

Surprises at Christmas

Christmas is a wonderful time of surprises, especially for children. It is delightful to witness the expectation, excitement and surprises on a child's face when they are hurrying to unwrap their presents. They are delighted with the surprise, and parents do not tire of the joy such surprises provide for them!

But there are more surprises at Christmas than we might bargain for. We might be very surprised, for instance, if we really give some thought to the true message of Christmas.

If I told you about God's 'love' for you I don't think you would be very surprised! I think we expect that God should love us; after all, we are all rather nice people! Don't you think that? I catch myself from time to time with such thoughts sweeping across my mind. But the Bible actually teaches that we are not all that nice; we upset others and we upset God! The baby in Bethlehem was called Jesus, "for He would save His people from their sins". We all do things – we call it 'sin' – things that do not please God! Sin is not nice! We upset others by our sin and we upset God; we grieve God's heart!

Sin is acting in a 'nasty' way to others and to God! We disobey His commands; we disregard His teaching; we neglect the church; we give a passing thought to God and Jesus Christ and think He will welcome us with open arms when death bowls us over! We grieve God's heart .. almost all of the time! The big surprise at Christmas is that the story of Christmas tells us that God loved us in spite of the fact we were sinners, but .. He will not continue to love us if we turn our backs on such overwhelming love. Christmas means we must make us peace with God .. quickly!

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