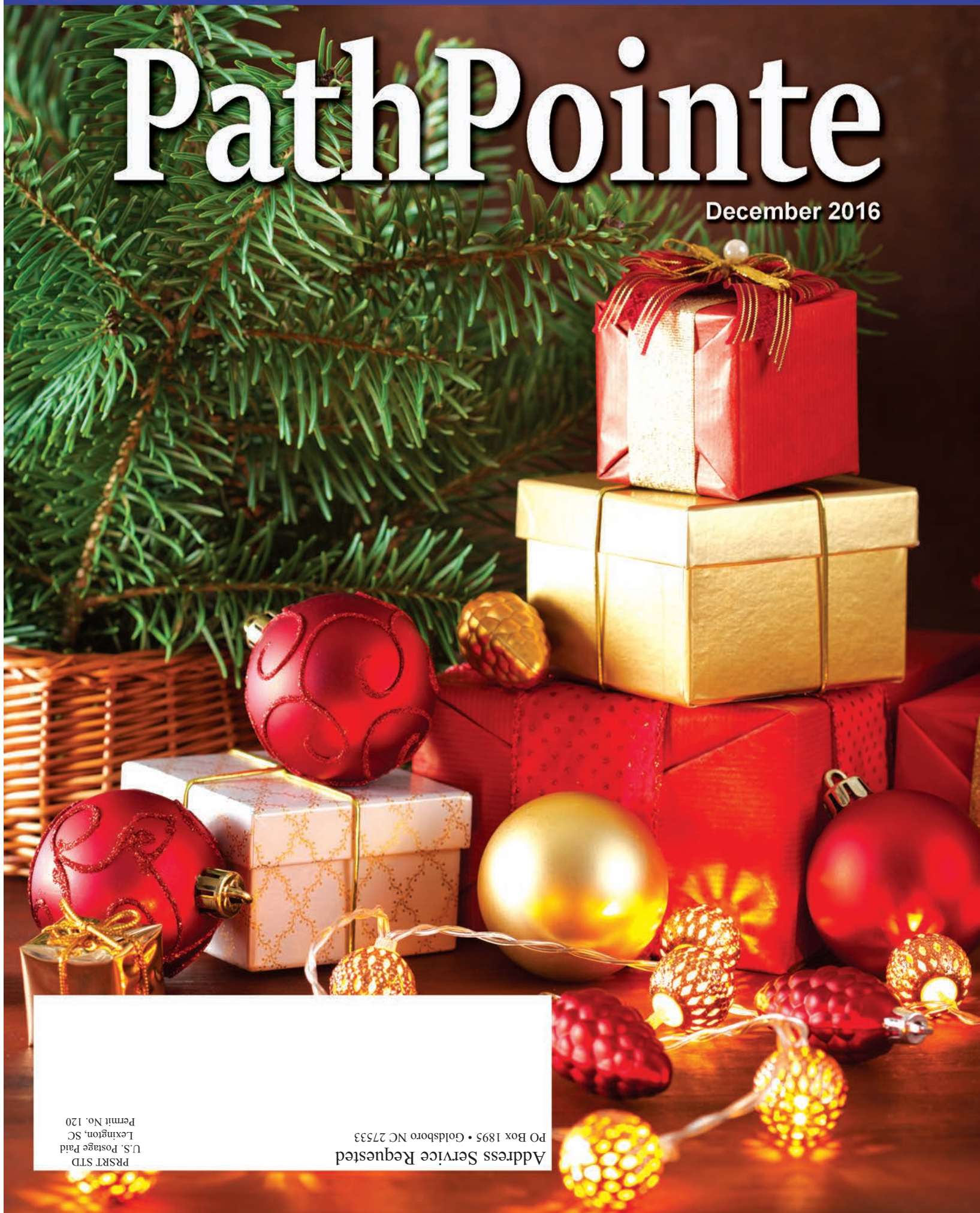


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A "Just Right" Christmas

Dr. T. D. Worthington

OK, I will admit it. I love the Christmas season. Those of us who are truly in love with Christmas see it everywhere. A few months back I saw it in a pepperoni pizza. Sure, in a slice of pizza with the pepperoni all carefully placed it looks like a Christmas tree. Surely, you've seen it? A whole pizza is like reliving every Christmas I've ever experienced.

I start looking for the red berries on the dogwood tree in September; they tell me Christmas is getting closer. Next I see the holly berries and breathe in the frosty air. Wow, I can hardly wait! Excitement is in the air, and things are beginning to *feel just right!*

Of course, having a just right Christmas may not come easy for some of us. I know many have gone through personal hardships over this past year. Some will have an empty seat at the table while others may spend their Christmas at a nursing home or in the hospital. Having a Merry Christmas is not always easy. However, I think the Lord gives most of us some free shots at having a *just right* Christmas during our life. These are secret portals in the calendar of time that only the experienced can truly understand. The first comes when you are a child. Now, I know all children do not have pleasant memories of the holidays, but for most kids it is the highlight of the entire year.

Yeah, when you are a kid, a Christmas with all the gifts and goodies *just feels right*. Even if you've been bad you deserve a little something, right?

Perhaps the next occasion is when you have kids of your own, especially when they are small. As they grow older, some of the magic is usually lost since they often spend a lot of time rolling their eyes at things you feel are important, but during their young years, it is another window when Christmas *just feels right*. The next freebee comes when you have grandkids. It is like the Lord allows you to go back and recapture some of the magic you thought was lost forever.

Now, usually these special “*feel right*” Christmases are small windows of time and will come years apart. So for most of the Christmases in between these free shots, we strive to recapture those times when Christmas felt right. Of course, we all know of others who just get bitter for not getting to experience the magic again. Not everyone will get all of these free shots, but for most of us these are the times when the magic of the season is especially intense.

I would also like to mention one additional opportunity, although the timing will vary from person to person, this occasion would be the first Christmas after you accept the Lord as Saviour. For this event it doesn't matter your age, Christmas will take on a whole new meaning, and there is no doubt it will just *feel right!*

Christmas for the Christian is somewhat of a microcosm of life itself. During the typical day you have many responsibilities and duties to perform, yet you always go back to your default position of dwelling on Christ. Christmas is the same way. Amid all the shopping, decorating, and gift giving, there is also the story of a Saviour who arrived on the earth, the miraculous son of a virgin, born in a stable, visited by shepherds, and worshiped by kings. We celebrate the opportunity for all mankind to experience God's love and forgiveness; and of our joyous privilege to worship Jesus.

Christmas can be like hitting the reset button as we recalibrate our lives and reorient our focus toward that which is eternally significant. It is a resetting of the compass away from the temporal and temporary. For those who use computers most likely you have noticed that when



you open up too many programs your computer slows down. If you have applications running in the background or if you have downloaded some questionable files, you may need to do a restart. This usually closes down all of the unnecessary applications so your computer can focus on what is really important. Life can be the same way. We get too many programs running at the same time, and we need a reset. Christmas provides a perfect season to bring our proper priorities back to the forefront.

Now, when you are dwelling within one of those earlier windows it is a little more difficult to devote most of your attention on God. When you are a child, you naturally focus on the toys under the tree. As you have children and grandchildren, you tend to focus your attention on them. Look at your photo album and you will see the annual objects of your focus. Yet, for all those windows in between those free shots, it is easier to focus on Emmanuel, God with us. Celebrating Christ is a window of time that will never pass away or disappoint.

Many years ago Isaiah wrote these prophetic words:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 9:6

The angel introduced Him to Joseph as Jesus, and Emmanuel, which means “*God with us.*” Indeed, if you are a Christian, He is with you every day of the year and in every Christmas you experience. This Holiday let's make Christ the focus of our celebration. It is the only lasting way to make Christmas feel. . . *just right.*



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



The last couple of months have been a blur! Hurricane Matthew hit the **GoMix** listening audience with a vengeance. I know everyone was affected in some way or another with this storm. Many homes and businesses were flooded. Some people now have their memories in their hearts instead of in pictures. Our prayers are with all of you.

Pathway Ministries was also hit at some of the **GoMix** facilities and was off the air at three stations for quite some time. We are thankful that everything is up and running again.

One of our ministries, **Pathway Christian Academy**, was flooded. Fortunately, the staff and other volunteers had come down to the school the day after Matthew hit and prepared for the upcoming flood. We never expected it to be so bad. We honestly thought what we were doing was overkill.

When the waters receded, my husband and I came down to look at the school. We waded in knee deep water to get to the building. The water had gone out of the building except for a few spots. As I looked around, my heart was

broken. My beloved academy was in shambles. The waterline was at about 3 1/2 to 4 feet. As we went further, we did not know what we were going to find. My mind was racing as I thought of the ministry the Lord had allowed me to help build. It was not just the investment of the property we were all concerned about; it was the investment of time we had put into creating the best learning environment and materials for our students.

We were relieved to find we had saved the students' materials. We had also saved all records and irreplaceable

items. Many material things were lost, and it was heart rending to see the desks as well as other things ruined. However, it could have been so much worse.

The next day we had the entire staff meet at the school to sort through everything. We had a save pile, a maybe pile, and yes, a garbage pile. Unfortunately, the garbage pile was growing about as fast as the other two piles. The staff and many volunteers cleaned all of the save items and the maybe items with pine sol or bleach. We sorted everything in a day, and then we continued to tear out walls and carpets over the next few days. Then we spent a few days extracting water and cleaning and disinfecting everything. It was such a mess.

One of the pleasures we had was stopping to eat lunch under the canopy out front. There was a nice breeze blowing and the sun was shining on our backs. We were all talking and one of our staff members mentioned that she heard on the radio this morning that it was only nine more weeks until Christmas. I said nothing, but on the inside I was thinking plenty. “Who could be thinking about Christmas at a time like this?” Christmas is supposed to be a time of joy. It is supposed to be a happy season. It is supposed to smell like cinnamon and sugar cookies, not fish and rotten sewage. It is supposed to be beautiful and bright, not ugly and brown.

You see, I was looking around and allowing my circumstances to control my thoughts. I was not a happy camper. I was looking at all of the devastation and work in front of me. I thought, “This is no time for Christmas.” Then, as I often do, I began to think. I felt convicted over the way I was feeling.



I was falling into that trap. All I was thinking about was what we do at Christmas instead of Who Christmas is about. Jesus was born in a smelly stable with animals, visited by shepherds, and wrapped in swaddling clothes. How could I possibly feel sorry for myself? Christmas is about His birthday. There is nothing wrong with having other festivities at Christmas, but the problem comes when that is what Christmas is about to us. Christmas is about our Saviour’s birth. It is about new life. It is about the new life our Lord came to give us on this special day. He is the Spirit that lives within!

There is new life at the academy, too. The first time I felt it was when I walked through and realized it smelled clean again. As I write this article, I can smell the paint going on the walls.

Soon, we will be getting new carpet. By the time you read this, we will be in our building. The academy received new life, and so can you. When you feel broken and torn, Jesus can give you life. He is there to pick up the pieces and allow you to start over.

Christmas is about the new life Jesus came to offer us one special day. Let’s not allow the things of this world to cloud our vision and get us sidetracked from the specialness of Christmas. Let’s make it all about Christ! Let Him give you new life!



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

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December, 2016

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Back On Track

What a whirlwind the past few months have been! We started with the first part of our *Fall Share-A-Thon* back in October, and week two was put on hold due to the damage caused by hurricane Matthew. With widespread flooding across the area, many of our stations were off the air for several days, and some of our buildings sustained damage. We also know of **Business Underwriters, Programmers, and**

some of our **Faith Partners** that suffered loss as a result of the storm. It was definitely a trying time for everyone! As we all worked hard to clean up and move on, we never doubted God had a plan and would provide.

With the help of our many **Faith Partners**, anonymous donors from around the area, and even extra fundraisers led by friends of the ministry, we are back up and running. Our second week of *Share-A-Thon* was held the week of November 14th and, as always, our Lord has been faithful to bless. With the addition of several hundred new Faith Partners and the funds we were able to raise, our *Fall Share-A-Thon* helped to put us back on track.

For all of you who supported with your time, finances, and prayers, we are so very thankful for all you have done! As co-laborers together in Christ, we are able to continue the work the Lord has called us to do. Thank you again for your continued support.



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Christmas Bells Are Ringing!

There's a tree in the your living room, colored lights on your porch, a wreath on your door, the fireplace is crackling, and there is a wonderful sound coming from your radio... You must be listening to **GoMix!** If not, you're sure missing out right about now! During the entire month of December, our *Music to the Highest Power* turns to *Christmas Music to the Highest Power* as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We love Christmas around here and hope you feel the same. For some it seems as though we go a bit overboard, but you know, it's no small thing that the Creator of the world came to earth to live as man, shed His blood for our sins, and conquer death so that we might live. In fact, it's a pretty big thing, and that's why we celebrate! Won't you join us in celebrating the gift of Christ?

Maybe you are doing some traveling this holiday season. If so, we want to go too! Check out our website at www.gomixradio.org to see our coverage map and a list of frequencies you can tune in to. You can also listen online through our website from anywhere in the world.

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We have always said we have the best listeners in the world, and we are so very thankful for all you do in support of this ministry. Thank you for allowing us into your homes and into your hearts. From all of the staff here at **GoMix Christian Radio** - Have a wonderful, Christ-filled Christmas!

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Rev. Jason Sherman

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants

shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

Revelation 22:1-5

Christmas is truly the most wonderful time of the year. It features the best music (*in my humble opinion*), keeps people in the most cheerful spirit

(*except when several are trying to buy the last toy*), and gives our terrifically busy culture several opportunities to slow down.

While the secular beliefs as to why this season is so special are numerous indeed, we know within the realms of Christendom, there is only one reason - the person of Jesus Christ. We openly admit He makes every day worth living, but there is a special tinge of peace during

this time of year that can only be explained by one special reality - this earth has been visited by Heaven.

There are more parallels between our Christmas celebrations (*at least of the Christian variety*) and Heaven than one would realize at a passing glance. Here are a few likenesses I see when taking a bit longer of a look.

Christmas is a time of being together.

What a busy life we lead! Our jobs and careers demand our time, as does the responsibility of being good parents and grandparents. We also have the extracurricular activities we involve ourselves with. Then there are the chores that life necessitates: cooking, cleaning, paying bills, home and yard upkeep, commuting to work, etc. Not to be outdone, and in my opinion, saving the best for last - we have our duties of service to the King of Kings, Jesus Christ. Each Christian is a servant to Him down here. I guess the question is whether we are a good or bad servant.

It's no wonder that out of all the days of the year, for many families Christmas is the only time each of us manage to get in the same room together. When all God's children get to Heaven, we'll all be together for the first time. What an exciting time that will be! Or, as another Scripture so aptly puts it, ***"...so shall we ever be with the Lord"*** (1 Thess. 4:17). This is a celebration no one will want to miss.

To the individuals reading this and you do not yet know Christ, maybe this truth will reveal to your heart a little more as to why your loved ones constantly share the message

of Jesus Christ with you. We don't want to be in Heaven without you! Every Christian wants our earthly family to be an eternal family and the only way to accomplish that is by the whole family trusting Christ. Then one glorious day, we will all be seated around God's table enjoying the splendor of Heaven together for all eternity. I wish this for all my family and I also wish the same for yours. May we, each family member, forever be in the presence of each other, our God and His Christ, Amen.

Christmas is a time of giving gifts.

Oh, the ever important search for the perfect gift for our loved ones. We all understand as to why it's so important, right? When you love someone, you do your research in order to get them the gift they either really wanted or really, really

needed. It makes all the shopping, the traveling through holiday traffic, and the long lines at each and every store worth it when you watch your family open the gift you bought them. The joy it brings you when you see their happy faces cannot be properly quantified with words.

Did you know God is a gift-giving God? The Bible teaches us in **John 3:16** that ***"...God so loved the world that He gave..."*** His one and only Son! Eternal life is a free gift from God. While it was not free to Him, it is free for us - all we need to do is ask Him for it.

Eternal life is not all God is giving. He has promised the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit to each and every believer. The Holy Spirit is called the down-payment, or "earnest," given from God to assure



us of our salvation. It is the spirit of Christ dwelling within the heart of each believer. Although an X-ray or MRI may never see Him, every Christian understands the “real” world is the one that isn’t seen anyway.

“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal (temporary); but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

II Corinthians 4:18

God wants you to receive the gifts He has already set aside for you. He has eternal life, the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, the grace to make it through each day, and many other gifts (*not counting the splendors of Heaven mentioned in our focal text*) all waiting for you to lay claim to each and every one for yourself. All you must do to receive, or “unwrap”, these gifts is turn from your sinful ways and turn to Christ. God teaches us whosoever calls upon Him shall be saved (**Romans 10:13**), and that He will never dismiss or cast aside anyone who comes to Him (**John 6:37**).

Christmas is a time of enjoying lights.

“City street lights, even stop lights, blink a bright red and green.” - excerpt from Silver Bells

One of America’s favorite pastimes is Christmas decorations. Normally throughout each neighborhood there are several houses taking part in the fun of decorating for Christmas. For

some, it is simply putting out the old plastic Santa Claus figurine that stands about three to four feet tall and lights up. For others, it is going



all out with thousands of lights, several Christmas trees elaborately decorated, and who can forget the beautiful manger scene placed in the front yard. No matter how we choose to celebrate it, we do indeed celebrate Christmas with lights!

God has sent the most amazing Light to visit us here on earth. In fact, there is much concerning Christ that has to do with light. There was a special star sent from God to announce His Son’s arrival. You can read about that in **Luke** chapter two. Also, when Christ was transfigured before His disciples (**Matthew 17:1-8**), the description was one of a fantastic white light signifying Jesus’ holiness, purity, and power. In Christ’s resurrection many saw angels announcing “Jesus is alive” while arrayed in bright, shining garments. Also, let’s not forget our

focal text from **Revelation 22** where Jesus is seen to be not only the light of the world but also the light of Heaven.

God has already gone through a great deal to make our Christmas celebrations special. So much ado is made about aliens and if they have ever visited earth. There has already been a much greater visitation that has actually been confirmed by thousands: the arrival of Jesus Christ to earth. Did you know God also wants to make our eternal celebrations special? As a family, we can each and every one of us make it to that city where the roses never fade and night is no more. In a way, an eternity spent with Jesus is indeed celebrating Christmas forever. In each moment of Heaven we are reminded of

the great impact Christmas has on our eternities through our precious Lord. Will you be there? Can your family count on the reality that you’ll be with them in that glorious city one day? Christmas won’t be the same without you.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Acts 4:12



Rev. Sherman serves as an Administrative Assistant at Christian Bible College. He and his family reside in Snow Hill, NC.



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And Finally...



Christmas Memories...

I remember spending all the days of my Christmas vacation with my grandparents. I helped them decorate the basement for Christmas Eve when all of our aunts, uncles, and cousins would be there. I remember making rings out of newspaper and homemade paste that strung together all over the walls and ceiling. I would help Grandma shop for all the cousins. I remember taking the bus to K-Mart and she had an envelope of cash for each cousin to ensure she spent the same amount on all of us. We baked cookies, deviled eggs, and set up the many nativity scenes Grandpa collected. Even though there were 20 of us cousins, she made me feel special. It truly was the best time of the year.

M. P.

When I was nine-years-old, my father was in the hospital during the holidays. Money was scarce. Mom had five children to dress for Christmas and she had to find presents for each of us. She told us the story of the Christmas Angel who, like the original Christmas Angels, brought tidings of great joy. Two days before Christmas, we heard a knock on the front door. When mom went to answer it no one was there, but she found a package on the doormat. She brought it inside so we could all open it together. It had a label on it that read, "From the Christmas Angel." Inside the package were new dresses for all four girls and a new dress shirt and pants for my brother. There was even a dress for my mom. Everyone screamed with joy and ran off to try on our Christmas Angel gifts.

K. B.

The Christmas of 1980 was my favorite. I was approximately seven months pregnant. My parents and my sister had made the trip from Jacksonville, Florida, to spend Christmas with my husband and me. We stayed up until the wee hours talking and watching holiday movies. Finally exhausted, we went to sleep. Well, we didn't get to sleep for long because my water broke. My beautiful son was born at 10:27 a.m. on Christmas Day, six weeks premature. It was as if God had said, "Here's my Christmas present to you this year. I love you; that's why I sent MY Son to you so many Christmas' ago. Now your son can help remind you of my gift whenever you are feeling low."

R. H.

"Send A Card To A Friend Day"

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

February 7, 2017, is Send A Card To A Friend Day!

Write to us in 150 words or less sending a note to your special friend. The deadline for submission is December 15th, 2016.

You can send an email to: Attn: PathPointe
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Something's Missing!

The picture tells us a lot . . . It's Christmas! We see the candy and greenery. We can imagine the decorating, the shopping, and the entertaining that is going on behind the scenes. But there is one thing, no matter how seasonal, this picture cannot give us. It cannot give us the sounds of Christmas. Holiday music helps us focus on the true meaning of the Christmas celebration. Music often soothes the hectic moments and gives us a soundtrack for our celebrations. . . *and that's where we can help.* Great Holiday favorites 24 hours a day as we "Celebrate the Gift" on your Christmas SuperStations.

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