



John Newlin Ministries, Inc.

- realizing the power of a life in Christ-

[To celebrate the Christmas season, we are including here four special short items from past years posted in our blog and sent out in our *Sign of the Times* publication.]

A CHRISTMAS GIFT

God loves us. He really, really does. That's a key part of the Christmas message. Why else would He ever have sent His son here to go through what he went through? And why else would Jesus ever have willingly gone to the cross?

I was reminded of that this past weekend in a way only God can arrange. Sunday afternoon a friend was coming to visit us at home. Late in the afternoon the doorbell rang, and I opened the door. There stood our friend, holding out a box of clementines. For those of you who do not know, clementines are small citrus fruit, like small oranges, and they seem to make an appearance in grocery stores about this time of year. They come in small but clearly distinct boxes.

Our friend handed me this box of clementines. "God told me to get this for you," she said. And she went on, exclaiming that God was very specific and strong about it. "So I went into a grocery store and I couldn't find them. I thought that I would just get a poinsettia, but well, God said to get clementines." So she stuck with her search, and she found them. Later in the kitchen she spoke with Cathy and asked if clementines were my favorite. Our friend couldn't get over how insistent God had been.

Later I thought more about this. I remembered how as my children grew up we would always get a box of clementines sometime around Christmas. It was a regular feature in our house. The box could always be found sitting somewhere in the kitchen. Everyone liked them. To this day when I see a display of clementines in a store, I want to buy a box.

And I thought some more. Here we are in the ministry involved in our usual activities and praying for guidance from God on key issues, like where and how to proceed in the expensive television ministry, where and what meetings to arrange, whether to begin another regular meeting in southeastern NC, and more. For months, even years, we have been going steadily forward, always fighting and overcoming attacks of the evil one which do come whenever anyone steps out for God. Into the midst of all that God sent an obedient woman friend to bring a box of clementines. Even when I write this the Holy Spirit is so strong in the office I keep stopping and reflecting. Is that love? Yes! And much more. That is God saying - John, even in the midst of all this, I'm still here, and I love you, and look, I even know little things about you, like how you like a box of clementines and what that means to you.

So I've been feeling really warm ever since. God sent me a box of clementines for Christmas. God knows where you are and what you're going through. He knows every hair on your head. Every day, if we'll just look around and take time to see with spiritual eyes, we'll see God directing our paths.

What a heavenly Father we have!

Keep Your Eyes on Jesus!

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JESUS AND HIS GOVERNMENT AND ALL HE IS DOING

*“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven. – Matthew 6:9-10 NIV*

*the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end. – Isaiah 9:6-7 NIV*

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. – Luke 2:14 KJV

For four thousand years following the fateful decision by Adam and Eve to disobey God and their then being thrown out of the Garden of Eden, humankind was lost. The Kingdom of God was not on earth. Only through a rare few individuals known as prophets did God intercede and speak to people, prophets like Elijah and Isaiah. God in that period was working on a plan to reconcile people to himself. We’ve looked at this much in past years, how he spoke to people through these prophets, how he chose the Jews as the people to take the message, the history of the Jews, the receiving of God’s word, how eventually God’s plan was fulfilled in the wonderful coming and actions of Jesus Christ, his son and our savior.

Jesus made the point he came to preach the Kingdom of God. That was why he came, he said. His going to the cross and doing what he did made that Kingdom real and available for all who accepted Jesus as their savior.

That Kingdom in our current time on earth is inside each believer in Jesus Christ. It is here on earth, but only inside us. So wherever we believers go, we take the Kingdom of God with us. We walk into a room, God comes into that room, regardless of however anyone else in the room thinks or believes. Putting on the armor of God described by Paul, our feet are shod with the gospel of peace. We take God’s peace with us. And his truth. And his righteousness.

But God’s total plan of reconciliation is yet not over! It continues. Soon, so very soon, so incredibly soon, the Lord will return to collect his believers:

*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:
Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.–1 Thess. 4:16-17 KJV*

In just a few years after that, about seven or a little more, he comes back with his holy ones (the angels and the believers) to win a victory at Armageddon over his enemies and to establish his Kingdom rule from Jerusalem. (Revelation 19 and 20).

Then the Kingdom of God will truly be on earth in a physical way, as well as inside the believers!

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

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HUMANITY'S GREAT PROBLEM AND OUR GREAT JOY

The problem for much of humanity is “yes I am coming soon.” That is Jesus speaking at the very end of the Bible. Yes, he is coming soon. He has told me that many times since he told me to “tell them who I am and that I am coming soon.”

When he first comes he collects his true believers and takes them with him. That is known as the rapture. And a terrible time known as the Tribulation ensues. The great problem for all those who do not know him and do not have him as their Lord is that they will not be going with him and will have to endure that Tribulation...and eventually eternity in the Lake of Fire unless they come to know Jesus during the terrible Tribulation. That is a really great problem right now – for them! Unless they soon realize who Jesus is and become true believers, their future is dark.

For believers, our great joy is Jesus and that we will be going with him. And right now we are at the most joyous time of the year, Christmas! We are looking for joy and peace and happiness more perhaps than ever this year. We need the peace of Jesus, the peace that passes all understanding. And the joy that comes with knowing him.

Most of you may remember my writing some years ago about the time when Cathy and I were sitting in a church service on Christmas Eve. It was really a warm, precious service, one we attended as often as possible when we were in the area of this church. As the program went forward, at one point very clearly I heard the Lord speak to me. He said, “These people are singing about my birth, and here I am coming soon.”

We still are singing about his birth, and we should forever. But indeed he is coming soon. He is not a baby in the stable. He is also no longer walking the earth as the most astounding teacher and preacher and healer and prophet the world has ever seen. And he is not on the cross taking upon himself everything that separated people from God, all our sins, sicknesses, diseases, and pains and more. No, all that was done almost two thousand years ago.

Where is Jesus now? At the right hand of his father. He is the King of the Kingdom of God. And time is up for this human age. He is preparing to return very soon, and he is returning as the King and the head of government. Remember these wonderful words from Isaiah 9:6-7:

*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*

*Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.*

The joy of his birth is ours! And the joy of his coming soon is ours too! A king is coming. The King of all kings. Jesus Christ.

IT IS ALL ABOUT JESUS

It really is.

About your relationship with him, about your being born anew, about your being filled with and baptized with the

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Holy Spirit, about your doing God's will, about your being like little children in your sincere and innocent childlike faith in the Lord.

There is no other way to heaven, no other way to being in the Kingdom of God, no other way to a good eternity, no other way to salvation from an eternity in the lake of fire, in a hell that defies comprehension.

It is not about which denomination or church you are part of, or whether you are part of one at all.

It is not about whether you read a responsive reading with the church pastor on Sunday or attend a liturgical church or not.

It is not about whether you stand and recite in rote some creed, whether a long-standing historical one or one recently written by your pastor.

It is not about singing classical old hymns, or modern worship music, or being immersed in praise music.

It is not about whether the clergy wear fancy formal robes and decorations and proceed ever so formally in the service or whether they wear blue jeans and have an informal service.

It is not about whether the congregation is solemn and stern or joyful and relaxed.

Once again, it is about this:

IT IS ALL ABOUT JESUS... AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM

May you live in the blessings of God always.

Merry Christmas to you all!

John and Cathy

Our sincere thanks to all who have contributed and continue to contribute to this ministry with your prayers, your financial donations, and other assistance! (All contributions to John Newlin Ministries, Inc. – whether money or material goods or stocks or bonds – are tax deductible. John Newlin Ministries, Inc. is a 501 © 3 nonprofit corporation.)

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