

The Gift Of The Son

December 2005

By Pastor Jim Emig

Around my house, we have a Christmas tradition: Christmas wrappings are not thrown away, until all of the gifts have been recovered and removed from the living room. This tradition was instituted because, one year, a vital part of a toy was thrown away with the trash, rendering the toy useless.

Perhaps you can see where I am going with this. For me, the temptation is to become so distracted with the 'wrappings' of Christmas that I have no time or energy to pay much attention to the fact that Christmas is a time to contemplate the initiation of God's redemptive plan. We say that we give gifts to others to remember that God gave us the gift of Jesus Christ. Yet, when I contrast the amount of time and energy I put into family gatherings, meals, and gifts, it becomes clear to me that the wrappings of Christmas have consumed the truth of this event. Christmas is a time to remember how God began the process by which our sins can be forgiven. Yet, we often spend more time fretting about getting just the right gift for someone or the Christmas day menu than thinking about how we ought to respond to God's gift to us.

Please understand, I am not suggesting that these parts of Christmas ought to be discontinued; rather, we need to wrestle with how to remember God in all of these activities. Perhaps, when we bring the family together for a Christmas meal, we could talk about how God has been working in our lives during the past year. I would think that, if Christmas is a celebration of God's love for us, we should be willing to express our appreciation, not only to Him but also to each other.

Would we be willing to offer God a gift this year? This time every year, I begin making lists of presents for my friends and family. Sadly, God is not on my list. What would God want as a gift from me? Well, He is usually convicting me about something and, this year, I intend to commit a part of my life to Him in appreciation for His life given for me.

So, celebrate Christmas this year. Celebrate it with gifts and feasting and family gatherings. But, as you plan each of these events, ask yourself how they can point you and yours to the event that ought to outshine them all: the gift of the Son.