

Not Quite Christmas

Christmas is upon us, and all around us. It is hard to ignore, if anybody should want to; but why would anyone want to ignore it? Why, indeed?

Well, Christians in particular should understand how those who do not celebrate Christmas can feel left out and ignored, as if they do not really belong, when they see the entire community celebrating something that they think has nothing to do with them; although, actually, Christmas has as much to do with them as with everybody else, since the Son of God came for the salvation of all sinners; but that is another conversation altogether.

Christians should be able to understand the sense of alienation those who do not celebrate Christmas can experience these days; for in many ways, Christians cognizant of the faith cannot but find themselves in a somewhat similar situation. Not only are many elements of the Christmas celebrations of common culture actually foreign to the Christian faith; to the Church of Christ, the current Christmas celebrations are also a bit premature.

Christmas has not yet come upon the Church of Christ. Well, this Christmas has not; of course, the birth of the Christ has come upon His Church once and for all, and she celebrates that all year long, along with other aspects of His salvation. But in the life of the Church, Christmas does not begin until the eve of the feast, on December 24.

Christians should know better, of course, than to be petty and resentful about the Christmas celebrations already going on around them; Christians really should know better than to be petty or resentful about anything!

But the point is that in the life of the Church, this is the season of Advent. And during this season, the Church prepares to celebrate the birth of her Saviour by hearing the promises given to the people of God in days of old, prior to the actual coming of the Christ; she goes back in time, so to speak, to gain an experience of what it was like to hear these promises and look forward to their fulfilment. And by doing so, Christians get a greater appreciation for the precious truth that the promises of salvation have now been fulfilled, and the salvation of God has come to us, fully and completely, and He has made it known to us, fully and completely, and gives it to us fully and completely. And Christians are reminded also, that greater things are yet to come: that He who came to live and die for sinners shall come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and Christians shall see that which we now know only in faith, and be with Him forever in the fullness of His goodness and His glory.

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