

## **The Spirit of Christmas**

No. 119

### **Introduction.**

- I. For the past several weeks we have in the midst of another Christmas season. Millions of people have been busy shopping, decorating trees and making other preparations for this holiday season.
- II. This Lord's Day I would like to speak on "The Spirit of Christmas."
  - A. There is a wonderful spirit that typifies this season of the year.
  - B. This spirit should be perpetual. It is a spirit that should never end.
- I. **The Spirit Of Praising Christ** - One characteristic that typifies this season of the year is the spirit of praising Christ.
  - A. The Bible does not tell us when Christ was born. Surely this would have been revealed if we are to keep His birthday as a holy day. Even though the scriptures do not tell us when Christ was born or command or encourage us to observe December 25 as His birthday, I am thankful that men are singing about Jesus and praising His glorious name.
  - B. This spirit of praising Christ should not, however, be limited to December 25 or even to December.
    1. We should sing about Christ and praise and serve Him every day. Jesus is our Savior. He is our King. He is our Lord. He is our all. He is worthy of all our praise and adoration.
    2. Let us praise Him as heaven does.

**REV 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 "And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." 11 And I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." 14 And the four living creatures kept saying,**

**"Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.**

II. **The Spirit Of Giving** - A second characteristic that typifies this season of the year is the spirit of giving.

A. People throughout the land have been cheerfully and generously giving to others.

1. I am told that **Americans have spent billions of dollars** this month on gifts. If you were to divide the money that is spent on Christmas into silver dollars and put a ton of silver dollars into a freight car, it would form a train more than 10 miles long.
2. This is a time in which parents look forward to presenting gifts to their children and others. This is a time when children, who have saved their pennies and nickels for weeks, look forward to presenting gifts to their father, mother, brothers, sisters, little friends and others. This is a time when people give to the poor. Many churches and community organizations prepare baskets or something else and distribute them on this day.

B. There is nothing wrong with this practice, but do you suppose that the poor are any hungrier on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of December than they are on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March or April.

1. **Once a man tried to destroy a little poor boy's faith in God.** He asked, "If God loves you, why does He not take better care of you? Why doesn't He tell someone to bring you shoes and a warm coat and better food?" The little fellows thought a moment, then with tears in his eyes, said, "I guess He does tell somebody, but somebody forgets."
2. This is so true. Too often we forget the poor except during this time of year. This is not as God would have it. He wants us to remember the poor throughout the year.
  - a. Christians are urged to remember the poor. (Gal. 2:10; Jas. 1:27).
  - b. Those guilty of neglecting the poor will lose their souls. (Matt. 25:41-46).

III. **The Spirit Of Forgiveness** - A third characteristic that typifies this season of the year is the spirit of forgiveness.

A. The hearts of men have been softened and the proverbial "chip on the shoulder" is not so evident. People are willing to forgive more readily than at other times during the year.

1. **One Christmas a woman**, who had been shopping, was coming out of a store with packages as high as she could carry them. As she passed out the revolving doors, a man bumped into her, knocking her down and packages went into every direction. A crowd gathered expecting to see some real excitement but to their surprise she got up, the man brushed her off, helped her collect her packages, and with a sweet smile she passed on down the street. Unusual, you say? Yes, and had it been July or some other month the man likely would have received a severe tongue lashing or a real dirty look, but she was possessed with the spirit of Christmas and thought nothing of it.
2. **During the same season 2 cars collided** smashing the fenders and shattering the glasses. Two men got out, calmly talked it over, reached a friendly agreement, shook hands and drove on. What prompted such a splendid settlement? It was the spirit of Christmas - the spirit of forgiving. Had it been any other time there would very likely have been a heated argument even a fight.

B. It is **lamentable indeed** that this spirit of forgiveness is so prevalent during this season of the year and is so utterly lacking during the rest of the year.

1. **Forgiveness should not be a seasonal thing.** It should be with us always. Regardless of the season Paul said. (Eph. 4:32).
2. We should forgive others, regardless of the season, because the **opportunity to forgive others may pass.**
  - a. Perhaps in the twinkling of an eye we may die or the unforgiven person may die.
  - b. **There was a couple who once quarreled at home.** Later on the husband, seeing that it was time to go to work, held his wife's hand before he left, said good-bye to her, kissed her, and asked her forgiveness. His wife ignored him and was unwilling to forgive him. At noon the police suddenly brought her husband home; he was already dead. When his wife saw this, she said, "O God! If I had known that he would come back like this, surely I would not have let him leave the way he did! Oh, the opportunity is gone!"
  - c. Brothers and sisters, realizing that the opportunity to forgive others can quickly pass, let us hasten to forgive others while there is time and opportunity.
3. We should forgive others because our **forgiveness depends on us forgiving others.** (Matt. 6:14, 15; 18:34, 35).

IV. **The Spirit Of Love** - A fourth characteristic that typifies this season of the year is the spirit of love.

- A. During the Christmas season we see many exhibitions of love and thoughtfulness. Children travel hundreds even thousands of miles to be with their parents. Parents make great sacrifices for their children. Most people are especially thoughtful of the sick, the elderly and the shut-ins.
- B. This is wonderful, but it is sad that these same people are often forgotten as soon as this season is over.
  1. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had this spirit of love and thoughtfulness throughout the year? (Matt. 22:39; Jn. 15:12; Col. 3:14; 1 Pet. 1:22).
  2. In 1 Corinthians the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter Paul wrote concerning love. (1 Cor. 13:1-7, 13).

**1CO 13:1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 13 But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

V. **The Spirit Of Happiness** - Another characteristic of the Christmas season is the spirit of happiness.

- A. Nearly everyone you see, both young and old, has a smile on his or her face. Throughout the land most

tears have turned to a laughter and song.

- B. This is wonderful and this is how God wants us to be while we live upon the earth. Living should be a thrill, not a drudgery. (Prov. 17:22; Jn. 16:33; Phil. 4:4).
- C. God not only wants us to be happy, but He tells us how to obtain true happiness. We can have happiness by trusting in God and by keeping His commandments. (Psa. 144:15; Prov. 29:18; Psa. 1:1,2; 1 Pet. 3:10-11a).

## **Conclusion.**

- I. Truly a wonderful, a marvelous spirit typifies this time of year. It is my prayer that the spirit of Christmas will be
- II. At this time we extend the Lord's invitation.
  - A. Christ now reigns on His throne in heaven. He invites all to submit to Him and enjoy His sweet rest and salvation.
  - B. Come now and give your life to Christ as we stand and sing!

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