

A publication of Genuine Joy Ministries

CHRISTMAS - What does Santa have to do with it?

Christmas one of the best of times and one of the worst of times. Do you know our circumstances tend to dictate our feelings? Do you feel unloved? You feel more unloved at Christmas. Do you feel unwanted, rejected? You feel more unwanted and rejected at Christmas. Do you feel poor? You feel poorer at Christmas.

Or perhaps you feel loved by family; it intensifies at Christmas.

Do you feel surrounded by loving friends and with no enemies? You feel more so at Christmas. Do you feel God's love and presence filling your soul? You feel His loving presence more at Christmas.

So, what does Santa have to do with Christmas? Santa is the promise of wishes fulfilled and magic. But where did he come from and why is he pushing Jesus Christ out of the picture? And what do Christian parents tell their children about Santa? Since he's everywhere you look from October on, you have to tell them something.

This is Santa's story: born to a wealthy Greek family, Nicholas was raised by devout parents and became a believer in Christ himself. One day his parents died in an epidemic leaving him all their riches. He distributed his wealth among the poor and became a priest. Some time later he became Archbishop of Myra in Turkey and his legend began.

Tales spread far and wide of him taming strong, wild seas, of prison walls crumbling and releasing their persecuted victims, of saving young children from death, and putting dowries in the shoes of poor, young maidens.

After his death, when he was canonized (made a saint) by the church he thus became St. Nicholas. Because of his reputation he soon became the patron saint of sailors, merchants and especially children. The Catholic church decreed that December 6th, the anniversary of his death be his official Feast Day.

He had a strong influence in seafaring countries because of his role as patron saint of sailors and merchants. Amsterdam adopted him as its patron saint and in the 12th and 13th centuries, 23 churches in Holland were built and dedicated to St. Nicholas. Thus, he arrived on the shores of America with the influx of Dutch immigrants. In the Netherlands his name, St. Nicholas became Sinterklaas and in America eventually that changed to Santa Claus.

Most European countries celebrate Sinterklaas or St. Nicholas Day on December 6th following many colorful and fun traditions that have evolved around his Day. Here in America we celebrate December 25th as the day of choice to celebrate the birth of Christ. So you can see, although he's now considered a secular figure, that St. Nicholas,



CHRISTMAS - What does Santa have to do with it? Continued

Father Christmas, Sinterklaas, aka Santa Claus really does fit in with our Christian tradition since St. Nicholas was a real person, and a devout Christian who went about following Christ's example by doing good to those less fortunate and selflessly caring for others.

We must never forget Jesus Christ, who came to earth as a baby, who fulfilled prophecies of His coming, who came in order to die that we might live. He is the reason we celebrate His birth on December 25th. Including Santa Claus as part of our celebration should not replace or take away from the importance of Jesus or His glory. But in knowing the story of St. Nicholas and passing it on to our children we can emphasize that he was a living example of what a follower of Christ looks like. Let's tell that to our children.

You might want to find out more about St. Nicholas. There are several websites with more information such as:
<http://www.thehollandring.com/sinterklaas>
<http://www.the-north-pole.com/history>
<http://www.investmentsinlife.com/Christmas>

FUNNY SPACE

The trouble with bucket seats is that not everybody has the same size bucket.

Do you realize that in about 40 years, we'll have thousands of old ladies running around with tattoos?

Money can't buy happiness--but somehow it's more comfortable to cry in a Porsche than in a Hyundai.

Drinking makes some husbands see double and feel single.

Living in a nudist colony takes all the fun out of Halloween.

After a certain age, if you don't wake up aching in every joint, you are probably dead

Quotation Space

I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true.
I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, and stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong.

Abraham Lincoln



SPACE FOR TIPS ABOUT FASHION

The elements of being well dressed:

1. Organization: An organized dresser knows what she owns and the items she needs to complete a look. When she goes shopping she has a list and sticks to it. Her clothes are neat and organized where they can be easily seen and outfits can be put together quickly.
2. Knowing yourself: A well-dressed woman knows her personal style so she is never tempted to buy an item that is not perfect for her. She has assessed her lifestyle, her personality and knows what style looks best on her and what she feels most comfortable wearing.
3. Knowing your body type: Women who know their body type and what lines look best on them feel better about the choices they make. Shopping is much simpler because unflattering shapes can be passed over and a lot of money saved when she knows what looks best.

So, you are organized, you know yourself and your body type. Is there anything else? A well-dressed woman is able to take all these elements and put them together with ease. She knows how to match styles, how to accentuate, what to wear to certain events and is confident about her choices. In every situation she is feels confident about how she is dressed and is free to tackle the business at hand. You may be thinking, whew!! That's a lot to learn. The bottom line is it can be learned. Everyone can be well dressed if they take the time and learn about themselves and what styles look best on them.

By Sheila Dicks

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel", which means, "God with us."

Matthew 1:22, 23

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