

Looking for More Than Santa?

Daystar – 12.14.3003

Note: Some ideas were taken from a sermon by LeRoy Koopman.

Introduction:

- A. Right now the most popular figure on the planet is a rosey-cheeked man with a big belly, a red suit & a jolly old laugh.
1. NOTHING could satisfy my daughter more than knowing that Santa had come.
 2. Everywhere children are counting the days & worrying parents with each passing day – looking for Santa.
- B. I have a strange question for you, however:
- **ARE YOU LOOKING FOR MORE THAN SANTA THIS CHRISTMAS?**
- C. In many ways, God is like Santa:
1. Omnipresent (on every streetcorner; travels globe in one night).
 2. Omniscient (“He sees you when you’re sleeping…”).
 3. Moral judge (“Gonna’ find out who’s naughty…”).
 4. Supernatural helpers (Flying reindeer).
- D. For too many people, God is just like Santa Claus.
- **BUT I’M LOOKING FOR MORE THAN SANTA CLAUS!**

Rom 3:22-24 NIV

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

I. Believability.

A. Santa's Believability.

1. Santa is supposed to be a "kid thing."
2. You don't see many 40-yr-old's sitting on Santa's knee.
3. Lesson: Faith is something you outgrow!

B. Many have the same faith in God.

1. Common phrase: "Christmas is for children."
2. That's b/c they've reduced Christmas to decorations, parties, vacations, giving & receiving gifts.
3. That Is Not What Christmas Is!

Isa 9:6 KJV

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

C. Many have outgrown their faith in God.

1. Sunday School is for children.
2. They've forgotten that they have an *adversary*-1 Pt 5:8.
3. They've forgotten that kids are smarter than you think.
4. They see right through our hypocritical religion – STOP sending them & start bringing them to church!

D. You can choose to believe in Santa or not to but...

1. One day all will agree that the Christ Child is REAL!
2. One day Jesus will prove Himself to the world:

Phil 2:10-11 NIV (And on that day...)

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord

II. Judgment.

A. Santa's Standards:

1. He keeps a record of who's naughty or nice & gives gifts accordingly.
2. This is "works salvation."

B. Many have similar ideas about God's judgment.

1. They believe in a "works salvation."
2. In the end, though, everyone ends up with presents under the tree (no matter how naughty).

C. The real God is a holy God.

Isa 6:1-5 NKJV

I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" ... 5 So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts."

Gal 6:7 NKJV

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

D. Many Christians believe in a Santa Claus God:

1. He talks of holiness & judgment, but in the end it doesn't matter how we act.
2. THAT IS NOT THE GOD WE SERVE!

E. God saves by forgiving, not forgetting!

1. God conquered sin; He didn't pretend it wasn't there.

2. He paid a tremendous price for sin.
3. He does not ignore sin!

III. Availability.

A. Santa visits the children one day a year.

1. The rest of the time, he's out of reach.
2. He keeps close record but offers no day to day help.

B. Many have the same idea of God.

1. Old man with white beard, out of reach.
2. He's keeping a record of things, but not present and active in our lives.

C. Or maybe they see God like Olivia sees Santa.

1. Grandparents visited North Pole & saw "real" Chris Cringle.
2. He's really there, really available – but to only a select few who have the means to find him.

D. THIS IS NOT THE GOD OF SCRIPTURE!

1. Ezekiel 48:35 – Jehovah Shammah – *"The Lord Who Is There!"*
2. God so wanted to be near that He came in human flesh!
3. When He went away, He said, *"I am sending you the Holy Spirit of God – I was beside you – He will be in you!"*

Ps 46:1 KJV

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble

E. You don't have to wait until December to find Him.

1. You don't have to find Him in the mall.
2. You don't even have to sit in His lap to tell Him your needs b/c unlike Santa Jesus Christ *"knows what you have need of before you ask Him!"*

F. JESUS CHRIST IS HERE TODAY!!!

1. He broke into history to meet the needs of His children.
2. Paul said there is nothing in heaven or earth that can separate us from the love of Christ!
3. HE IS HERE → TO LOVE YOU!!!

Conclusion:

A. I don't know what Christmas is to you...

1. Busy, Busy, Busy...
2. Christmas plays, family, gifts, good-will...

B. That's all good – But I'm looking for more!

Luke 1:31-33 NKJV

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

Matt 1:21 NKJV

He will save His people from their sins.

C. I don't know about you but that sounds like more than a fat old man sliding down a chimney on Dec. 24th.

1. I WANT MORE!!!
2. I want to know why the King of Kings & Lord of Lords showed up in the womb of a virgin in an obscure town in the Middle East!
3. I want to know what He wants to do in my life...
4. I WANT TO LET HIM HAVE RULE & REIGN!!!

D. Christmas Illustration.