



President Walton's December 2019 Message

Let Jesus be Seen This Christmas!



All year long, the District has been promoting the theme, “Let Jesus be seen in 2019!” In fact, it will serve as the theme for our Advent Devotions for the next few weeks. Initially I intended the phrase as a reminder, and encouragement to myself, to find intentional opportunities to show the love of Jesus. In my personal experience, it is apparent that people respond more to what I do than to what I say, and when I speak and act as a witness for Jesus, this can have an impact on the faith and life of others. If I’m honest with myself, and with you, the readers, there have been some days when I have lived my faith pretty well, and other days when I have lived my faith poorly. Thankfully, we have a gracious Savior who is so full of forgiveness He makes me want to live my faith daily—not because I have to, but because I get to!

I find that the Christmas season, especially, lends itself to be a time to show the love of Jesus as we tell the story of our Savior’s birth through symbols, words and songs! I find the story of Jesus in every twinkling light, every Christmas tree, sparkly ornaments, much of the music and the whole idea of gift giving. It is indeed the most wonderful time of the year!

Christmas can also be a harried and hurried time for many. There are all kinds of additional activities, social events, shopping, traveling and decorating. It can be exhausting. In one of my favorite Christmas movies, “Miracle on 34th Street,” the teenage janitor, Alfred, is listening to Kris Kringle’s concern that people have forgotten the true meaning of Christmas and talking about how commercial Christmas has become. If they only knew how much worse it would get! Alfred says, “Yeah there’s a lot of bad ‘isms’ floatin’ around this world but one of the worst is commercialism Make a buck make a buck Even in Brooklyn it’s the same--don’t care what Christmas stands for just make a buck make a buck.” Of course, the focus of the movie obviously differs with our faith in Jesus, but the idea of Christmas losing it’s true meaning shouldn’t be lost on us. The truth is, with all of the things we have on our lists, it is easy to neglect or forget what the season is really all about. Jesus still is the reason for the season!



Over the years, I have found that people are genuinely curious and open to hear the real story of Christmas. The Christmas season is so commercialized in our day. You could find stores playing Christmas music and setting up displays before the end of October. Retailers may see this as a way to increase sales. I almost wonder if this also does not reflect our culture that longs for the joy that this season can bring. People all around us need joy!

We read these familiar words in Luke 2: “And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.’” This verse is the heart of the story we get to share with the world. However, the good news of Jesus is told best through our lives, transformed by this very joyful news we get to share! When this good news has done it’s work in our lives it overflows and impacts others all around us.

Over the next few weeks, as the world rushes around to keep pace with what this season has become, let me encourage you to let Jesus be seen in your life. Let Jesus be seen in your worship and devotional life. Let Jesus be seen in your social events, in your decorating, in your shopping trips, in all you do! The Christmas season is the most wonderful time of the year because it is the season we get to tell people the story of our Savior’s birth. So many in our world do not know the story of God’s most gracious gift to the world in Jesus. In Him we have the solution to man’s problem of sin. In Him we have hope, joy and peace. In Him we have forgiveness and eternal life!

Let Jesus be seen in you this Christmas season. Let His presence be evident in how you decorate your home. Let Him be present in your conversations. Let Him be seen as you pray for a little extra patience, a little more joy, and lots of opportunities to share Jesus with the world. Let Jesus be seen in Christmas 2019, and beyond so that those who don’t yet know Him can celebrate with true Christmas joy!

Have a wonderful Advent, and a Merry Christmas season!

Peace in the Prince of Peace,

Greg

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

- [Region 3 Lay Leadership Summit](#)
February 28 - 29. Prince of Peace
Lutheran Church, Orlando
- [Veteran's of the Cross](#), March 2-4 for
all retired workers; ordained,
commissioned and lay