

ADVENT

preparing for Christmas,

GIVING

And yes during this time, all the great catchphrases come out.

To give is better than to receive.

The joy of giving.

Give me all the presents.

The thing about giving is, it's hard to be completely selfless in the giving.

When my wife and I first got married, I always struggled to figure out what gift to give her. And then when I'd give it to her, I'd always be disappointed that her reaction wasn't what I expected.

No one likes giving a gift, only for the person to give the face of, "Oh. This."

I read an article this week on how to write the perfect thank you note. And the motivation for writing a thank you note, even for bad gifts, according to this article, was that a thank you note, increases the chance of a better gift the next time around.

GIVER

PSALM 146:6

**He is the Maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and everything in them—
he remains faithful forever.**

We as the giver, tend to seek appreciation, adoration, adulation, for the gift we've given. And when we don't get it we find ourselves discouraged, disappointed, and

I don't know how often I've given a gift to someone, hoping to have my love for them reciprocated, only to be sorely disappointed. And then sulking away,

6 He is the Maker of heaven and earth,
the sea, and everything in them—
he remains faithful forever.

There's this beginning. God, from the beginning has been giving. He is, the Maker of Heaven and earth. And everything here. And his faithfulness is unending.

And we open with this.

1. God is Creator
2. God is provider
3. God is faithful

Three promises. Three truth.

He is the one who gives and he's the one who gave from the beginning

PSALM 146

**He upholds the cause of the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets prisoners free,
the Lord gives sight to the blind**

PSALM 146

**the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down,
the Lord loves the righteous.**

7 He upholds the cause of the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets prisoners free,
the Lord gives sight to the blind

He upholds the cause —
voice for the voiceless
hope for the hopeless
Rejoice in Hope

He gives food
satisfies
limitless

He sets free
gives freedom to those who are trapped
who are under the control of something else

Gives sight to the blind
opens eyes too truth

God speaks for those who have no voice, and gives hope even in the bleakness
He fulfils the deeper desires of our heart, and satisfies in a deeper way
He gives freedom from sin, and the things which bind us.

the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down,
the Lord loves the righteous.

Lifts up those who are bowed down
Loves the righteous —-

Humble, and righteous —-
Knowing that God is God,
And walks according to his ways.

PSALM 146

**The Lord watches over the foreigner
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.**

The Lord watches over the foreigner
and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

The promises extend outward
The Foreigner, the outsider — and in this case, us, we are outside.
Sustains the fatherless and the widow

Frustrates the way of the wicked.

PSALM 146:6

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There's this beginning. God, from the beginning has been giving. He is, the Maker of Heaven and earth. And everything here. And his faithfulness is unending.

The promise of his faithfulness is seen in Jesus.
And in that promise we are remade. His faithfulness, the promise from the very beginning is about us being brought back into relationship with Him.
He gives Jesus for us.

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When we have been adopted into his family, it also means that the giving heart of God becomes our giving heart as well.
Are our values in line with His? Is our giving the same as his.

Do we have compassion on the cause of the oppressed. Who are the oppressed today? What can, or could we do.

What does it mean for us to set prisoners free? I don't mean we just run into jails, but we have a responsibility for declaring the truth to non believers

We love humility and righteousness as well.

These become characteristics that not only we desire in our own lives, but we celebrate in others.

Righteousness is something we encourage, as is humility.

I want to be as humble as that person. I want to grow in grace and love, not lording over others, or thinking I'm better than others.

It's a love of righteousness and joy in seeing it in others.

Not a spirit of competitive condemnation, not who is more righteous, or I'm right — never lording above someone.

PSALM 146

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The Lord watches over the foreigner
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but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

Then there's the care for the foreigner,
and strengthening for the orphans and widows — those who are marginalised by society. For
us that also means caring for those who are for them.

And do you know what frustrates the way of the wicked — goodness and righteousness. It
drives them crazy. But it's hard.

PSALM 146

**The Lord reigns forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the Lord.**

The Lord reigns forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the Lord.

This at the end — we realise, JESUS reigns forevermore. For all generations. not just now, but
for all time. above all forever.