



LONGING FOR THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

KEY SCRIPTURES: 1 Chronicles 16:8-12a, 1 Chronicles 16:31, 1 John 3:1, John 3:16,

It's the day before Christmas and I think everyone where I live has finally given up on the notion that we might have a white Christmas. Living in the Midwest, there is always the possibility. But not this year. We had an unseasonably warm, snow-free end to fall, and up to just a few nights ago comments about it abounded on every night's evening news.

"When will we get some snow?"

The news anchors kept asking the question every broadcast. "It's hard to get in the Christmas spirit with these warmer temperatures and no snow on the ground," they said. The poor weather guy just had to shrug his shoulders and reply, "There's still no snow in the forecast for Christmas."

Not a white Christmas? But how can we get in the Christmas spirit?

Before I jump on any "Luke 2 is for every day" bandwagons, I have to admit I've had a time of it myself sometimes. I've gone through the motions of putting up the tree, wrapping the presents, and even watching my favorite Christmas movies, all the while not feeling as Christmasy as I'd like.

So, what gives?

Maybe the answer to that question is the same as when we ask why we sometimes don't feel very thankful on Thanksgiving or hopeful on Easter or loving on Valentine's Day.

While we have the tendency to believe that the spirit of the holiday—or any day—depends on what we're seeing and hearing and feeling at the time, it can actually depend on something far greater.

It can depend on what God sees and hears and feels about us. All the time.

(continued)

"...so we can know our value, live with purpose, and make a difference...[In that order.](#)"



LONGING FOR THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS Page 2

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1). And why can we be called the children of God? "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

God sees us in our need. He hears our prayers. And He loves us so much that He did whatever it took to give us a way to become His children.

God Himself is the true spirit of giving, of thanks, of love, and of hope.

Joy to the world, the spirit of Christmas is truly here.

And He's been here all along.

"Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done. . . Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let them say among the nations, 'The LORD reigns!'" (1 Chronicles 16:8-12a, 31).

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