

WHAT DOES GOD WANT FOR CHRISTMAS?

I was listening to some holiday music while driving when a song came on I had never heard before. It talked about a lot of the good things we get from Christmas and had a recurring phrase, "but what does God want for Christmas". It caught my attention as I had never considered that before.

First off, we know that celebrating Christ's birthday is not from God as He never commanded it to be observed. Some "Christians" had been celebrating Jesus birth and around 350, December 25 was decreed by Pope Julius 1 as the day to celebrate Christ's birth. Why do this? December 25 was the last day in an ancient pagan celebration called Saturnalia that many Christians were celebrating. Pope Julius 1 had made it a Christian holiday to be celebrated (for his followers). Roman Emperor Justinian declared it a civic holiday in 529 AD.

What does God want from His children? Matthew 22:37 tells us what Jesus said, "And He said to them, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'" He went on to call this the great and foremost commandment and then went on to add a second commandment in verse 39, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' Jesus then declared that upon these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets (verse 40). In these few words, Jesus set the foundation for all the other biblical teachings. If we love God with our whole being, we are going to do all the things He commands us to do. If we love our neighbor as we love ourselves, we are going to abolish prejudice, warfare, and violence against the innocent. We would have peace on earth. Sadly such peace will have to wait for heaven and as in our world, evil championed by eager followers ignorant of their eternal destination (hell), is rampant.

Setting aside for a moment the fact that Christmas is worldly and not spiritual, if we could ask God what He wants for Christmas, what would He say? I think John has the answer for us in 1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and that His commandments are not burdensome." God would want for Christmas what He always has wanted from His children, our willing obedience that comes from our firmly rooted love for Him. Remember, love is the answer not just for the holiday season; but, for all time.

Larry Benson

Elvis Has Left the Building

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 5:14-16

I think I can speak for everyone and say we all love Elvis Presley. Even if you don't like him as a person or the lifestyle he lived, there is no doubt you must respect his music and his talent in performing. When Elvis walked in a building, everyone knew it. When Elvis sang, everyone could pick out his voice. There was no mistaking who he was because he lived with such purpose, passion, and enthusiasm for his job.

In his sermon on the mount, Jesus says we are the salt of the Earth and the light of the world. We know that salt is salt because it has properties that no other thing on Earth has. Something may be salty, but it is not salt. In the same way, there is no mistaking light. When light shines, darkness ceases to exist. Light is not mimicked, and it cannot mimic anything else. Light is its own thing with its own properties.

If we are to be the light of the world and the salt of the Earth; that means there should be no mistaking who we are and what we are about. Just like everyone recognizes Elvis as a great singer and musician, everyone should recognize us as dedicated followers of Jesus. Elvis was recognized by how he talked, how he dressed, where he went, and what he did. In the same way, we are recognized by the world as followers of Jesus based on what we say and do. Let's let our lights shine and our influence be like that of seasoned salt. People will know who we are by how we live.

Joshua Houston

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Ken & Barbara McPeak, Hazel Carey, Selma Boyd, Pat Davidson, Nora Fann, Odell Grissom, Sue Reeves, Ernestine Taylor, Carolyn Thomas, Laura Wiser, Nell Jernigan, Narene Davidson, Mary Williams, Shirley Bibb, Janice Ham

SHUT INS:

Tommy Bibb, Oleta Bullard, Houston Henry, Dan Stephens, Richard Jones, Wayne Mobbs, Carolyn Thomas, Mabel Robertson, Louis Wilson, Melba & Jeanie Young

NURSING HOMES & ASSISTED LIVING:

***MEMBERS**

ADAMS PLACE: Nora Fann*, Shirley Bibb*

NHC: Lizzie Bush, Sue Reeves*, Ernestine Taylor*

STONES RIVER MANOR: Laura Wiser*, Virgie Leonard*, Margaret Davidson*, Lillian Whitworth

SMYRNA: Geri Melton*

WOODBURY: Jeweldean Hall*

TN VETERAN'S HOME: Edna Vance*

NEWS & NOTES

- **Picture Day - today** for all new members who have not had their picture made for the pictorial directory and for anyone desiring to update their picture. This will take place in the right front of the auditorium after Bible classes. Please see Rick Corum or Larry Benson if you have any questions.
- Special thanks to **Glyn Watson** for making the bench for the hallway.
- There will not be evening services on Sunday, December 24th.
- There will be a **youth devotional** at the building on January 7th after evening services. We ask that you bring your favorite finger foods and desserts. Please make plans to be here as we will be going over our plans for 2018!
- There will be a **combined game night** for the **youth and senior groups** on Saturday, January 20th at 5pm. Please bring board/card games to play. We are asking the senior group to bring soups and salads and youth group to desserts and drinks.
- In preparation of the **2018 Membership Directory**, please check your information for any corrections or additions. A printed copy of this list is located in the foyer. Also, there are **volunteer opportunities** for the upcoming year, please sign-up on the lists provided in the foyer.

Salem Creek church of Christ
2525 Salem Creek Drive
Murfreesboro, TN 37128

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P.O. Box 332067
Murfreesboro, TN 37133-2067

Email: office@salemcreekcoc.org

We're on the web!
www.salemcreekcoc.org

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday

Morning Worship	9:00 am
Bible Classes	10:15 am
Evening Worship	5:30 pm

Wednesday

Ladies Morning Bible Class (Sept-May)	10:00 am
Evening Bible Classes	6:30 pm

ELDERS

B.K. Ham
Jim Hatfield
Jon Holland
Andy Mitchell
Randall Phifer
Keith Short

MINISTER

Ron Harper

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Joshua Houston

DEACONS

Rick Acklin	Rick Corum
Larry Benson	Andy Melton
Michael Bowman	Brian Melton
Craig Buckner	Alan Pepper
Joe Byars	Wendell Wilson

FOR THE RECORD

December 3, 2017

Sunday	AM worship	245
	Bible classes	193
	PM worship	158
	Contribution	\$7,708.00

Wednesday	PM Bible classes	132
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Wednesday	AM Ladies Class (Sept-May)	16
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When county schools are closed due to inclement weather A.M. Ladies class will be canceled

To Our Honored Guests...

We are happy you chose to worship with us today! Please stay after our assembly so that we can get acquainted with you and your family. We invite you to come back as often as you have opportunity!

We were honored by your presence!

GREETERS

*Please be at the door
30 minutes prior to service*

December 10

Bobby & Jackie Sims

December 17

Jerald & Peggy Hill

