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# PathPointe

December 2023



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#### PathPointe Magazine

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*Dr. T. D. Worthington*

*“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”*

**Psalms 33:12**

Director Frank Capra’s *“It’s a Wonderful Life”* was a movie whose theme was to remind a suicidal George Bailey that his hometown, Bedford Falls, would have turned out to be a pretty miserable place without his seemingly ordinary presence. It is shown that without some simple caring person like George Bailey, the selfish and power-hungry Henry Potter would take over. The end result would be a dreadful place called Pottersville.

In my view that is what has happened in America. Without the Johnny-on-the-spot, level-headed, freedom-loving American on the scene, a host of Potter politicians, Potter businessmen, Potter military leaders, Potter educators, Potter judges, and Potter preachers have taken over. Consider what our country might look like today if over the past 100 years the current administration had been in power. But such an administration has not

been in power. Why? Because of guys like George Bailey.

In the movie, George Bailey was facing a perplexing financial situation and begins to wish he had never been born. Suddenly, an angel appears to George and shows him what life would be like, if his wish were to come true. George is awakened not in Bedford Falls, but in Pottersville. The angel takes him from one scene in that small town to another. The difference is stark. The town’s main street is a red-light district, crime is rampant, and life there is poor, hopeless, cold, and uncaring.

Now, I grew up in Bedford Falls. Not literally of course, but pretty close to it. It is hard today for us older folks not to draw an analogy between contemporary America and Pottersville. Our nation in the 21st century is the complete opposite of the Bedford Falls of my childhood. It has become a hateful, dark, and grumpy place to live in. In the movie, George is terrified when he’s in Pottersville. He wants to get back to Bedford Falls even with its problems, which seem small in

comparison to Pottersville. Most of us older folks would like to go back too. Of course, most younger people have lived in Pottersville all their lives, so they have no idea how wonderful Bedford Falls really was or how much our nation has really changed.

Back in Bedford Falls there was one person who was not happy, and he desired to make everyone else unhappy also. His name was Henry Potter. Potter did everything he could to insure people were a slave to his own power. Misery and financial bondage were the bill of goods he was selling. Most folks in Bedford Falls wanted no part of it, while folks in Pottersville didn’t know how to survive without it. Potter controls all of the economic activity in Pottersville. Instead of owning nice homes, people rent tenements from Potter. Instead of bookstores, restaurants, clothing stores, and houses of worship; Pottersville is dominated by bars, second run movie theaters, liquor stores, and dime dance halls. Public safety is maintained, not by the morals of the community, but by a strong police presence. It is in

essence, every man, woman, and child for themselves. The people are also perpetually divided by race or class.

America today is Pottersville; ruled over by a bunch of grumpy Potter's. America is all about power and control. It's not about people like George Bailey and his family that just want to have a decent life. The Bailey's were not asking for much, only the basics. They don't want to be in debt, they want food on their table, they want their children to be happy, they want to live in a moral society, and they want to feel safe. They also appear to enjoy being free. Yet, all these things seem to be out of reach in modern America; just like they were in Pottersville. The problem is that Mr. Potter doesn't want to give them any of this. He wants them to be miserable because he is miserable. Potter was miserable in Bedford Falls, yet he is equally miserable in Pottersville. Potter is corrupted to the point where he is just a miserable wreck of a human being. In fact, Mr. Potter doesn't even act like a human being. Potter wants to enslave people and hold them in bondage. This is America, it is a wreck, and it's falling apart, just like Henry Potter.

While America falls apart, the George Bailey's of the country are suffering. America could be a nice, happy place. The problem is that Pottersville is so deeply entrenched into our society that even George Bailey begs for Potter's help. *"Please help me, Mr. Potter. Help me, won't you, please? Can't you see what it means to my family? I'll pay any sort of a bonus on the loan, any interest, if you still want the Building and Loan."*

Unfortunately, in today's world there is no guardian angel to get everyone back to Bedford Falls. If America could look at itself in the mirror, it would see that Pottersville is not a good place to be. Pottersville was designed to horrify the movie audience of 1946, strange as it may seem to us today, it *was* horrifying back then. But today, Pottersville is the exact kind of town that most politicians and many foolish citizens wish to have. It is too close to reality to be frightening any more. Business did seem to flourish in Pottersville. The streets were lined with business; mostly nightclubs, bars, and girly joints. There was a greater police presence as you might imagine. I guess miserable people need some kind of outlet. Whereas Bedford Falls seems to have pretty much rolled up its sidewalks early in the evening, not so at Pottersville. Nice and peaceful neighborhoods, like Bailey Park, have given way to shacks and slums. That is not to say that Bedford Falls was a boring place. On occasion, Bedford Falls was quite lively, but it seemed to be a decent kind of lively.

Bedford Falls was a place where people walked calmly along the tree-lined boulevard, but now, the street is filled with drunks, prostitutes and police wagons. Pottersville had totally adopted Henry Potter's values of greed, power, and selfishness. Potter facilitates activities that appeal to people's base desires and drains the town of its shared community values. Morality has plummeted. It appears that our society has adopted Potter's values and transitioned from the Bedford Falls of my youth into a modern day Pottersville. How did we get here? A simple answer is that no one kept Henry Potter reigned in. So, he was able to shove his agenda down our throats. Where are the George Bailey's when you need them?

The red-light district has grown because the Potter agenda downplays the importance of Biblical morality. Slums exist because that is the type of communities that Potter likes to build. Poverty reigns because Potter has manipulated the money supply. Freedoms have eroded





because Potter has promised security if we surrender our freedom. Hopelessness prevails because Potter needs it to keep his subjects in check. I am not saying that all the world was always like the idyllic Bedford Falls, but at least back then we could at least imagine living in such a place. Today we can't even imagine that such a place could even exist in America.

Moral and economic change certainly are not the only cause of the decline of families. However, it is a cause that has been overlooked by too many people. A Bedford Falls society cherishes families rather than neglecting them. It sees, rather than ignores, the poor and the outcast. It is a well-ordered society where the greed of the Potters are reined in, and where communities are generally safe and the working poor can still find the American dream.

The spirit of Mr. Potter has long held much of the world, but today it thrives in America. That is why modern America seems more like Pottersville than Bedford Falls.

So ingrained are the attitudes of Pottersville into our psyche that we hardly recognize them as morally deficient. Think of the state of our lives in America today. It seems to me that our sense of community is at an all-time low. To many, life seems to be harder than ever, and as a result, we are less charitable and tolerant of our neighbors. Mr. Potter seems to me to be an illustration of the leadership in today's America. It is a short sighted leadership, seeking every advantage in pursuit of current power and profits. Potter is always seeking ways to limit competition and thereby choice for the people of Pottersville. He wants them to be beholden to him for their lives. Does that sound familiar? Doesn't government want us beholden to them for everything?

Maybe I am so deep in the bubble of my own life that I am misinterpreting the things I see around me. After all, most of the people I know *are* hard-working, caring, and generous people. It's just that I can't escape the fact that I feel that America has become a much harsher place than I remember. Even the movie, *"It's a Wonderful Life"* has been impacted. Once upon a time it was shown 100's of times a year. Then the rights to the movie were acquired by NBC, and now it gets shown far less, because it is far more expensive to air.

When I was in high school, we used to worry about living in a world like the one in Orwell's *"1984"*. Orwell's writing described a world of violence, control, and power. He frightened us all with the prospects of living in a dark and sinister world where even our thoughts were

controlled. We were right to be frightened, but perhaps we should have been warned that the precursor to *"1984"* was Pottersville. *"It's A Wonderful Life"* premiered in 1946. Orwell's work was published in 1949. Pottersville comes first, perhaps *"1984"* will follow.

I am not smart enough to have all the answers, I know that. And even George Bailey resisted listening to the messenger sent from God. But, I do believe this; if America could find it's way back to two important documents; one of them perfect, one of them imperfect but still good, it would go a long way to helping us find our way back to Bedford Falls. The most important document is the word of God.

***"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."***

**Psalms 33:12**

The second document is the Constitution of the United States, a document that most all leaders have promised to honor and defend. But, it is also a document that most leaders seem to ignore once they get in power.

Merry Christmas America. It is unlikely I will live to see it, but it is my prayer that one day, like George Bailey, you to will cry out *"I want to live"* and then perhaps find your way back home.



***Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry for over forty-five years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries and Christian Bible College.***

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The Holiday Season brings so many emotions for me. Sometimes, I feel like my mind is in the midst of a whirlwind. I have many pleasant feelings and lots of stressful feelings, too. Fortunately, the pleasant thoughts far outweigh the bad. Some of the most pleasant thoughts are about family. We have traditions that have been kept year after year but have evolved over time. I have memories from when I was a child to the ones I have as a grandparent. Each one makes me smile.

One of the traditions we have was revisited once again. Our family has made an annual trip to Meadow, NC, since 2004. If you do not know, there is a wonderful restaurant there and a beautiful array of lights. We always try to go to Meadow Restaurant where I always eat more than I should. There is a buffet of great food as

well as a buffet of decadent desserts. You can probably guess what is my favorite. I actually did pretty well this time, although I did give in and eat a slice of chocolate cake with ice cream. I thought I was doing well to eat just one of the desserts. Afterwards, we went to Meadow Lights. There is a candy store, a carousel, and a train that carries you on a path with Christmas light figures. As I admired the arrangements and the children's sense of awe, especially the youngest one in the bunch, it brought a smile to my face. Remi is almost one, and he is our first great-grandchild. His joy was contagious as he saw the menagerie of lights for the first time.

I looked at the different family members who could make it, and as I looked at my husband, my eyes gazed toward the stars behind him. My thoughts went to my heavenly

Father. As I held back the tears, I thought, Lord, help me to redeem the time. There is so much I feel you need me to do, and so many blessings you have given me, I want to be sure I am doing what you want me to do with each minute of each day. My husband and I are growing older, and time is growing short.

My mind was a floodgate. So many things went across my brain. My thoughts varied from major concerns to small desires. Some are very private, and I am unable to share, but hopefully, others may minister to you as I try to express my heart.

I looked at little Remi and his great excitement. He was admiring the lights and enjoying his cousins at the same time. He was jumping in rhythm to the Christmas music with great enthusiasm. When he ate at the dinner table, there was



neither a concern for the calories he was taking in nor if eating it would make him sick. Remi was carefree and having a blast. It reminded me of the days when my children and other grandchildren were that age. All of our grandchildren rode the train when they were Remi's age with the same reactions, pure delight, with some slight variation, of course. Our children never went on that particular train, but there was at a stage in their lives where they were carefree, but not anymore. They are parents now with adult problems and bills. However, one of their greatest concerns is the future of their children.

I must admit, that is one of my biggest concerns as well. The future of our world is scary. I look around and see the moral compass has moved so much. I think, "What can I do, Lord, to assist in making things better? How can I make our circle of influence for You to grow?" I am teaching in Sunday School, I teach at the academy, and I try to teach my family. Sometimes, they end up teaching me more than I do them. The influence of television, the internet, and especially social media has such a hold on people it is hard to compete. Our society has become so liberal I wonder what the future holds for our churches, Christian radio, Christian schools, and other Christian organizations. But we will fight as long as we are able to fight. We must for the sake of the children.

Many of our grandchildren are shielded from the ills of this world, for now anyway. As a

mother and a grandmother, I desire more time with my children and grandchildren. I am not the grandmother I had pictured. I always envisioned baking cookies and taking walks with them, but there is a silver lining. I wouldn't trade what I have. I see most of my grandchildren at school every day, but grandma and teacher don't always mesh very well. It saddens my heart when they do get in trouble, especially if I am the



one delving out the punishment. Hopefully, they will see the Lord in their grandmother as I attempt to redeem the time in their lives.

Most of all, when I looked in the stars, I saw my husband. As he looked into my eyes, all our years together flashed before me, all of the Christmases, all the happy times, and all the struggles. I teared up as I realized our days together were growing shorter. That moment in time became so much more precious. Every moment, every Christmas, every dinner, every kiss needs to be treated as our

first and our last. We may outlive those younger than ourselves. Who knows? We already have in many cases. I have lived thirty years longer than my baby brother. I must redeem the time with my husband. May we not take one moment for granted.

As you look at your family and friends today, see them for the first time. Treasure every moment you have with them. Don't waste one day, hour, or moment. Each meal needs to be special, and each laugh and each tear needs to be one you hold close. Don't go through your day ignoring the needs of those around you.

What is the greatest need of those around us? The greatest need of those around us relates to the baby in the manger. Our Savior and Lord came down to earth to save us from our sins. Are you sharing with the people you love most about their need for the Savior? Are you letting them know that Jesus is the one who can guide them through their struggles? Do they see Jesus in you? Can you convince them with your life? We are not promised tomorrow. What better way to redeem the time than to lead others to Christ? Do it now!

***"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."***

**Ephesians 5:16.**



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

# Radio**bits**

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## *It's Here!*

It's here! The moment many of us have looked forward to throughout the year. Young or old? It doesn't matter. We're all a little excited about the Christmas season! Lights and wreaths mark driveways and doorways, department stores have Christmas music to sooth in the background, and a special anticipation fills the air. Needless to say, we're excited too. If you're new to *GoMix Christian Radio*,

we hope you enjoy the sounds of Christmas, because we've got them around the clock.

All month long, we'll help you enjoy the season just a little more with our special Christmas music format. You'll hear some of today's top Christian artists, some of our talented local artists, and a mixture of some oldies and goodies to usher in the Holiday season.

With all of the excitement and busyness of the season, we hope you'll remember the real reason we celebrate, the gift of Jesus Christ. Our desire is to help strengthen your relationship with Him or even point you to Him

if you are lacking that personal relationship. If we've done that to the best of our abilities, we've done our part.

From our family to yours, have a Merry CHRISTmas.

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## Too Busy For Jesus

Most of us are sitting in some amazement right now, trying to wrap our mind around how quickly another year has passed by. 2023 is almost gone. Now, with Christmas approaching, we try to slow down a bit and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, but all too often, time for reflection is quite a rare commodity.

Of course, you can't totally ignore Christmas. Homes are decorated, stores are busy, and with all the twinkling lights and holiday music, Christmas is in your face. Christmas is loud. It comes on with a bang. The holiday gets a lot of attention, even from non-Christians. Although you can't miss Christmas because it is everywhere, you can walk through the Christmas season and miss the real reason we celebrate. We can lose track of what all the festivities are supposed to be about. We aren't going to miss Christmas, but it is possible that we miss Jesus - even though we are celebrating His birthday.

Because of Jesus we have hope and a future to look forward to. Because of Jesus, we can walk through

life differently. It's the birth of our Saviour we are celebrating. But, when you think about it...more often than not, we miss Jesus. One of the things that is so fascinating about the Christmas story and Jesus' arrival, was that most people even missed it when it originally happened.

This will be the mission of *GoMix Christian Radio* during the Holiday season. We will be reminding our listeners that Christmas is all about Jesus. We will be reminding folks that we should all stop, slow down, rest, reflect, prioritize our lives, and keep the season centered on Christ.

Let's not go through another season where we are so busy that we miss Jesus. Maybe it's time to kick out the un-desirables and the free-loaders taking up refuge in our Inn, so we will be sure to have room for Christ.

# Lessons from the Wise Men

*Dr. Glenn Mills*



*“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”*

**Matthew 2:1-2**

As we read and meditate on the Christmas story, there are some things that we can learn that will make our walk with Christ more fulfilling. Please allow me to share some thoughts I have regarding the Wise Men and their visit to Jesus.

## **They were Willing to Travel a Great Distance.**

If we are true believers in Christ, it is going to cost us something almost daily. Even Jesus stated that no man builds a tower without first considering the cost. Seeing the heart of materialism in the rich young ruler, Jesus told him to sell all he had, give it to the poor, and come follow Him. Sadly, we seem to live in a time when

many know the cost of most things, but the value of only a few.

For the wise men, it was a time when travel could take a lot of time. Some scholars say this one trip could have taken up to two years considering Jesus was around two when the Wise Men arrived. Even Herod asked when the star appeared and had all baby boys in Bethlehem under the age of two killed. One thing we know for certain, they traveled a great distance and were willing to be inconvenienced to come see Jesus, King of the Jews.

Daily we must ask ourselves how far we are willing to go to worship and serve Him. Years ago, people worshiped in community churches close to their homes, but today travel is much easier. However, the question remains, how far will we go to worship Him both physically and spiritually?

Are we willing to be inconvenienced by giving up other things to love and serve Him? Everything we have belongs to Him. How much are we willing to use for Him? Not



in the sense of having to, but truly desiring to because of our love for Him. And yet, regardless of how much we give, it could never match up to what God has given and is giving to us daily. Don't forget the Bible tells us to seek God first and ALL we will ever need will be added unto us. It even tells how much; thirty, sixty and a hundred fold.

### **They Followed the Light.**

The more I study the Star, the more I believe it was the Shekinah glory of God leading the Wise Men, just as He led the children of Israel in the Wilderness. Stars don't move, but the Shekinah glory does. Today for us, that light is Jesus Himself. He is the Light of the world, and we are reflections of that light. Jesus said if we truly would be His, we would deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him. The world is full of people wanting to go their own way and do their own thing. But, just like the Wise Men, we should follow the Light, God's Shekinah glory, in Christ Jesus.

The world is constantly trying to get our attention with all their bright lights and attractions. Like the Wise Men, we must keep our focus on Jesus and wholeheartedly follow after Him. God's Word and Holy Spirit will always lead us to Jesus. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life that we need. Our faith and trust in Him give us salvation, joy, peace, and eternal life. If you want true, abundant life, follow the Light.

### **They Recognized the Fullness of Christ.**

We know that the Wise Men must have known who Jesus would be and what He would do by the gifts they brought to Him. Gold was a gift for a king. Frankincense was for a priest to burn as incense of prayer unto God. Myrrh was a fragrant perfume used for embalming purposes, signifying the death Jesus would die. Myrrh was given to honor the prophetic office. Together the gifts recognized that Christ the Messiah would be Prophet, Priest, and King.

Like the Wise Men, we should daily worship Jesus and celebrate the offices He fulfilled for us. He is King of all kings, but is He our King? Does He have us completely? Do we seek to please Him in everything we do? Is He truly our Lord and Master? If so, then we should worship Him as such.

Jesus is our High Priest, the ultimate sacrifice, praying and interceding for us. Jesus destroyed sin's penalty once and for all. It is not our performance, but our trust and faith in Him and the works He did for us. If we truly love and appreciate His sacrifice, we will serve Him out of a love and desire to please Him through a holy and pure life. Having to do right, is religion; but desiring to, is a relationship. In yielding to Christ, we become priests, as well, serving under Him to bring men to salvation.

Jesus was a Prophet in that He fulfilled all prophecy about Himself. He did, and is doing, what God had promised. God's promises are still being fulfilled in our lives through Jesus, His Son and our Saviour. ALL the promises of God are yes and amen in Jesus Christ. My friend, that is the best reason to REJOICE this Christmas season! All we need is in who Jesus Christ is and what He is doing in and through us.

Constantly, we should bring Him our gifts of praise, worship, and thanksgiving. We should desire to use our gifts of time, talent, and tithes to honor Him. I pray we use all He has blessed us with to love and serve Him.

### They Left in a Different Way.

Scripture says the Wise Men were warned in a dream about Herod, so they returned home a different way. I truly believe this has both a physical and spiritual implication.

Could you imagine the joy they experienced when they saw Jesus, God's promised Messiah? For centuries, His coming had been prophesied, and now they, like Simeon at the Temple, beheld the Lord's salvation. They gladly presented Jesus with gifts. It must have seemed so little in comparison to all He would do for them and all mankind. Like the shepherds, I can't help but believe they left praising God for His gift to the world.

With each encounter we have with Jesus, we should leave a different way in the Spirit. Each time we meet with Him, it should change us for the better. Our joy should be fuller, and our peace should be greater. Our love should be deeper, and our compassion wider. Our faith should be stronger and our hope more solid. No matter how we come to Him, we should leave a little different each time.

I pray each encounter we have with Jesus this season makes us more like Him. May our lives show the world who Jesus truly is and why He first came to that stable in Bethlehem. May the light of Jesus shine brightly through us this Christmas, showing men the love of God and their need for a Saviour. As the old saying goes, "the Wise Men sought after Jesus, which shows they were truly wise men."

I pray you and your family have a safe and joyous Christmas and a wonderful New Year. May your Christmas be filled with the joy, hope, peace, and love of Christ.



*Dr. Glenn Mills is a long time supporter of GoMix Christian Radio and a full-time Evangelist with Glenn Mills Ministries. More information is available at [www.glennmillsministries.com](http://www.glennmillsministries.com)*



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# Let Christmas Be

*Pastor Rusty Conyers*

We read of a great saint named Simeon in the Gospel of Luke.

*“And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”*

**Luke 2:25-35**

Simeon had waited for years in the temple to see the promised Messiah, and God blessed him with that great opportunity! He accepted that opportunity just as God gave it to him. Today, we have the same privilege to just let Christmas be.

I’m saying let it be in the sense of just leaving it alone. Stop trying to change it and commercialize it so much. Leave it just as God gave it and intended it to be. As Christians, may we receive it as God gave it to us in His Word. May

we keep it as a special time of worship and adoration as Simeon did in the temple on that holy occasion.

Otherwise, we may get so wrapped up in all the Christmas wrappings we are given by this world to the point that we can lose sight of its real meaning and purpose. So, here are three thoughts to help us let Christmas be.

## **First, Let Christmas Be WORSHIP.**

Simeon worshipped the Lord in the House of God. People used to go to church for Christmas even if they didn’t go at any other time. Like Simeon met Jesus in the temple, being in the House of God is a great place to meet with the Lord.

Also, the shepherds worshipped the Lord with their bold praise as we read in Luke’s Gospel.

*“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.”*

**Luke 2:20**

They witnessed to everyone about their splendid experience with Jesus. God made us for worship. He put it into the soul of every person. Until we meet Jesus, there is a spiritual emptiness in our life. So, let’s follow the shepherds’ example as they believed the Heavenly message.

Then there were wise men who worshipped the Lord with their giving. We see it in Matthew’s Gospel.

*“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down,*



*and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.”*

**Matthew 2:11**

They gave of their time and treasure in abundance. What a great example for us. I believe this was the start of what we now call Christmas gifts. First, God gave the greatest gift of His Son. Now we can give our hearts and lives back to Him by faith and Christian service.

### **Second, Let Christmas Be A WITNESS.**

The Old Testament prophets witnessed of the messages God gave to them concerning the promised Messiah. Five hundred to seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, they were describing that wonderful event.

*“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”*

**Micah 5:2**

The angels also witnessed of it. Gabriel went to Zachariah and then to Mary. A host of angels appeared to the shepherds on a hillside. Later, an angel went to Joseph to fill him in on the great plan of God’s salvation for all who will believe on Jesus as Saviour. Today, we are to be His witnesses. We can do so by our regular church attendance that announces we are among those who believe on Jesus. Perhaps we can witness by putting up a nativity scene in our yard or a sticker on the car that says, “Jesus is the reason for

the season.” We can witness as we share the Gospel message or show the love of Christ to others. We can witness as we give to God’s work by our regular tithes and offerings. Remember, Jesus said, *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16)

### **Third, Let Christmas Be A WONDER.**

*“But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.”*

**Luke 2:19**

*“And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.”*

**Luke 2:33**

Mary and Joseph, the wise men, the shepherds, Simeon, and others all marveled and wondered at the glorious event of Christmas! May we also wonder at its tremendous truth of God’s love to all mankind. God sent His Son to be born miraculously of a virgin so that He could one day pay for our sins on the cross of Calvary. Yes, that really is what Christmas is all about. And in that sense, hopefully, we will let Christmas be all that God wants it to be in our hearts as we spend time together with friends and family this year exalting our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.



*Pastor Rusty Conyers has been in full-time ministry since 1998 and Pastor of Liberty Baptist Church in Snow Hill, NC, since 2010. More information is available at [www.libertybaptistsnowhill.com](http://www.libertybaptistsnowhill.com).*

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# Light and Darkness

Jesus is the Light of the world.

Jesus came into the world as a baby in Bethlehem. He brought light to a darkened world as illustrated by the light of the angels' glory at His birth and the light of the star that shone above His dwelling place. A world that lived in spiritual darkness was illuminated by the Son of God coming to live among us. Many followers recognized the spiritual light that Jesus shared as He ministered to mankind during His earthly lifetime.

Conversely, as Jesus brought light upon His arrival here, darkness prevailed when He left the world. As He took our sin upon Him, suffering in our stead, the world was covered in darkness. **Luke 23:44-45** says, *"And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened,..."* As His Father turned away from Him because of our sin, darkness fell.

Sadly, most do not perceive the light that He brought. **John 3:19** says, *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."* Many still live in spiritual darkness, and that darkness is becoming more and more evident in our world as time goes on. When we look at the world as it exists today, we can't help but notice the darkness. It is easy to see that the world has no love for our Saviour. Seeing how He is despised by those who scream the loudest grieves His children as it also grieves Him. Spiritual darkness appears to be winning in this present day.

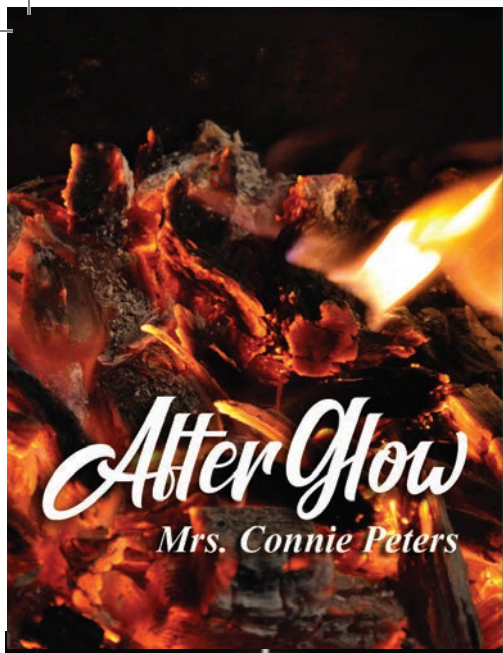
But Jesus is still the Light of the world. We can still pray, as David did, in **Psalms 13:3**, *"...O Lord my God: lighten mine eyes,..."* And as He brings light into the lives of those who have trusted Him, He can use our testimonies to shed light on a world that is ruled by darkness. We only need to let our lights shine to those around us. We need to stand up for righteousness and condemn evil at every opportunity.

And one day, in that final day of the Lord, the whole world will recognize the Light. We have the hope and assurance that the Light will have the ultimate victory. We can gaze with assured hope and anticipation beyond the darkness that is apparent today to the time when we will be in the presence of the Eternal Light!

In the meantime, as Christ's ambassadors, let us shine forth His light to a darkened world especially during this Christmas season. After all, we are the only light that some may see. *Ponder that!*



*Mrs. Connie Peters has two children and resides in Princeton, NC. She serves as an instructor at Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.*





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