

Ephesians 2:4-10 NLT

4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, **he gave us life** when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he **raised us from the dead** along with Christ and **seated us with him in the heavenly realms** because we are united with Christ Jesus. 7 So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus. 8 **God saved you by his grace** when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; **it is a gift from God**. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10 For we are **God's masterpiece**. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, **so we can do the good things** he planned for us long ago.

Christmas - personal testimony of childhood - unconditional love - sacrifice - lack of sleep - the joy was finding pleasure in the pleasure created in the child.

Satan Claus or Santa Claus

### Santa Claus

The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century ... on the southern coast of Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships. - [The Saint Nicholas Center Website](#)

### As the story moved west it picked up some pagan baggage:

In the fourteenth century when, on 6 December, teachers would dress as St Nicholas and use a birch rod to beat the children who hadn't succeeded academically that year, whilst rewarding those who had with sweets or pocket money. St Nicholas would also turn up at houses and scoop naughty children (or those who couldn't answer his questions about the Bible) into his sack to take them away to Hell.

<https://www.thehistoryvault.co.uk/st-nicholas-naughty-or-nice/>

In the Netherlands, the Sinterklaas (the Dutch name St Nicholas) of the Middle Ages was also a sinister figure and might scoop naughty children up into his sack and take them to Hell. He carried a birch rod and would also quiz children about the Bible, beating them if they answered any questions incorrectly.

<https://www.thehistoryvault.co.uk/st-nicholas-naughty-or-nice/>

### How did he become what we know today?

In 1809, Washington Irving, published a book that described the Dutch settlers' Christmas traditions including a jolly St Nicholas who delivered presents and flew over houses in a cart pulled by horses. Then in 1822, a New York newspaper published an anonymous poem entitled A Visit from St. Nicholas written by Clement Moore. The poem, better known as The Night Before Christmas, introduced the eight flying reindeer, and presented a kindly St Nicholas figure. <https://www.thehistoryvault.co.uk/st-nicholas-naughty-or-nice/>

A Visit From St. Nicholas - 'Twas the Night Before Christmas  
By Clement Clarke Moore

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;

## 171224 Let's Hijack Santa Claus

2 of 4

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled down for a long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below,  
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;

"Now, DASHER! now, DANCER! now, PRANCER and  
VIXEN!

On, COMET! on CUPID! on, DONNER and BLITZEN!  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,  
So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,  
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my hand, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes -- how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly,  
That shook, when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,  
HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A  
GOOD-NIGHT!

Mr. Moore had done some redemptive surgery on St. Nick - Santa Claus - There is a key part of the old story that had crept it, that he removed. There was some poison that needed to be removed - that was put back in for sure in 1934 John Frederick Coats and Haven Gillespie

### "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town"

You better watch out  
You better not cry  
Better not pout  
I'm telling you why  
Santa Claus is coming to town

He's making a list  
And checking it twice

Gonna find out Who's naughty and nice  
Santa Claus is coming to town  
He sees you when you're sleeping  
He knows when you're awake  
He knows if you've been bad or good  
So be good for goodness sake!  
O! You better watch out! You better not cry Better  
not pout  
I'm telling you why  
Santa Claus is coming to town

Naughty and Nice Came Back to Santa -

C.S. Lewis - Fantasy - Fiction - teach truths like parables instead of a Legal document - Ever wonder why Santa Claus or Father Christmas shows up in Narnia - and he comes with gifts - and is a sign that the power of the white witch is dying - type of the Holy Spirit some say - CS.Lewis likewise did surgery and took the naughty nice part out.

The naughty nice santa - is a corrupt santa - and evil santa - a poisoned santa, remove the poison Awesome! Santa is about Joy - Love - Unconditional giving - generosity - a giver of Gifts - illustrates for children love and grace. Every year I was a bad kid - Santa Always came - I never experienced a naughty nice Santa - I experienced a Grace Santa.

“You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.””

Hebrews 1:9 NKJV

<http://bible.com/114/heb.1.9.nkjb>

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning James 1:17 NKJV

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... (Isaiah 9:6a)

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son... (John 3:16)

The Gospel is not Naughty or Nice theology - it is Grace Theology

That is not what the angel had in mind when he announced to the shepherds in the field: “I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)

The good news is that we did not deserve but we were given a gift ! Because we are loved—even though we do not deserve it!

Ephesians 1:4-8a, NLT

4 Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. 6 So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. 7 He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. 8 He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

Truth = We are more wicked than we ever dare imagine, but more loved than we could ever possibly dream

God does not love us because we are lovable—we are loved because God is love!

We are not loved because we are lovely—we become lovely because we are loved by God!

But what Christmas brings us is Good News (Behold, I bring you good news of great joy ...)

God loves us in spite of us ! Romans 5:6-11, NLT

6 When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. 7 Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. 8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. 9 And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. 10 For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. 11 So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

**God loves us because of who He is not because of who we are  
We are, in light of God's holiness, all together unlovable**

Here is some true Christmas Love theology:

If God's love for us and kindness toward us is not based on our being loveable—if it is not deserved—**then it is actually greater than we could ever deserve or warrant in and of ourselves.**

And: If you think God loves you because of you, then you will think **God does not love you because of you**

If you think God loves you because of **what you do**, then you **will think He doesn't love you when you do wrong**

If God's love for us, and kindness toward us, is not based on our being good—if it cannot be earned—then it will remain when we fail. **If it cannot be earned it cannot be lost.** This is truly good news

**Ephesians 1:6-8, NLT**

6 So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. 7 He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. 8 He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

If God's love is based on who He is and not on who we are then **God's love cannot fail!**

It is unconditional (unmerited, undeserved, unearned)

Heb 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Gift that God desires is a willing heart - does it pleasure you to pleasure the Lord? Key to serving with a joyful heart - jolly way.

**"I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "**

**Acts 20:35 NKJV**

<http://bible.com/114/act.20.35.nkjv>