

## True Meaning of Christmas

### True Meaning of Christmas by Janine Ghannam (Dec. '01)

Why do people get to open presents on Jesus' birthday? Why don't we give Him presents? And why is it that some people don't even believe in God or go to church, but they celebrate Christmas? All these questions can be summed up in one answer; many people do not know what the true meaning of Christmas is anymore.

Christmas, in society's eyes, has turned into a commercial holiday. It's merely another Valentine's Day, which was a day created by the card companies. Christmas gives shopping malls great business. Stores that sell decorations also benefit. But why are these people going to shopping malls and decorating their houses? For them, Christmas is just about giving and receiving presents, winning the neighborhood's decoration contest, and getting a few days off work and school.

"Christ is born, big whoop. I need a new bike." Some would conclude from this comment that material things have taken over this holiest of days. People have become selfish and greedy on Christmas and that is terrible. Christmas is a time when we must give to those who are less fortunate than we are and stop thinking about ourselves for once in our life. Almsgiving is a very important thing to do at this time. We should all give God a present on his birthday, and I'm sure He would love the gift of almsgiving.

Snow, caroling, chestnuts roasting on an open fire — all those things are great, but those things aren't what make Christmas meaningful. The birth of Christ is such a great day. We can't mix with the material world because it makes that holy day corrupt with greed. We are not seeing what this day actually means. Christ is born... our salvation has begun. That's why we should give gifts, to celebrate the birth of our Savior, not because we need new clothes or a Playstation 2. We should decorate our houses, not to make them prettier or win the neighborhood contest, but to celebrate the birth of our Savior. We should take time off work and school, not to do our last-minute shopping or sit around and do nothing, but to go out and give to those less fortunate and to go to church, to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

Christmas isn't just a time to give gifts, decorate your home, or watch the parade on television. It is a time to spend with our families, to love one another, and to celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. People need to realize that. They need to ask themselves, if they didn't exchange gifts or decorate this year, would Christmas be the same or mean the same to them? If the answer is no, then the true meaning of Christmas is indeed lost.

