



Outreach Posters

December 2013

His parents called him Nicholas and as far as we know he had a normal 3rd century Mediterranean upbringing. One thing made him stand apart from the crowd though. He was famous for giving presents. And not just that... he gave presents secretly. And not only to children. He carefully looked out for anyone in need.

There are accounts of Nicholas dropping gold coins into people's shoes for them to find later. One story has him secretly providing a wedding dowry for the three daughters of a local pauper. He visited the house at night and left the money, possibly via the chimney. Sound familiar?

When a person does this kind of thing it's not hard to imagine them with a twinkle in their eye.

But why did Nicholas do this? What motivated him to be such a generous gift-giver? Well, something had happened, something that would change his life forever. Nicholas had become a Christian.

Turkey in the 3rd and 4th Centuries was a place of uncertainty and chaos. Emperors rose and fell, wars were won and lost, food came and went. And people had little hope. They would offer incense to idols and pray that they might receive some gift of goodness and security.

But the Christian faith offered so much more. The promises of Jesus were so



different. Jesus offered real forgiveness and real hope.

Nicholas was orphaned as a young man and lived with his uncle who was a Bishop, also called Nicholas. No doubt his uncle taught him to follow Jesus. Young Nicholas was such a devoted Christian that he became a church leader and eventually the Bishop of Myra.

Nicholas understood the generosity of Jesus forgiving his sins. And that's why he gave gifts to the undeserving, because God had given him the gift of eternal life.

The modern Santa supposedly brings presents to children who are good. But the problem is that none of us are good. In contrast, Jesus brings forgiveness and new life to anyone who trusts in him. Will you do just this? Will you trust in Jesus to have your sins forgiven?

Prayer: Dear God, thank you for the best presents in the world – forgiveness of sin and eternal life with you.

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”