

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year?

By Pastor Greg
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Romans 8:38

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Just last week my family was at the mall finishing up our Christmas shopping. But while the speakers were blaring out their musical cheer, in countless children I saw nothing but tears. I thought of those who will be alone for the first time this Christmas, the parents who just don't see how they will be able to put much of anything under the tree, if they have a tree at all. I thought of the wives who will be alone come Christmas morning because their husbands must work, or whose husband is stationed overseas. And as I listened to the songs play out their Christmas Jingle, I couldn't help but wonder how this is the "Most Wonderful Time of the Year".

In times of peace and prosperity, it's far easier to find the spirit and enthusiasm for Christmas. But for some their dreams by the fire are of lost loved ones; of forgotten times of peace and plenty. For some, they look to God and ask, "Do You hear what I hear"; the sounds of loss, of war, of sadness? Even the familiar family gathering is nothing more than the legend of fairytales.

I'm not trying to depress you. I just want you to be aware that finding joy is becoming increasingly difficult, especially considering all that is wrong in this world. And the sugar coated, garland wrapped Christmas that bombards today's society just seems so empty; so blind to the reality many will face this year.

Christmas, at least the one that has been thrust upon us, is a demonstration of how far we have drifted from the whole reason we celebrate in the first place. Christmas is a time when we celebrate not the absence of problems in this life, not the absence of wars or famine or death. But the fact that God sent His Son to redeem us; to free us from condemnation, and to wash away our sin.

Christmas is a time to celebrate the things of eternity; to let our minds drift away from the present troubles that surround us, and turn our hearts upon the things that are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18); to remember that what we are enduring will pass, and that nothing will separate us from the Love of God that is found in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38).