

**The Christmas Story: Gratification**  
**December 25, 2016**  
**Lynn Haven UMC**

**Introduction**

Did you get everything you wanted for Christmas? You might be feeling a certain sense of gratification at the sight of your loved ones enjoying that “perfect gift” you picked out for them. You might even feel completely satisfied with all of the goodies you received. However, gratification derived from things will never last. You will eventually become familiar with what you have and it will no longer be enough to make you truly happy. But the good news is the gratification that Jesus provides comes wrapped in an eternal luster. This Christmas Day we come together to celebrate the birth of our King, the Mighty Counselor and Prince of Peace who will always be more than enough to carry His people. Let us wake up today and every day with grateful hearts and hands stretched high in thanks to the One who gave us everything.

**Digging Deeper**

Jesus is the gift that brings us true gratification because...

1) He is **infinite**: Christ is **eternal** and **enormous**

- There’s a video going around social media that depicts a man waking up wrapped in Christmas paper. As he opens himself, he thanks God for waking him up. As he moves throughout the house he finds his family and everything else is wrapped. He opens his wife and kids, the faucet, shower head, breakfast plate, a briefcase, car keys and finally, the car. All are opened with great enthusiasm and thankfulness as they are seen as precious gifts from God. In truth, these are things many of us typically take for granted. This January, why not start a gratitude jar? Throughout the year, jot down things you are thankful for and drop them in the jar. Then open that gift next Christmas, remember everything He has given you, and rejoice! Don’t forget to celebrate that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is more than sufficient to meet our every need out of God’s glorious resources.

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created... (John 1:1-4a NLT)

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 NLT)

[Jesus] was supreme in the beginning and, leading the resurrection parade, he is supreme in the end. From beginning to end he’s there, towering far above everything, everyone. So spacious is he, so roomy, that everything of God finds its proper place in him without crowding. (Colossians 1:18 Msg)

## 2) He is **immutable**: Christ does not **change**

- Are you the same person every single day? If we are being honest, most of us would have to say, “of course not.” Past experiences, encounters with people around us or even our current state of wellness can alter our mood and reactions to situations in dramatic ways. Would you say you react more or less harshly to minor inconveniences when you are not feeling well? What about when someone confronts you with aggression versus gentleness? Talk about how a strong relationship with Jesus can protect our integrity, and strength of witness, regardless of our circumstances.

God’s unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:17b NLT)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8 NLT)

## 3) He is **immanent**: Christ is **near**

- He is with us! Time and time again the Bible confirms this truth. Psalm 34:18 (NIV) tells us that God is close to the broken hearted. Philippians 4:5 (NIV): “Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.” Is it more difficult to remember that God is near when times are tough? Why or why not? Do you consider your trials a blessing?

The Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father’s one and only Son. (John 1:14 NLT)

The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and you will call him Immanuel (which means “God is with us”). (Isaiah 7:14b NLT)

## **Conclusion**

We can be confident that God is with us and near to us because He gave us a gift in Christ Jesus that is immanent.

And the Lord can be counted on because Jesus is immutable. He never changes and is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And He is here to stay because Christ is infinite, all-powerful, all-sufficient, for all-time. He is both eternal and enormous.

This is the Lord’s doing, and it is wonderful to see. This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:23-24 NLT)

Merry Christmas! And may God bless us, every one.