



BO'S BLOG

Merry Christmas!

Yes, I do know this is the January, not the December, newsletter. But this is one of those times I've written of before in which the church seems to be out of sync with the rest of our culture around us.

In December we focused on waiting for the coming of Christ. In some ways that's difficult for us, because while we focus on the prophecies of Christ's coming, and sing hymns that reflect the theme of waiting, the malls and the radio stations are playing all the fun Christmas songs, from Black Friday (or before!) until Christmas Day. I even saw a church or two with outdoor nativity scenes, and there was the baby Jesus in the manger in early December.

Then, when the church's season of Christmas starts on Christmas Day and goes until January 5th, the radios and malls go back to "regular" music on December 26th. Now is the time when we should be boisterously singing the joyous songs of Jesus birth. Instead, we are hearing about "after" Christmas sales, where to dispose of our Christmas trees (it's always good to recycle!), and focusing on football bowl games and playoffs. Things tend to go quiet during the church's season of Christmas.

But then, don't you think God kind of prefers that? Don't you think God would prefer the slower pace, the days off for holidays the week after Christmas, than the commercialism frenzy that precedes it? Don't you think God prefers that we spend time at home and with family, rather than stuck in traffic at the mall? Don't you think we're in a better mood to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the quiet after Christmas, than when we are sick of hearing "Frosty the Snowman" for the 50th time before Christmas?

We begin this month, and this new year, celebrating still the fact that God is now "with us and within us." And on January 6th, with the beginning of the season of Epiphany, we also realize that this God-with-us is the light by which we, and the rest of the world, may be guided. It is a good time, in this quiet of winter, to reflect on how we may best follow this light's guidance, to think about how we may best be-with-God, so that this year the peace of God may grow within us.

Shalom,

Bo