



THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTMAS— LOVE

—A message from Jesus

Christmas

is spoken of as “the season of joy” and “a time of cheer.” But as Christmas comes around, do you sometimes experience things far from joy and cheer? Do you find yourself bogged down and your days filled with busyness? Are you weary after a long year and the numerous problems and difficulties that came your way? Does Christmas seem like one more pressure, one more demand on your time?

I want to help you to experience calm and peace this Yuletide. Instead of struggling to survive the Christmas season, you can actually enjoy it! But you may have to give up something in your busy life to make space for something better.

It may seem like each Christmas needs to be bigger and better than the last, as you anxiously fill up every moment making preparations toward that goal. But sometimes less is more. Have you stopped to consider whether all the running around is necessary? Is it really making your Christmas season and that of your family and friends happier? Or are you having to cut out the truly important things in life in order to select the perfect gifts, arrange the decorations, and prepare a sumptuous fare for dinner celebrations?

Christmas is best enjoyed when it isn't centered on decorations, gifts, or festivities, but when love is at its core. Love is the essence of Christmas. Christmas should mean taking quality time with your family and friends. It's about cherishing and celebrating the love you share. It's about lending a helping hand to those who are in need.

Sadly, love and friendship can get lost amidst the Christmas hustle and bustle, the decorations and gifts, the endless shop-

ping, and the Christmas dinner and parties, but there's much more to it than that. Christmas is a celebration of the day I came into the world. It's a time to celebrate the greatest gift ever given to humanity!

It was love for you that brought Me to earth 2,000 years ago. It was love that gave Me the impetus to walk your world and be one of you, to live and to die for you. Love was—and still is—the core of My very nature. My life and death on the cross were My gifts of love for you personally and for all humankind. You mean that much to Me!

You can honor Me this Christmas season by taking time for love. Celebrate love as the main feature of your holiday celebrations and gifts to others. The festive decorations and the material gifts will fade into oblivion, lost among the memories of many Christmases; but the love and goodwill that you share and nurture will live on forever.

Love means making time for others, even if you end up with fewer gifts and less than perfect Christmas events. The less you clutter your Christmas season, the more time you'll have for what's really important, what really matters—the essence of Christmas—love!



If you haven't yet experienced Jesus' beautiful love, the heart and soul of Christmas, you can do so now, by inviting Him into your heart and life. You can pray a prayer like this:

Jesus, I thank You for the amazing love You have shown by coming to earth and dying on the cross for me. I want to know You personally, to receive Your love and Your gift of eternal life. Please touch my life with Your love and help me to share that love with others.

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