

Pastor's Christmas Message – December 2020

“Message of Christmas”

Phillips Brooks, the 19th century Christian leader who composed the beautiful Christmas carol. “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” wrote: “The coming of the Lord has been the inspiration of the Christian world. The power of any life lies in its expectancy.”

“The power of any life lies in its expectancy.” What are you expecting this Christmas season? The power of expectancy starts with seeing life through God's eternal perspective. If you and I are discouraged, downhearted, dispirited – it is because we are looking at the world through human eyes, and not Divine eyes.

Journalists Bill and Judith Moyers did a documentary on death and dying in the U.S. They discovered that many terminal patients they interviewed found peace in the face of death. In fact, many of them found greater meaning and beauty in life after learning they would die. One man lived four years past his doctor's prognosis. In that time, he learned to cherish every moment of life. As he said, “If you are told you will never see spring again, and you live to see spring, spring takes on a whole new life.”

Nothing focuses our priorities quite like knowledge of our own mortality. Advent is not a season for focusing on a morbid subject like death. But it is a season for looking beyond the present moment to the eternal. and then evaluating our life in the perspective of eternity.

The Christmas season, as most of us experience it, seems almost designed to distract us from God-centered living. there is so much pressure to shop, shop, shop, and rush, rush, rush and spend, spend, spend. And all for what? How many of us remember Christmas presents we got last year? The gifts of Christmas are temporary; the message of Christmas is eternal. The Almighty God came to earth in the form of a man. Christ lived among us, and shared our suffering and pain. He died a horrible death to save us from our sins. He opened up the way to eternal life for us. And someday, He will come again to establish His perfect and eternal kingdom here on earth. Until that day, our job is to share the love of Jesus Christ with everyone we know.

Louis Pasteur, the pioneer of immunology, lived at a time when thousands of people died each year of rabies. Pasteur had worked for years on a vaccine. Just as he was about to

begin experimenting on himself, a 9-year-old boy, Joseph Meister, was bitten by a rabid dog. The boy's mother begged Pasteur to experiment on her son. Pasteur injected Joseph for ten days with his new rabies vaccine – and the boy lived.

Decades later, of all the things Pasteur could have etched on his headstone, he asked for three words: JOSEPH MEISTER LIVED.

Our greatest legacy will be the lives of those who know God's love because of our efforts.

Whose life will be transformed because you shared with them the love of Jesus? Claim this moment for God. Let that be the true present you give this Christmas. the present of a life lived out in service to God, and service to others.

Blessed Christmas!

Pastor Bill Sass

