

Stop Stealing Christmas From the Holy Spirit

This year, why not invite the Holy Spirit to spend Christmas with you?

Christmas is a high point on the Christian calendar. We decorate our homes and feast with our families. Our churches are full of activity, with Christmas programs, Christmas hymns and sermons about the baby born in Bethlehem. Then on Christmas Eve, we have our midnight services and trade presents.

We honor Mary and Joseph, the wise men, the angels and the shepherds, and baby Jesus. But what do we do to honor the Holy Spirit who conceived Jesus (Matt. 1:18, Luke 1:35)?

All too often the Christmas season is a spiritual desert, as the Holy Spirit is ignored. Our services can become mere recitation of tradition, our worship lifeless formality and our focus shifted to Christmas gifts instead of the Spirit's gifts. Churches and ministries close their doors for the holidays, locking out both the Holy Spirit and the needy who desperately need His ministry.

We forget that for some, the Christmas season is a time of great need and pain. The poor have material needs beyond toys and turkeys. Family problems and health issues do not go away at Christmas. And many cannot receive the joy of the season because of broken relationships and losses. In fact, the Christmas season, when many take a holiday from the Holy Spirit, is often the time when Satan launches his most devastating attacks.

Instead of ignoring the Holy Spirit, we should be welcoming Him for Christmas. It was He who conceived Jesus, and He who spoke a warning to both Joseph and the wise men after the most

famous gift-giving in history. The gifts of the Holy Spirit to us give us more power than that new car you may be looking at and more wisdom than any iPhone. Then there are the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love joy, peace and the others, that make life worth living.

So this year, let us invite the Holy Spirit to be with us to share in the peace and joy of Christmas.

“For the kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 14:17). {eo}

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