



POTPOURRI FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT

(remembrances of the Holy Spirit)

Celebrating the King of Kings and Lord of Lords

The Real Christ in Christmas

11-16-2024



Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

WILL YOU HAVE THE COURAGE FOR CHRIST TO BE PREEMINENT IN YOUR CHRISTMAS?

We're bombarded by the phrase the "spirit of Christmas" which can mean anything from consumers filling bags with needless purchases to romanticized family gatherings around a loaded dining table, and everything that's marketed in between. But it's nearly impossible to find Christ taking center stage in people's celebrations (which means far more than driving by a manger scene with your kids before hurrying home to view a favorite "holiday" movie). Hallmark dramas would have you believe that Christmas time is all about discovering the perfect "forever romance", especially if your own marriage hasn't turned out so well. And marketing ensures that you spend more than you should so your home is filled with the "spirit of Christmas". But there's something we'd like to discuss that may help you see Christmas in a different way.

We'd like to bless you if you are *genuinely* born again by making you aware of the bamboozling of Christmas by Roman Catholic theology centuries ago. Its specific focus keeps Christians fixated on baby Jesus rather than on celebrating and magnifying His glorious heavenly role: **The King of Kings and Lord of Lords**.

What if you take away the inordinate emphasis on the needy Infant and the sentimentalized view of His birth. (Even the shepherds had ears to hear the angelic announcement which focused on Jesus' adult role as Savior and long-anticipated Messiah!) When a birthday is celebrated, you are recognizing that person at their current age and wishing them many more birthdays in the future. You don't keep looking back and imprisoning the birthday person as a baby. You celebrate who he or she has become to date and your hopes and prayers for them for each new day to come. We who are the *genuinely* born again should be celebrating Who Jesus is now as the One with Whom we'll live for eternity: **The King of Kings and Lord of Lords**. Even at Christmas, please make sure you don't confine Him to His infancy when He is SO MUCH MORE.

What you may not know:

In order for the Pope to rule as Vicar of Christ — Christ's earthly substitute with the same power and authority over the Church that Christ had, Catholic theologians imprisoned Jesus as a perpetual



baby in His mother's arms in their paintings and statuary. (This ongoing image of the dependent Infant

extends beyond church buildings. An enormous statue of Mary holding infant Jesus greeted Sue in the foyer of the hospital she was assigned by her insurance provider.) Through this deception of focusing on Jesus as a perpetual needy Infant, His divinity and His reason for becoming Man is downplayed or ignored. Let's face it. Nobody treats a baby as Lord of their lives. Catholicism elevated His mother Mary to the point of receiving the awesome regard which only God—Father, Son, Holy Spirit—is due.

The Lordship of Jesus Who conquered sin and death and is ALIVE and personally rules His own is downplayed by Catholic dictate. How? He has been left hanging on the cross as a permanent Victim. His perpetual crucified state reflects centuries of Catholic dogma which stated, "Anyone who believes that the sacrifice of Jesus is sufficient for salvation, let them be eternally cursed." Even though this particular tenet was removed in 1963, the statues and imagery still remain. Minimized is the Bible's joyous truth of Jesus as the victorious **King of Kings and Lord of Lords**.



Here are some points for you to prayerfully consider if you are genuinely born again:

If you celebrate Christmas, represent your current relationship with **the King of Kings and Lord of Lords** to remind you of WHO will be welcoming you for eternity. And celebrate that eternal reality each and every day! As we've previously written, commit yourself this Christmas season to being our Lord's **redemptive ambassador**, which includes being **His peacemaker**. Choose to make a decision this Christmas. Either make the center of your Christmas why our Lord Jesus became man and Who He is NOW so you can joyfully celebrate what He has accomplished on your behalf. Or, leave Christ totally out of your Christmas with all of its superficiality and self-focused gratification; refuse to be a hypocrite from our Father's perspective.

We take seriously our responsibility of serving our Lord and you as **redemptive ambassadors** and **His peacemakers**. That's why we want to offer you some insight into why so few Christians fulfill these two vital roles, and why so few Christians who are shackled by unresolved bitterness and/or just plain apprehension aren't confronted as Scripture calls for.

***"There is a way that seems right to a man,
but its end is the way to death"*** (Proverbs 14:12)

👉 Which biblical truths have been de-emphasized and even eliminated by 'learned' theological Reformers? Here are two which provide you with wonderful life purpose: •your transformation by the Holy Spirit into increasing growth in Christ's character. •your fervent desire undergirded by love and grace to bear fruit to our Father's glory as Lord Jesus calls for in those who love Him. These are **THE** biblical life motives for the *genuinely* born again! But these godly motives have become intellectual considerations rather than an obediently trusting way of life. How has this happened? Blinded by

their own educated intellect, many of the distinguished and highly revered Reformers had vast “knowledge” of God’s Word. But sadly, most bore little personal testimony of putting that knowledge into practice. Their approach to the Bible was more akin to **Deists** who view our heavenly Father as totally uninvolved with His creation. From that Hellenist framework, man’s intellect is his source of determining what he believes. In their ‘learned’ bamboozling of untrained common people, various Reformers promoted unquestioned belief in their own **differing creedal positions** and **religious practices**. Sadly, the divisive intellectual focus of many Reformers personified Proverbs 14:12, above, and kept our Lord Jesus at arms’ length. Our Lord’s commands and the way of life which they produce in His followers by His indwelling Spirit were disregarded by intellect-captive Reformers whose approach bamboozled so many Protestants.

👉 The writings of all too many Reformers brought people no closer to the way of life our Lord Jesus would have His own live through His Spirit, nor in His people fulfilling Father’s purposes. In fact, their writings have ultimately fractured Christianity into many thousands of opposing denominational and sectarian camps. You may be among Christians who participate at some level in these various divisions but who do very little about these two life purposes: •to mutually fulfill Father’s purposes (this includes being a peacemaker), or •to fervently seek Christ’s character to be developed with you by His Spirit. Consider that you may be one of the bamboozled who thinks that the fracturing of Christianity is acceptable to our Lord Jesus. Not so!

👉 In their fracturing of Christianity, many Protestant theologians followed the errant path of Roman Catholic doctrine in two key ways: by removing our Lord Jesus as the **personal ruling Head of His own by His Spirit**, and replacing Him and His rule with **Nicolaitan dominating clergy** just as Catholicism did. All the more tragic is that by removing our Lord from His rightful place, many Protestant theologians emulated Catholic theologians in disregarding Jesus’ means of unifying His followers: *“[Jesus] gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, shepherd/teachers... until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a full grown man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”* (Ephesians 4:11,13).

During the decades of our ministry it’s been heartrending for us to see the divisiveness created by these various theologians of religious distinction. The loving rule of our Lord and enacting His commands as a way of life has been so downplayed. Think about this next Sunday as you drive off to your place of worship and pass by the homes of other Christians whose creedal belief systems and religious practices differ from yours. They head off to their own various religious establishments with their own differing beliefs and practices. And in your theological divisions you as Christians are unable to experience the unity and one-anothering actions of love with one heart, one soul and one mind as Lord Jesus would have you. HE envisioned His followers being unified by His Spirit and bound together by sacrificial love:

➤ *“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, IF you have love for one another”* (John 13:34,35).

➤ *“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is above all and through all and in you all”* (Ephesians 4:3-6).

All Scripture is God-breathed...

It's crucial for you if you are *genuinely* born again to take God's Word as HIS Word because of WHOSE Word it is! To do this, you must free yourself from the theological bamboozles which may have duped you. Many of the past theological bamboozles water down the veracity of God's commands, making them seem optional depending on how you feel about them. But when you free yourself from theological bamboozles, your heart overflows with these heart responses when you think about Who our wondrous God really is: •a vastly greater and loving appreciation for Him •a deeper holy fear of Him •a greater reverent awe of Him. Perceiving Father through this heart lens will deeply affect how you view the commanding nature of His commands in your life.

Let's look at an example of the awesome nature of the One Who has given good and righteous commands to His own. As we told you in our 12-6-2024 Potpourri, [Serving Our Lord Jesus Is To Be His Peacemaker](#), our Lord's words are crystal clear: that our heavenly Father will not forgive those who refuse to forgive (Matthew 6:14,15). Our Lord Jesus made it a straight-forward command to "forgive" and then revealed the dire consequence if you refuse to forgive. He didn't minimize what will happen to the unforgiving. Forgiving others is a command that's brought up throughout the Newer Testament, and each instance supports our Lord's firm warning in Matthew.

Our Lord Jesus reiterates the fear-worthy nature of His Father even to those who know Him: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). Remember, fearing God is a holy and reverent response to the One Who loves you as His child! But fearing a fellow human being has no place in your heart and mind. This same exhortation to "not be afraid" applies to you if you're fearful of confronting people who are holding onto unresolved bitterness or who live with ongoing apprehension. **If** you don't sorrow over the hellish consequence which Father will do to the unforgiving for whom you care, then you don't possess the character quality of Christ's love for them. **Your fearful silent cowardice may be reinforcing their refusal to forgive, and you already know the hellish outcome of that.** Prayerfully think about it...

Here's an anecdote we hope will encourage you if you're afraid of speaking up when you should. When Corrie ten Boom found that she was becoming fearful after speaking, she asked the Lord to release her from the burden. "He showed me the following verses: 'Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man shall attack you to harm you' (Acts 18:9,10). Lord Jesus, show us when we are keeping silent because of fear. Give us the faith and courage to speak up whenever it is necessary. God never inspires doubt and fear, but faith and courage. Peter produced his own doubts by looking at the waves. "I sought the Lord and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears." (Psalms 34:4) Lord, our fears are the result of not trusting fully in you. Make us see the foolishness of fearing. Turn our eyes in the right direction unto You, Lord, and away from the waves." (emphasis added)

We know that this email isn't like the Christmas cards you may send or receive this holiday season. But we're disheartened if you celebrate Christmas without the love of Christ for those you'll be spending it with. We'd far rather you bring the deliverance and healing powers of our Lord Jesus into your Christmas and be His redemptive ambassador and peacemaker. Please make Christ preeminent in your Christmas!

Mike & Sue