

We enjoy giving presents to our friends and loved ones. God delights to give, too. Although we may not often think about Christmas from God's perspective, we shouldn't be surprised that He finds joy in giving Himself to us, because our God is a generous God.

The prophet Zephaniah lived about 600 years before Jesus was born. Looking ahead to the day when God would pour out His blessings on His people, Zephaniah wrote,

- ¹⁴ Sing, Daughter Zion;
shout aloud, Israel!
Be glad and rejoice with all your heart,
Daughter Jerusalem!
- ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away your punishment,
he has turned back your enemy.
The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you;
never again will you fear any harm.
- ¹⁶ On that day
they will say to Jerusalem,
"Do not fear, Zion;
do not let your hands hang limp.
- ¹⁷ The LORD your God is with you,
the Mighty Warrior who saves.
He will take great delight in you;
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,
but will rejoice over you with singing."
- ¹⁸ "I will remove from you
all who mourn over the loss of your appointed festivals,
which is a burden and reproach for you.
- ¹⁹ At that time I will deal
with all who oppressed you.
I will rescue the lame;
I will gather the exiles.
I will give them praise and honor
in every land where they have suffered shame.
- ²⁰ At that time I will gather you;
at that time I will bring you home.
I will give you honor and praise
among all the peoples of the earth
when I restore your fortunes
before your very eyes,"
says the LORD.

Zephaniah 3:14-20 (TNIV)

Zephaniah begins by calling the people of Israel to rejoice because of what God has done for them. He goes on to say that God rejoices over Israel. God finds joy in showing love to His people! We usually look at God's gifts from our perspective—we like receiving. But God enjoys giving at least as much as we enjoy receiving. The Apostle Paul tells us that "the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35 TNIV).

God finds joy in giving Himself to us at Christmas. Just as our joy increases when we see the joy our gifts bring to others, so our joy in receiving God's gift brings more joy to Him. So enjoy Christmas—God certainly does!

Reflection and Discussion

- Can you think of a time when you found joy in giving to others?
- What do you think God enjoys about Christmas?

Prayer

Lord Jesus,

We don't think of Christmas from Your perspective as often as we think of it from ours. But it makes sense that You would find joy in giving to us since we find joy in giving to others. Thinking about Your joy actually increases our joy. We're glad that You enjoy giving Yourself to us. We're thankful that You enjoy Christmas. So do we! Thank You!

Amen.