

The Lakeside



Message in a bottle

Verse of the day for Monday November 27, 2023 - Psalm 69: 30

30 I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving.

Read Psalm 69 for meditation and inspiration.



BE GOOD AND DO GOOD!

Dear Lakesiders and friends,

Once again, we are in the swing of what many call the “Holiday Season” and it seems to come upon us so fast and furious. A friend from Illinois said to me that it feels like he just put away his Christmas tree and decorations last week and here we go again. Each year things change and the latest rage for kids is seemingly always new. Over and over we hear of the new “Must have toy” on the market and often there is a limited supply so parents are frantic to get their hands on one before it is too late. Which makes me think of a Santa story, that goes like this.

In a magazine cartoon, Santa Claus is pictured at his workbench, putting a new toy together. From his nearby TV set, he hears a reporter saying, “We continue our look at the real meaning of Christmas sales indicators. In the fourth quarter, consumers have dramatically cut back their spending, which could slow the economy, which might be a healthy development after their earlier borrowing, which boosted the economy but added to concerns of low savings and overstimulation, leading to sluggish sales as we enter into the all-important Christmas season.” Santa looks up and says to himself, "It used to be a lot easier to know if they've been bad or good."

Jesus' timeless "Parable of the Last Judgment" provides Santa with an easy answer to his problem. The parable is Jesus' once-and-for-all, definitive, foolproof way of knowing "if they've been bad or good."

Come, you whom My Father has blessed," says the Lord, and "take for your heritage the Kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me food; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you welcomed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you visited Me, I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see Thee hungry and feed Thee, or thirsty and give Thee drink? And when did we see Thee a stranger and welcome Thee, or naked and clothe Thee? And when did we see Thee sick or in prison and visit Thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these, my brethren, you did it to Me.'

There you have it Naughty or Nice, Good or Bad clearly stated. Let us never forget in this season celebrating God's Gift of Love in Jesus our opportunities to share the gift and the love with the least of these brothers and sisters.

Joyfully,



Roger

