

THE PASTOR'S MINUTE

"Don't Forget The Peace"

Christmas, as most of us know it, is a time of rejoicing. It's a time when families come together and share with each other more than at any other time of year. However, some see no lights and no decorations. The sounds of rejoicing are drowned out by the cries of parents fussing and fighting. It's a time when the highways are bumper to bumper with people trying to make it to Grandma's house. The shopping malls are filled to capacity with last minute shoppers hoping to find that perfect gift. It's a time of rush, rush, rush.



In the midst of your rat-race world, you rush out of the department store with your arms loaded down with gifts and all of a sudden as the cool air hits your face you hear, in the distance, the sound of that little bell— "ding, ding, ding." As you turn your head you see him. There he is in the dim light, that little man with the big smile, the red bucket and that silly little bell, there, in the same spot as last year. Suddenly, he says to you, "Merry Christmas, God Bless You," and then you remember. . . It's Christmas! Things haven't changed a lot since that first Christmas in Bethlehem. Things in Bethlehem were also busy, confusing, frustrating, and everyone was living a life of rush, rush, rush. Christmas, as the world would see it, came . . .

1. To The Wrong People: Mary and Joseph were their names. They were poor people struggling to make ends meet. Mary was pregnant, the baby was due any day and worst of all . . . she was not married.

2. In The Wrong Place: Christmas came to Bethlehem. You say, "What's wrong with that?" Nothing really, that is, if you live in Bethlehem. But Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth, which meant they would have to travel for Christmas.

3. At The Wrong Time: Now, how many of you would like to have Christmas on April 15th, tax day? Not me! The first Christmas took place during tax season (Luke 2:1-3). So this was just not a good time for Christmas. But for Mary and Joseph, it was worse than this, because there was no postal service available to deliver their tax return, therefore, they had to travel even though Mary was "*great with child*," which was *not* good.

However, in the midst of this first Christmas in Bethlehem, we find a message of hope, given to us by a host of Angels, that should be our focus during this Christmas Season. It is recorded in Luke 2:13-14, "*Suddenly a great company of the Heavenly Host appeared with the Angel, praising God saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'*" So, as you prepare for Christmas this year, be sure to focus your attention not on "what's *wrong* with Christmas," but instead on "what's *right* about Christmas." And as you do, "Don't forget the peace!"

See Ya Sunday,
Pastor Johnny

Sunday Services

Sunday School ~ 9:30 AM
Morning Worship ~ 10:45 AM

Wednesday Service

Small group
discipleship classes
for all ages ~ 7:00 PM

"THE PASTOR'S MINUTE"
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