
The Spirit of Christmas

Seasonal Thoughts

Christmas is coming! I'm writing this in October and Christmas is already coming!

The Reason For the Season

Time to be stocking the freezer and the drinks cabinet. Time to be laying up piles of presents to ward off the January Visa bill. Time to sort out who has Uncle Victor this year. Time to be getting closer to colleagues than we really intended to at the works' meal. There's yet time to escape the whole thing by getting a late deal on Christmas in the Canaries. Time for ministers of all persuasions to start encouraging people to remember the 'reason for the season'.

Or perhaps not. The spirit of the midwinter festivals that predate the Christian Christmas seems to be increasingly asserting itself. It is about keeping our spirits up despite the descending darkness. It is about getting together in families (papering over the relational cracks with plenty of TV and a little lubrication if necessary). It is about giving gifts (out of obligation if not out of love). It is about having a good time. And there's nothing wrong with a bit of good will and good cheer – unless we mistake it for Christianity.

Christmas comes and goes. It cheers us for a while, for which we are grateful – but has little lasting effect. It strikes me that Christianity is more of a January 2nd affair. We can try and remember the 'reason for the season' amidst the hustle and bustle. But faith in Jesus is for the long haul, for real life when the holidays are over and the partying stops. Did God really become a human being? That needs clear-headed thought. Did God as a human being really die on a cross and come to life again? That needs clear-minded evaluation of the eyewitness testimony in the cold light of day. (And what light is colder than January days!) What are the implications for me if this is true? That takes time to work through.

Peace on Earth

So my advice: if you can spare a thought for the "Word made flesh" as the season presses in on us, so much better. But if you're serious about it, mark a date in your 2005 diary after the last shindig and resolve to find a "peace on earth" that will stand up to all that the New Year has in store.

Nick Gray,
Wychwood Baptist Minister

Turkey Farm Nightmare

Snow and blizzards 2 to 3 days before Christmas with all the birds ready for customers to collect and they cannot get to the farm.

This happened twice in the late 60s and early 70s.

So don't forget

Melplash Turkey Farm, (Proprietor: Joanna Cook)

We are now taking orders for Farm Fresh Christmas Turkeys range 8 to 25lbs. Over 30 years of satisfied customers

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