colossians, Philemon* and *Constable’s Notes* at Netbible.org.

Remember the context is humility; it is unselfishness. Jesus . . . didn’t cling to that position, didn’t clutch it, that equality with God. When it became necessary for a rescue operation called salvation, He released His hold on that and was willing to take upon Himself a different schema. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Correlation: God's Generous Heart

The third step of a *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study is *correlation* where we explore how the text compares with other Bible passages. Carefully read [John 1:1–3, 14](#). How did John describe Jesus in the prelude of his gospel?

In the NASB, John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” In Koine Greek, the structure of the sentence “the Word was God” is particular. The Word was not the Father. The Word was not a god. But, what God was, the Word was also. John accentuates the divine nature of Jesus by writing that the Father and the Son share the same essence or substance.

In [1:11–12; 3:16–18](#), we find a wonderful promise about God's gift of Jesus. Summarize this promise below. Describe the two responses to God's gift of Jesus and their respective consequences.

The gift remains available as long as you're alive, but when you're dead, there's no more gift. There's no more hope. There's no second chance.

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

What does supernatural generosity look like in believers, according to [1 John 3:16–18](#)?

Examples of God's generosity sprinkle the pages of Scripture and flow down from heaven to cover the earth. From the rain to the bumper crops, the fingerprint of our generous God is everywhere (Acts 14:15–17). However, His greatest showcase of generosity is the gift of His own Son.

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Before there was earth . . . there existed the Godhead: Father, Son, Spirit, co-equal, co-existent, co-eternal, together. And there He was, second member of the Trinity, a part of the plan that would rescue those who live in the future on that little globe called earth. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Celebrate and Extend Generosity

Application is a response to in-depth study of the Scriptures. What insights about God's gift of Jesus have you drawn from your time in God's Word?

*We tend to forget that the baby born to Mary is the One who has always been the second member of the Trinity, God in flesh among us.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

What is it about the incarnation, life, and death of Jesus that leaves you speechless?

Music and songs are effective ways of storing God's truths in our hearts. Charles Hutchinson Gabriel wrote the lyrics below in the early 1900s. It has been described as the "raw amazement at the magnitude of Christ's sacrifice."²

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

How marvelous, How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous, How wonderful
Is my Savior's love for me!

He took my sins and my sorrows;
He made them His very own.
He bore the burden to Calv'ry
And suffered and died alone.

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As your vocal cords sing or hum the melody, let your heart stand amazed at God’s wonderful and marvelous gift of Jesus! Using this song as inspiration, put into words your own amazement at God’s ineffable Gift to humankind.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, Your Son became human to rescue me. He humbled himself and died so that I may have a relationship with You through faith in His perfect sacrifice. Open the eyes of my heart to see the unseen at the nativity scene. Rekindle in me the wonder of Your indescribable Gift. Help me give freely and sacrificially as I celebrate Your Gift to me. In Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll’s *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, “*How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?*”
2. Charles H. Gabriel, “My Savior’s Love,” in *The Celebration Hymnal: Songs and Hymns for Worship* (n.p.: Word/Integrity, 1997), hymn 348.

For the 2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll’s messages. Copyright © 2012, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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