

# Wishing Everyone

All I want for Christmas is... **Simple**



Eli Petzoldt tells Santa what he wants for Christmas. Santa made a stop at the Elks Lodge in Heppner last Thursday evening. —Photo by Autumn Morgan

Luke 2:10-12 - And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

Born in a small town, wrapped in simple cloths, lying in an animal feeding trough is the Savior, Christ the Lord. It is certainly very humble beginnings for one who will be crowned "King of Kings." This is probably not how I would have planned the birth and unveiling of the Messiah.

Here is the Son of God, leaving the glory of the Father and Heaven to

be born as a baby, in a small town of little importance, to be raised by what the town's folks would have considered as less than average parents. It seems that something is missing. Someone of that importance and greatness would surely have a more powerful introduction to the world. But, often in the Bible we see God doing this just a bit differently than we would.

I think God takes a little different view of importance and greatness than we do. Importance and greatness are not a function of someone's surroundings, or stuff, or bank account. Importance and greatness are not a matter of your social resume, friends, address, education or work status. Importance and greatness are a function of one's role in God's work.

For one brief moment the center of God's unveiling plan resides in an animal trough and the importance and greatness of the event comes from the person lying at this center, humbly doing the will of the Father. And this makes me think...

Importance in my life is not measured in position or accolades, but in obedience. If my life is to have importance then my desire should be to humbly serve God wherever He places me. Greatness in my life is centered in relationship. Greatness is not about who I am, but whose I am.

So, this Christmas season, if you find yourself in a humble place or maybe you feel like you are in a place of no consequence, understand this: That your life is important and great if you humbly serve God and the community in which He has placed you. If you do this, then your Christmas will be a reflection of that first one. Humble in its location and status, joyous in its message, and powerful in its hope of bringing freedom and healing to the world.

**Pastor Keith Price**  
Willow Creek Baptist Church

## Light of the world

In the first chapter of St. John's Gospel (V14) he states: "We have seen his glory". That is testimony given by John after being with Jesus for several years. During those years he saw a multitude of miracles which included healing leprosy, restoring sight to the blind, and raising the dead to life. He heard Jesus teach - his sermon on the Mount to his inspiring parables; he was there for the founding his Church, his transfiguration, his death, resurrection and ascension. His testimony is simply saying I know him, I have been with him, and I can tell you with confidence that he is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Why did Jesus take on a human nature like ours? Why did he become a baby, grow into manhood, and suffer and die? John answers that question when he tells us that Jesus came into the world so that all who believe in him could become 'children of God' (1, 12)

At Christmas we celebrate the coming of

Jesus into the world. This event is telling us that the prophecies of the Old Testament are now fulfilled. It is telling us of the infinite love of our Heavenly Father. It is telling us that the time has come for us to respond to that love. That may seem difficult in a world torn by war, struggling with failing economy, and proliferation of nuclear weapons. So the Christmas message is telling us that like St. John we must see his glory. And when we do we will have the hope to see beyond the present conflicts that exist in our imperfect world. We will see that Jesus came that he might have salvation leading to an eternal destination of happiness.

As we celebrate Christmas and the Birth of the Savior we will have the inspiration to live for that destiny. This is a time to look beyond the fog of confusion that exists in our world and experience the hope that is offered to us with the birth of the Savior. The words of the angels will remind us that there can be peace on earth. The Christmas lights will remind us that Jesus later called himself the "light of the world". May we be guided by his light, and enjoy the peace that he offers to those who live in the light of his truth.

**Fr. Gerry Condon**  
St. Patrick's Catholic Church, St. William's Catholic Church

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**Happy Holidays**

Designed by Gabriel Moore, Age 7 of Baker City, Oregon. He was the top artist in our Holiday Design Contest.

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