

St. Andrew's (JKP) Monthly Newsletter
December, 2010

Edification: *"Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?!"* Who could forget the palpable holiday angst of Charlie Brown in the iconic Christmas classic "A Charlie Brown Christmas"? And of course what follows Charlie's frustrated cry for clarity is Linus Van Pelt's confident response: *"Sure, Charlie Brown, I can tell you what Christmas is all about"*. I recall, in a former life enjoying a church Christmas program that included this famous exchange. A young man (who shall remain nameless herein - you know who you are) playing the part of Linus took the stage. As he uttered those opening words there were "oohs" and "aahs" from the audience because this young man sounded *exactly* like Linus Van Pelt. Not similar to, not close to, but *exactly* like Linus. He then, like Linus launched into the simple but profound answer to Charlie Brown's desperate plea:

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Linus then simply concludes; *"That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."* What remarkable commentary by Linus! Commentary that perhaps neither he, nor Charlie Brown, nor even Charles Schultz understood at the time, but remarkable nonetheless. Linus gets to the very heart of our religion, not just with the quoted passage but also his insightful commentary. As people all around us try to recapture the "meaning" or "spirit" of Christmas we would do well to point them to the substance of Linus' simple comment.

Events/Information: The adults-only Christmas party will be at the Miranda household on 12/10, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Please bring a finger-food to share. We'll hold our annual Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m. at the church. Don't forget to get your year-ending tithes in by January.

Encourage: In Deuteronomy 29:29 we read *"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are **revealed** belong to us and to our children forever"*. Ours is a revealed religion. God gives it and supplies the meaning of it. When Linus says "that's what Christmas is all about" he's making this point. Whatever the bible says the meaning is, that is the meaning. Whatever the bible reveals to be the meaning of the coming of Christ is the meaning. So too His death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, etc. - the meaning of all this is precisely whatever the bible reveals it to be. Nothing more, nothing less. For those who've lost the "meaning" or "spirit" of Christmas there's one answer - take up the bible and read. We dare not search for some "meaning" other than the meaning God has revealed. As William Cowper once penned; "God is His own interpreter". What can be said? Linus Van Pelt and William Cowper trusted the word of God. And that's what Christmas is all about Charlie Brown, and everyone else! ~Merry Christmas to all~