



Fresh Oil



December 2015

Dear Fellow Servants,

Christmas is such a blessed time of the year and one in which we contemplate the great gift of God's Son, the best Christmas present ever. As we focus on this incredible example from the Lord, it helps us to turn our attention to giving to others. Having a right attitude as we reach out in love to others is vital. The Lord gives us a hint in Psalm 149:4 by how He treats us:

***"For the LORD takes delight in His people;
He crowns the humble with salvation."***

Look carefully at that first line: "He takes DELIGHT in His people." As you give to others and reach out to those in need this Christmas season this is something we really need to keep in mind. If our attitude is stinky, or our service is done out of a sense of duty instead of motivated by love then it will be very hard to be the fragrance of Christ to those who desperately need to experience it. By choosing to "delight" in others we will be more apt to overlook their faults and give freely, as God would. Not everyone we seek to help this holiday season will gush forth with gratitude or show appreciation for our sacrifices. Leave that with the Lord and minister to them as if ministering to the Lord Himself.

Of course, our attitude should be completely gracious if we happen to be on the receiving end of the giving. The psalmist, in the verse above, noted that the Lord "crowns the humble with salvation." The young virgin, Mary, pregnant with the Lord Jesus, demonstrates for us this right attitude. Consider what she said in Luke 1:48 and 52:

***"for He has been mindful of the humble state of
His servant...He has brought down rulers from their
Thrones but has lifted up the humble."***

If Christmas this year (or any year, for that matter) becomes a time where we just go through the motions and find that it is "no big deal" than we are in a bad place. Even though we are familiar with the message of the gift of God's Son we should not become entitled, as if we deserve this great gift. Our hearts should be clothed with humility as we consider that God should love us so much that He gave us His one and only Son (see John 3:16). When the wonder and awe of Jesus coming to us as a man hits home, it makes everything else seem precious, too. Look at Romans 8:32:

***"He who did not spare His own Son, but gave
Him up for us all – how will He not also, along
With Him, graciously give us all things?"***

So, let's head into Christmas with hearts humbled by the very fact that God loves us and cared enough to give us His very best (long before Hallmark claimed that distinction!). Rejoice, friend, the Lord DELIGHTS in you!

Christmas blessings to you!

Pastor Brian

... I have been anointed with fresh oil

PSALM 92:10

