

Open in Prayer - Read obituary

Service run down

God gave His Son that you might be saved

Intro: It's that time of year that endless channels will show Frank Capra's "It's a Wonderful Life" with Jimmy Stewart. Remember when George Bailey was in trouble with the bank examiner and all the people came to his aid?

Inspired by a dream, **Phillip Stern** published a 4,000-word [short story](#) called "**The Greatest Gift**" in 1943 after working on it since the late 1930s but, unable to find a publisher, he sent the 200 copies he had printed to friends as [Christmas cards](#) in December 1943. One of the pamphlets came to the attention of [RKO Pictures](#) producer **David Hempstead**, who showed it to actor [Cary Grant](#), who was interested in playing the lead role. RKO purchased the motion picture rights for \$10,000 in April 1944.^[1] After several screenwriters worked on adaptations, RKO sold the rights to the story in 1945 to [Frank Capra's](#) production company for the same \$10,000, which he adapted into *It's a Wonderful Life*.

I. How much are you loved?

A. Our love for others is reflected back

Being a police Chaplain I see many death scenes and notify numerous families of the death of their relative. They are not all loved.

This family loves each other.

TS – It is hard to imagine someone loving you more than your own family. A stranger could not love you like that or can he?

B. God's love for you is inconceivable

(John 3:16 NKJV) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Maybe you know God maybe you don't. Maybe you honor God maybe you don't. One thing for sure is that He loves you. He loves you so much that He sacrificed His son Jesus for you and I. **He Changes Lives**

ILL - Auschwitz was the first German concentration camp to become an extermination camp. The gas chambers were in constant use. But because of the great influx of new prisoners daily, the Germans began to use firing squads as well.

One day, the commandant selected ten men from one barracks to be executed by the firing squad. One of those selected was the father of a large family. When he was pulled from his place in line, he fell to the ground, begging the commandant to spare his life. The commandant was unresponsive until the man standing next to the fallen one, a Catholic priest named **Maximillian Kolbe**, stepped forward to offer his life in exchange for the man on his knees.

Surprisingly, the commandant agreed to such an arrangement. But, instead of being led away to the firing squad, Father Maximillian was thrown into a tiny damp cell where he suffered the agonizing death of starvation. Today, Maximillian Kolbe is honored by millions of people because he died in the place of one man.

Jesus Christ, through an agonizing death on the cross, died not for one man, or a few, or even several—but for all men.

TS- What was God's motive? Some people show you kindness to get something from you.

II. God's intent was to save you

(John 3:17 NKJV) "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

You will do almost anything to save someone you love.

ILL - Some time ago, a teenager, **Arthur Hinkley**, lifted a 3,000-pound tractor with bare hands. He wasn't a weight lifter, but his friend, **Lloyd Bachelder**, 18, was pinned under a tractor on a farm near **Rome, Maine**. Hearing Lloyd scream, Arthur somehow lifted the tractor enough for Lloyd to wriggle out.

Why was Jesus' life the price?

We are sinners –

1. Good deeds do not outweigh our bad

Bank robber gives to charity. Mean to one person good to the next.

2. Why is He so demanding? None are perfect. He is love therefore holy. He is love therefore gave his son. He is just. **ILL** - Fixing tickets and cases. He paid the price for everyone who desires it.

B. He died on the cross for us

He suffered in our place

(Rom 5:8 NKJV) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

III. He will not force us to choose Him but we all make a choice

(John 3:18-19 NKJV) "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

"And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

A. We must believe freely because it is a relationship

(1 John 4:19 NKJV) We love Him because He first loved us.

B. It is also the free choice of those who don't

(Mat 11:28-29 NKJV) "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Father Died With His Son

Patrick Morley, in *Man in the Mirror*, tells about a group of fishermen who landed in a secluded bay in Alaska and had a great day fishing for salmon. But when they returned to their sea plane, it was aground because of the fluctuating tides. They had no option except to wait until the next morning till the tides came in. But when they

took off, they only got a few feet off the ground and then it crashed into the sea. Being aground the day before had punctured one of the pontoons, and it had filled up with water.

The sea plane slowly began to sink. The three men and a 12-year-old son of one of them, **Mark**, prayed and then jumped into the icy waters to swim to shore. The water was cold, and the riptide was strong, and two of the men reached the shore exhausted. They looked back, and their companion, who was also a strong swimmer, did not swim to shore because his 12-year-old son wasn't strong enough to make it. They saw that father with his arms around his son being swept out to sea. He chose to die with his son rather than to live without him.

There is a fact of life that most kids do not know. We love our children so much that we would die for them.

Jesus chose to die rather than live without you.

– Invitation