



Part I: His Presence

Introduction:

- Today we begin our Advent series entitled, *Giving: The Meaning of Christmas*.
- It's a little play on words:
 - As Christians, it's our responsibility to give the **meaning** of Christmas.
 - But **giving** really is a big part of the meaning of Christmas.
 - After all, James 1:17 tells us, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father..." (NIV)
- At Christmastime, while we don't want it to be our focus, we spend a lot of time, money, and energy giving presents to our loved ones.
- God knows what we want, and He knows what we need – so He gave us the greatest gift possible...

God's greatest gift to us – _____.

God the _____ is always present. (*Joshua 1:5, 9; Psalm 139:7-12*)

God the _____ became human, to be with us, and to save us from our sins. (*Matthew 1:18-25*)

The _____ is present in the lives of every follower of Christ. (*John 16:7; 14:16, 17, 27*)

Why the gift of Jesus is so _____:

1. Through Jesus' life on earth, God _____ and _____ our hurts, pains, struggles, and temptations. (*Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:14-16*)

2. Jesus was _____ without and _____ without _____, so that we can have forgiveness and life. (*1 Peter 2:22, 1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21*)

Conclusion:

- Matthew's last recorded words from Jesus remind us of God's gift of Himself in our lives.
- Matthew 28:20 "Behold, _____ to the end of the age."
- This Christmas season, let's take time to remember, celebrate, and give thanks for the greatest gift we've ever received – God's presence in our lives.