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President and Publisher: Dr. T. D. Worthington

Editor: Tiffany W. Johnson

Advertising Director: Ashley W. Lovett

Contributors: Tiffany Johnson,  
Jason Sherman, and Sherry Worthington

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# Cancel Christmas?

*Dr. T. D. Worthington*

What if there *were* no Christmas? I don't mean what if Christ had not been born, for we all know the tragic outcome of that prospect. What I mean is, what if the liberals and agnostics had their way and suddenly Christmas was cancelled? Let's just place the entire event on the celebration ash heap. No more Christmas trees, no more decorations, let's just scrap the whole thing!

Well, that would also be tragic. Not nearly as tragic as a world without Christ, but tragic nevertheless. Actually, even apart from its spiritual significance, Christmas is quite good for our country.

***First, without Christmas a lot of retailers, especially marginal retailers, would go out of business.*** It is called Black Friday for a reason. Yuletide sales account for billions in economic

activity. For many merchants, this season accounts for nearly half of their annual revenue. If you cut December off of every shopping calendar, the U.S. retail industry would be in a permanent depression. One-half trillion dollars would be lost. One-half of all toy sales would be lost, marginal retainers (*those suffering already*) just wouldn't make it.

***Second, a lot of people would lose their jobs or face cutbacks.*** Holiday hires at retail stores lift employment and stimulate the economy. What would happen to all the part-time Christmas help? What would happen to the seasonal overtime so many employees count on? Short term employment, not just in retail, but also in wholesale, manufacturing, and shipping would be affected. The post office estimated several years back, that without the profit of Christmas

mailings, first class postage would increase by 10% all year round. Turkey sales would take a huge hit. Although Thanksgiving is the biggest turkey day, Christmas is second, and without the Christmas sales, your Thanksgiving turkey would cost an estimated 15-20% more.

What would happen to the fruitcake bakers? Personally, I like fruitcake, if its good fruitcake. But, I also understand it just doesn't seem to fit in for July 4th. How about giving your sweetheart a fruitcake for Valentine's Day? Even if it were shaped like a heart, I just don't think it would work. What an economic loss!

***Third, we would miss a lot of wholesome movies and music.*** Most movies on television are not fit to watch, but during Christmas it seems even Hollywood and Disney can

sometimes remember how to be decent. The same is true for the music industry. Last Christmas I was scanning the radio dial and found that one of our local hip-hop stations was playing Silent Night on Christmas Eve. That was weird, but it was also kind of nice.

***Fourth, innovation would be stifled.***

I know American ingenuity would not cease without Christmas, our efficient capitalist system is always looking for ways to develop new products to sell for a handsome profit. But, as you have seen, many manufacturers work hard to develop new, innovative, and exciting products they can bring to market for the profitable Christmas season. New smartphones, new laptops and tablets, new video games, new clothes and shoes, new appliances and pots and pans, while artists come out with new music. Why? Because it's Christmas and people buy stuff at Christmas.

***Fifth, volunteer work would suffer great loss.*** It is estimated that nearly one-third of all volunteer work is done over the Christmas season. Could it be done during other seasons? Sure,

but would it be done without the magic of Christmas to back it up. Volunteer work at homeless shelters and soup kitchens would likely take a hit. Outreach would suffer at nursing homes and prisons. Service and work done for the poor and needy, outreach to orphans and widows would likely be stifled without the holiday magic.

We see this even in the church. As a pastor I could sometimes get someone to help in a Christmas play, or sing in the choir for the Christmas cantata, or help with the church Christmas decorations, when getting their help any other time of the year was almost impossible. In turn, we were also able to get folks to visit church at Christmas to hear the Gospel of Christ.

***Sixth, without Christmas we would soon forget all those wonderful Christmas memories,*** the memories that seem to be stored in the boxes with our holiday decorations. These are the memories of childhood, memories of loved ones now departed, and memories of when our children were small. These are the memories of life that perhaps could be relived anytime of the year, but never with the depth

of emotion and feeling they bring at Christmas.

There are other things that we might think of if Christmas were suddenly cancelled:

For example, there are some family members we would never see again without Christmas, because that is the only time we see them now. Some of us guys would never again experience the joy of owning a new pair of socks or new underwear, and there would be no more bow ties with flashing lights on them. Unbearable loss! No more kisses under the mistletoe. No more of the left-over Christmas wrap that we later use to wrap birthday gifts throughout the rest of the year - I mean if it is good enough for Jesus' birthday, it's surely good enough for your birthday in August, right?

They would no longer ship Frazier Fir trees to the east so we could see them and smell them this time of year. Otherwise, we would have to travel to the mountains to catch a whiff of their magical aroma. Children would not be as likely to look up into the December sky and wonder. While even us old,





grey-haired Christians would also not be as likely to look up into the December sky... *and wonder.*

No, as a Christian I don't want to spend Christmas without all the stuff that goes with it. I am not talking about the drunkenness and godless revelry. I am not talking about the staggering debt that some folks will acquire, but I'm talking about all the things that have made Christmas special to me and pointed the way for me to see Christmas in a true light, once I became a Christian.

Christmas for me is a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. You see, Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to be born. His birth brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby.

The prophets had told of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

Whatever your traditions, or memories, or expectations of the holiday, we know the birth of Jesus Christ is the real story of this incredible season. What I am trying to demonstrate is that there is hardly any realm of our life today that is not touched by Christmas. Our economy, our music, our technology, our culture, and traditions are all touched by the power of this wonderful holiday. And, we desperately need this touch, more than ever. This touch, the Christmas touch, can be a contact with our God, for those who need it most.

So if secular things can be affected so profoundly, and in many cases greatly improved, just because of the historical message of Christmas; if economies and cultures take such note of a single date on

the calendar; if its cancellation would be devastating for the world - *the physical realm* - then, just think of the impact the birth of Christ made in the spiritual world. If Christmas, just in its raw and natural form, can lift up or cripple the world, just think of what it can do in its spiritual form. If it has the power to make non-believers joyful, generous, and caring - *just think of what it can do for us* - as God's children.

What if there were no Christmas? The world would be a whole lot darker. It would be less caring. But, thank God, there is a Christmas, a day to celebrate the birth of our Saviour.

***Merry Christmas!***



***Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry over forty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries.***

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# *A Conversation With Mary*

*Mrs. Sherry Worthington*

If you could go back in time and spend a day with someone, who would it be? I am sure many of us would name a special family member or perhaps a Bible character. It would be a difficult decision. Besides the Lord, of course, I think I would like to speak with Mary, the mother of Jesus. I wonder if it might go something like this....

***Mary, how did you feel when the angel came announcing you as highly favored and blessed among women?***

Well, it honestly scared me to death. I thought, what in the world is he talking about. It took a moment for me to realize it was an angel. I never expected to be visited by an angel. And then when he told me I had found favor with God and would conceive a Son, I really thought he must be mistaken. After I regained my senses, I realized this was for real. This was serious.

***What did you do next?***

I asked him how this was possible. I have not known a man. I could

not have a baby. Then he told me the Holy Ghost would come upon me, and my child would be the Son of God.

***Did you ever consider telling the angel you did not want to give birth to the Son of God?***

No, not really. I knew I had the option of saying no. God always gives us choices. We can refuse to do His will for our lives. He wants us to serve Him because we love Him. For me, my only response had to be yes. I told the angel, be





it unto me according to thy word. I knew God would see me through any problems I might face.

### ***Weren't you afraid?***

I hadn't had time to be afraid. My mind was racing. I was wondering how I was going to tell my parents and Joseph. I wasn't sure they would believe me. I knew I wouldn't believe me. The fear of the unknown did settle in, but honestly, I never expected it to be as rough as it was. With many blessings come great difficulties.

### ***What was the hardest part?***

Which time? It depends on when you are talking about. It hurt that Joseph did not believe me. However, an angel came and reassured him. I tried not to be hurt, because as I said, I would have a hard time believing me, too. It hurt that my family did not believe me. When we went to Bethlehem to pay our taxes, we stayed in a stable. We could not stay with family. Joseph had grown up in Bethlehem, so we had several family members in town. It was upsetting that the Son of God had to be born in a stable. It seemed like we were not caring for Him as we should. He deserved so much better.

### ***Did you have a lot of visitors?***

Yes, we did. Not only did we have visitors, but they were from all walks of life. We had shepherds from the fields who came to the stable, and later we had a visit from the wise men that brought gifts for Jesus.

### ***I know you went to Jerusalem to have Jesus dedicated and eventually went back to Bethlehem. When did you leave Bethlehem?***

Jesus was about two years old. We had to leave in a hurry. Joseph had a dream that Herod was going to kill Jesus. We got up and left as soon as we could. Fortunately, the wise men had brought Jesus gifts, and we were able to use the gifts for our trip to Egypt.

### ***I guess you had several moves and trips in such a short time. It must have been hard for Joseph to keep up with his carpentry business. It takes time to get a business started.***

Yes, it was. Joseph took his role as provider very seriously. We stayed in Egypt until Herod died, then we went back home to Nazareth. It was rough traveling with a young child and getting settled in a new town, but God always provided. I was real glad to go back home.

### ***Was running from Herod the most difficult part of raising Jesus?***

Oh, no. The hardest part of being Jesus' mother was watching Him suffer and die. All the hardships I may have faced were nothing compared to watching my Son, God's Son, be tortured and die on the cross. I could hardly recognize my own Son. When he carried that cross up

Golgotha's hill, it was so heavy. I wanted to help him so badly. My heart was breaking.

### ***I guess we don't think of all the ways you suffered. Do you feel you were blessed? Do you feel that is an accurate statement?***

Oh, yes! You see, Jesus is the Saviour of the world, and in some small way, I was a part of that. God deemed me worthy, for some reason, to be the earthly mother of Jesus. But, Jesus is my Saviour as well. Without Him I could not go to Heaven. Without Him I could not have abundant life. So, yes, I was and am blessed. I am blessed to call Jesus my Saviour.

Thank you, Mary. We are all blessed. Jesus came from His throne in Heaven to be born in a stable. He lived on this earth as a human and as God. He felt hunger, sadness, and pain and had the agony of the sin of the world placed on His shoulders. Jesus did all of this for us. He came to be our Saviour.

As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, don't get caught up in the busyness of the Christmas season. Stop and ponder over the Saviour for whom the season represents. Ask yourself if you have accepted the Saviour. The most precious gift you can receive this Christmas is Jesus Christ. You don't have to travel back in time to spend this Christmas with Jesus. He is waiting for you to just ask.



***Mrs. Worthington has five children and eleven grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.***

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Life is grand when it's all about us... it must be because that's how we think most of the time. How does this serve my interest? How is this going to work out good for me? After all, you've got to look after number one. The children's song says that "*Zacchaeus was a wee little man,*" and he was small in stature. However on a spiritual level, *we* people are big people; it's the *me* people who are small!

Will it be *me* or *we*? It's a question each of us face each day as we make decisions, establish priorities, and live our lives. Do we live as isolated individuals or as a person accepting some responsibility for others? Are we willing to be so connected and interdependent with others that we may even sacrifice some of our desires?



It's a question Solomon faced when the Lord came to him in a dream and said, "*Ask what I shall give thee.*" (1 Kings 3:5) It sounds like a great deal. It sounds like God had given Solomon a signed, blank check. All he needed to do was to fill in the amount. Who hasn't at one time or another wished for that? However, God's question came with a dilemma, and Solomon's answer carried profound consequences. Solomon had to decide between asking for his personal self - the *me*... or asking for his larger self, his responsible self - the *we*!

Look at the world today. When you find conflict, you will also likely find a *me* attitude. It's not just public issues. The choice between *me* and *we* exists in marriages and families. Look for conflict and chances are you will see a *me* life taking precedent over a *we* life.

Solomon chose a *we* attitude. He asked for a listening heart; a heart with ears, a heart that would hear the pain of the world, a heart that would hear the needs of the people, and a heart that would hear

the voice of God. He did not ask for a long life, riches, or even the defeat of his enemy. His request pleased the Lord.

Our lives and our world desperately need a new way of looking at things. We need this kind of leaders in our government. We need this kind of husbands and wives. We need this kind of leaders in business and industry. We also need this kind of leaders in our churches. Through Christ, God has entrusted each of us with Solomon's dream, and it is well past time to wake up and go live the dream to be a *we* oriented person. Solomon put the needs of the kingdom first and that is the call each of us have in order to truly please our Lord.

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## What Makes Christmas Special To You?

There are many things we love about the holiday season. First and foremost is the sense of hopeful anticipation. One is led to expect any number of miracles. Peace on Earth with perhaps reconciliation with those who have wronged us or those who we have wronged. Christmas may include a visit or card from distant friends and relatives, a special gift from a special someone, or maybe a taste of a favorite holiday treat. Some miracles are life changing and profound while others are simply life affirming. Such is Christmas!

From the first hint of the Christmas season, our minds are set on a magical journey of hope and nostalgia. We look forward to hearing our favorite songs and maybe even finding some new ones. We look forward to treating others to a surprise and recall our own delightful Christmas mornings of time gone by.

Every sense we have is acutely conditioned to anticipate another Christmas miracle. The smell of pine, the sumptuous flavors of Christmas cookies, the familiar charm of our favorite holiday songs, the glamor and dazzle of gifts in their paper and ribbons; the magic of Christmas pervades our very being.

Inside our hearts, and outside on the streets of town, Christmas magic is everywhere. Just as the plain workaday streets are transformed into a glistening fairyland with the stringing of a few lights, so too are our heavily laden hearts lifted out of glum daily reality on a magical sleigh ride through enchanted forests of

Christmas trees and ‘*candy canes and silver lanes aglow*’. Isn’t it funny what a little tinsel and some lights can do to lift even the heaviest hearts in the deepening dark of December?

What makes Christmas Special to you? Actually, it is your **very own Christmas secret**, because it cannot be expressed with words. You could if it were in your mind, maybe even if it were in your heart. But, Christmas is deeper; it is in your spirit. Thus, it is deeper than most other emotions. That makes it hard to put into words; just like the emotion of love.

Whatever it is that makes Christmas special to you, all of us here at **GoMix Christian Radio** hope you find it. We hope you can rejoice in it and use it as an occasion to glorify our Saviour.

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# Seeing Our Presents in the Room

*Rev. Jason Sherman*

One of my favorite books I read while in school was “*A Christmas Carol*” by Charles Dickens. Although as a pastor, I would have to say it probably isn’t good source material to cite in a Theological Discussion (*with “ghosts” visiting, etc.*), but I have to admit the book gives a rather sobering view of what’s really important in life - especially around the time of the Holidays.

In Dickens’ book, the main character is a very sour man by the name of Ebenezer Scrooge. Though wealthy, Scrooge is a stingy, greedy, and hateful old man. On a selfish scale of 1 to 10, Ebenezer most certainly cranks his self-centeredness up to 11!

Throughout the novel you see the depths in which Mr. Scrooge is willing to plunge to save a penny - even keeping

his faithful bookkeeper shivering in the next office because he didn’t want to purchase coals to place in the fire. From telling various charities to get lost when they came calling on him for help to never wishing anyone a Merry Christmas, the old miser was someone you didn’t want to cross paths with that’s for sure.

As most of you already know, through the ordained appointments of three mysterious visitors, Scrooge was given the ability to see many things his selfish eyes had never opened large enough to view. The final straw which brought about his “awakening” to a new, kinder demeanor was the opportunity to see his own funeral.

Because of the attention-grabbing nature of Scrooge’s visitors, he was able to turn over a new leaf immediately.

Ebenezer died a pleasant and generous old man, bent on righting the wrongs he had caused by decades of gratuitous greed.

Our Heavenly Father expects Christians to live on a higher plane than good ole’ Ebenezer did for most of his life. Whether it’s Christmas time or any other day of the year, the characteristics displayed by Mr. Scrooge should never be named among us as Christ-followers.

If you are someone who struggles with being a grumpy, greedy, and ungrateful person - God has one piece of advice for you: look around and see all the beautiful gifts He has showered you with today. We have plenty of reasons to be grateful every day, but most certainly we can thank God for the loads of blessings we have during the Christmas season.

The more time God grants me down here, the more I realize some of the greatest gifts we can ever receive have absolutely nothing to do with material things. I'll admit - when I was younger Christmas was entirely about what I could get. In many ways, our children view Christmas this way. *"I can't wait to see what I'm getting this year Daddy!"* they often say.

The Bible tells us God gives ***"good and perfect gifts"*** (***James 1:17***). Let's take a second and view our presents in the room...

How is your health today? When was the last time we thanked our Heavenly Father for our health? Notice I didn't even say for our *"good"* health... God commands us to be grateful also if our health is less than ideal because it could always be worse.

I believe one of the reasons Christians may be grouchy this holiday season is because they think life has dealt them a lousy hand concerning their health, and it's just not fair. While I'll admit it is tough to accept limitations, why not still thank God for what you do have? Truth be told there are scores of people lying in a hospital bed today who would be forever grateful to take your place in an instant.

If that's not sobering enough, drive on over to the cemetery. Get out and look at the gravestones of those whose health did not endure to Christmas 2018. Aren't we blessed to be able to look our loved ones in the eye today? Hasn't our Heavenly Father been good to us - allowing us to tell those in our families that we love them yet once more?

I tell you - waking up each morning is a privilege, not a right. It's a gift that our loving Lord grants to us day by day.

How can we get angry at our children for being ungrateful for the candy in their stockings when we neglect to thank our Heavenly Father for putting two feet in ours?

Have we thanked God for our families recently? *"Aw, Pastor Jason don't get me started on my family!"* you might quip, but have you? I shared a chapel message with the kids at Pathway Academy a few weeks ago, and I said something that floored them. I told them if they have one person who genuinely cares about them and loves them, they are better off than scores of children all over the world.

My wife and I had problems starting a family after marriage. We had it all planned out! We were to enjoy a couple of years together after marrying and then start our family maybe around year three. One miscarriage later and five years after our wedding we were showing no signs of being able to conceive.

How grateful we were when God stepped in and performed a miracle!

Almost exactly six years to the day after our wedding, we were holding newborn twin boys in our hands. Now we have four children (*three boys and our youngest, a little girl - pray for us!*), and I can honestly tell you there's not a better gift I've ever received than to be able to see those little rascals running around and bringing so much joy (*and craziness*) into the Sherman household.

When we gather at the foot of our extremely decorated tree each year to open Christmas presents, you can't convince me otherwise - the most magnificent presents are right there sitting beside me. Aside from my salvation and my lovely wife, these children are the greatest gifts I have ever received, hands down.

And that brings me to my final question: Have we taken the time also to appreciate our salvation? How can you and I not see that as Christians, we are already in possession of the greatest gift ever given?

We go to Christmas events, parties, special church services and activities, cantatas, living manger scenes,





hanging of the greens, and the list goes on... yet the One all these things focus on is INSIDE our hearts and the SPLENDOR of that truth escapes us. How?

It's time for a heavy dose of good, old-fashioned truth here: Satan has tried to pack the holidays with so much stuff getting us extremely busy with the comings and goings that we don't have time to reflect on just how wonderfully blessed we are by God.

It is quite ironic that the One whom Christmas was intended to focus on is precisely the One everyone ignores because... Christmas!

*Dear Jesus, please save us from the trappings of this season that take glory*

*and attention away from You. We want the focus to be on You, Lord, and the blessings You have so richly bestowed upon us.*

*Help us to prioritize Christmas according to Your will. Give us the discernment and discipline to eliminate anything that draws us away from worshipping You and showing genuine appreciation for our blessings.*

*God forgive us for being grumpy in exactly the season we should be elated and filled with joy. When You left Heaven's halls and Your throne to come down here arriving as a virgin-born baby, it was indeed the most special moment Earth had ever experienced.*

*May our conversations and demeanor be reflective of exactly how personal that reality is to us! And Lord, if possible, help us this Christmas to see all the other presents in the room. Oh, and maybe we can be thankful for the ones that come in boxes and wrapping paper, too!*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*

***Merry Christmas everyone! With love from Pathway Ministries.***



***Rev. Sherman serves as an Administrative Assistant at Christian Bible College. He and his wife Amber have four children.***

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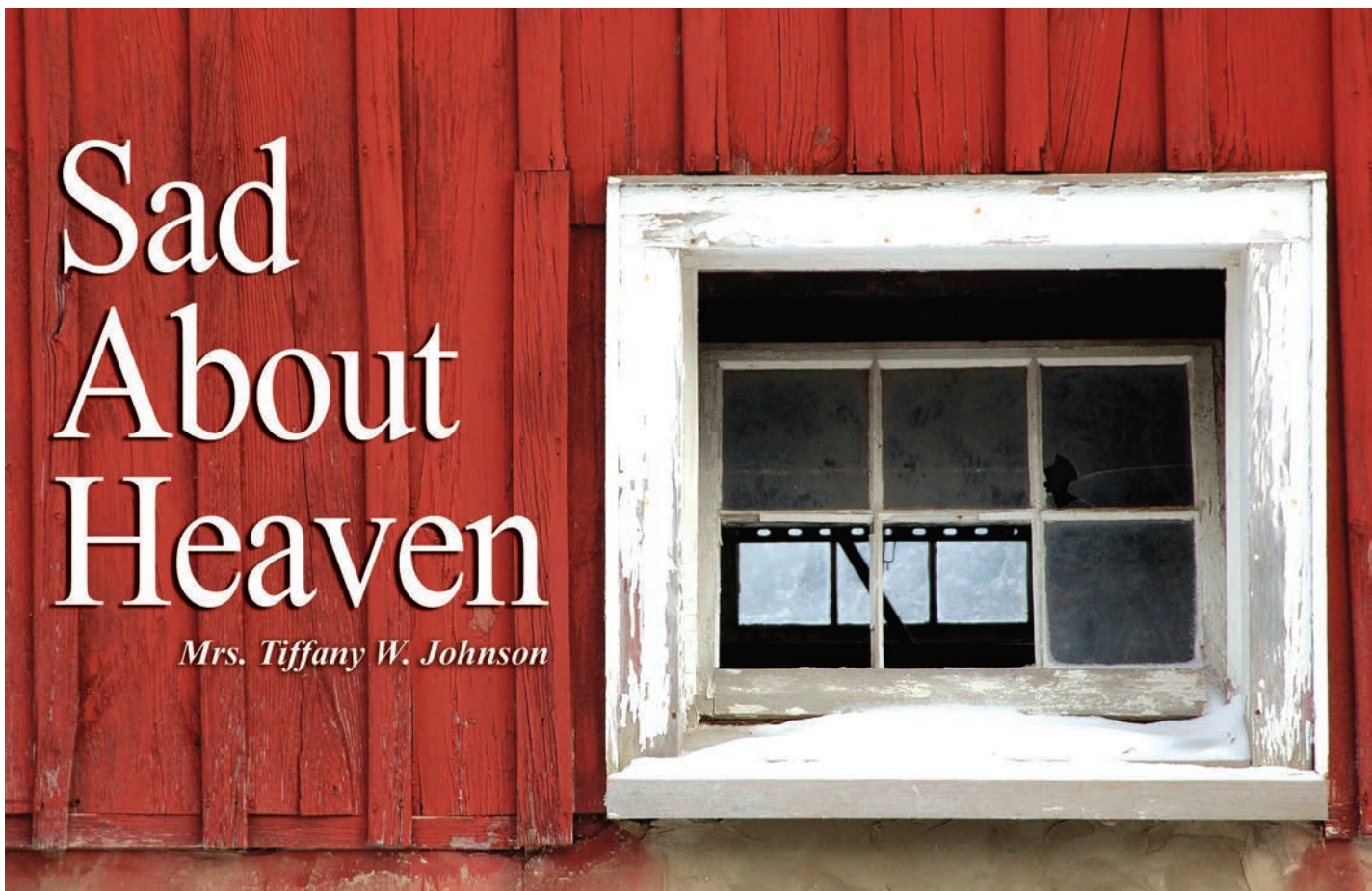
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It's a strange thing to hear someone say they're sad about Heaven. Well, weird as it sounds, I had a brief moment of sadness about Heaven several months ago...

It was towards the end of summer, not even slightly close to Christmas, and the upcoming Holiday season was far from my mind. I was walking around in the backyard with the dog, thinking of all the repairs and projects we need done around our house, and I was just conversing with the Lord about the day to day stuff of life. Our home was built around 1900, and it seems there's a never-ending list of things that need to be done at any given time. Now, just a little insight; I love to fix things! I also love to take something ugly and make it pretty. Whether it's refinishing an old piece of furniture, painting a wall, or just mending a hole in a piece of clothing, I enjoy the satisfaction of knowing I made something just a little bit better.

There is an old barn towards the back edge of our property. I won't lie... being as old as it is and neglected for years, this barn needs work.

The windows are out, the metal roof is peeling back, the steps to the door are missing, etc. My husband thinks we should tear it down, but I want to fix it. You see, when I look at that barn or whatever else I may be working on, I don't see what it is... I see what it has the potential to be. Bring on the challenge!

Well, as I was talking with the Lord and looking at the different areas of the barn that need attention, I was also thanking Him for the health I have to work on things like this and for even blessing me with it in the first place. I was also excitedly telling Him my plans for the barn and how I couldn't wait to finish up some other projects in the house so I could start work on this one. Suddenly, I began to think about Heaven.

*"Lord, working on things like this is one of my favorite things to do. I guess there's not much to fix in Heaven, huh? There are no old barns, leaky roofs, squeaky hinges, or drafty windows up there, are there? I mean, I doubt I'll need to mend holes in my white robe either. I know I'll*



*be happy and glad I'm there, but what in the world am I going to do?"*

Suddenly a slight sadness came over me. It sounds silly, I know. But really, what will I do with an infinite amount of time and no projects or challenges? Then I thought about Him.

*"I guess You like to fix things too, huh Lord? I mean, the Bible says all of Heaven rejoices over one sinner that gets saved. You throw a party every time a broken person with a lost soul turns to You to help fix them! Jesus came to Earth for the soul purpose of fixing what was broken – our relationship with You. What are You going to do when all of Your children are in Heaven and there's no one left to fix? Aren't You going to be bored, too?"*

As I walked around praying and thinking, His tender, loving, still-small voice spoke to my heart. It was as if He told me to think of my happiest times here on Earth. I thought for a moment and immediately pictured Christmas. I was sitting with my family gathered around a lit-up Christmas tree. I pictured everyone smiling and happy, the kids shrieking with excitement, and the reminders of the love and blessings of God that always seem to flood the room during that special time. That's when I'm happy!

Next, I thought of friends and family I know that are going through trials. I know of several facing critical illness, financial struggles, and marital problems. I'm sure you do, too. Suddenly, I had the same picture in my head of my family around the Christmas tree I had a few minutes ago... but something had changed. Now, the friends I have currently facing cancer are there too... but they're smiling, happy, and healthy! Those I know with financial struggles are there with my family too, but they aren't burdened by debt anymore... they are safe and secure in their forever home! Oh, the joy I see on their faces! The same with those I know currently struggling in relationships. The former things are now passed away and all things have become new! To see their happiness makes me happy.



So, the Lord didn't exactly give me an answer to my question earlier of what I would be doing in Heaven, but it didn't matter anymore. He has it under control and knows what's most important. I'm sure He'll think of something for me to do, and it'll be perfect and tailor made just for me.

By the way, He's still currently in the "fixing" business. If you have a need, share it with Him today. He likes projects, too!



*Mrs. Tiffany W. Johnson is a Registered Nurse and also serves as Editor of PathPointe Magazine. She and her family reside in Snow Hill, NC.*



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# And Finally...



## Christmas Wishes...

*I honestly don't need anything for Christmas that I can think of. I am blessed to have my family close, my health, and a beautiful home. I thank God for all the blessings he has given to me.*

**J. H.**

*My Christmas wish is to celebrate the birth of Christ in my life and the lives of my family and friends. I wish to overflow that celebration in some small way upon those around me. I wish to honor Him and to keep Him the center of my heart at Christmas just like I try to do every other day of the year. My Christmas wish is to somehow reflect my love and gratitude for the constant presence of Jesus in my life, in my home, and in my heart. I also wish the same for you as you celebrate the birth of Jesus; King of Kings and Lord of Lords!*

**P. L.**

*My heartfelt wish is that we would have a fantastic time of family and friends, relishing those sweet memories being made, and focus on the important things in life: Where will we be when He returns, when Jesus comes to call us home? Are we ready, or are we too caught up in the here and now? I hope I can work harder at making life simpler by removing distractions in my life and living it to the fullest so I can truly focus on the things that really matter.*

**D. L.**

*I am wishing for a white Christmas this year! Those are very rare in eastern North Carolina. I do remember*

*the snowy Christmas we had back in 1989. I know snow is not for everybody, and I'd rather it not stick around too long, but I think it would be neat to have another snow-filled Christmas just like we did 29 years ago.*

**M. T.**

*It seems like every year someone in our family is going through some type of sickness. Sometimes it's just a cold or stomach bug, and sometimes it's a lot more serious. This year for Christmas I am wishing for all of my family and friends to be healthy and have time to slow down and enjoy the reason for the season!*

**C. B.**

## “Making A Difference”

We'd like your help for an upcoming edition of “And Finally...”

Write to us in 150 words or less and tell us about someone you know and an act of kindness they've done. It can even be about yourself! The deadline for submission is December 30th, 2018.

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