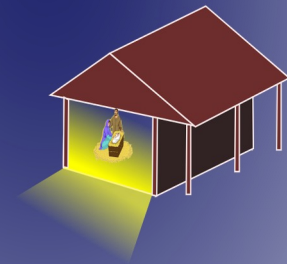


*For God so loved the world,
that he gave his only begotten
Son,*



*that whosoever believeth in him
should not perish, but have
everlasting life. John 3:16*

♪ hallelujah!! ♪

The Christmas story – a short expansion of John 3:16

For God (the Almighty, the Creator, the Eternal)
so loved the world (that's us)
that he gave (the first Christmas gift)
his only (unique, one of a kind)
begotten (receiving the natures of both father and mother)
Son (a firstborn, heir of and partaker in all that is the Father's, including dominion)

To what end?

that whosoever (any person)
believeth (the only relevant "action" one can "do")
in him (Jesus, the relevant object of the belief)
should not perish (the destiny of us all otherwise)
but have everlasting life (a life that does not, cannot, end).

God's Christmas Gift

We are made by God in His image, and are eternal from our creation going forward.
Yet, we are all sinners and we all sin by choice; we don't live up to that image.
God's holiness cannot abide sin, not even a little sin.
God's justice demands an eternal penalty from eternal sinners. We call it Hell.
We cannot pay that penalty; we are like paupers owing the national debt.

BUT

God loves the people He created.
God sent His Son to be our Immanuel (God with us); the Son became flesh.
The Son, Jesus, having become man, could die.
The Son, being God, is sinless, and valuable enough to pay for all men's sin by His death.
The Son died on the cross between two thieves for that purpose.
Jesus rose again, proving the Father accounts the payment sufficient.
He ascended into glory, and will return for His people.

The gift is to all people, but, like a Christmas gift, has effect only to those who receive it.
We do that by trusting, relying upon, what Jesus did for us, believing in Him.
Nothing more, for we can do nothing more – we are paupers, after all.
Upon trusting Him, we are indwelt by His Spirit, and, though paupers, clothed with royalty.

Christmas. Simple story. Love story. Hard story. True story.

God loves us!



Merry Christmas!