

## January 2024 Newsletter

### From Heaven's Heart

#### “It's a New Year But Hold Tight to Christmas”

For as long as I can remember, I didn't want Christmas to end. I didn't want to open the last present. I wanted to be able to eat one more serving of creamed potatoes and gravy. I still wish the excitement and the joy of Christmas could continue into the New Year and not end. Why can't Christmas continue?

As I was thinking about this, I decided to have a talk with God. Something I have noticed about getting older is I am finally discovering that if I'll mention things to God, He always has something to share with me, explain to me, ask me to consider and offer a clear path to take. So I asked, “God, why can't all the things we enjoy with Christmas continue all year long?” He said. “It can, if you hold tight to Christmas”. That was a surprise. Hold on tight to Christmas. How do we hold tight to Christmas when it's over? Does the bible say anything about this, Holding tight to Christmas. Yes it does...

All of us need to put yesterday behind us, don't we! It is a New Year when we can think about new goals and objectives, sometimes deciding to put a bad habit or two behind us. But if I understand what God was saying, Hold tight to Christmas, maybe He was saying, Christmas should never end. Never let Christmas slip away from your thoughts. Christmas should be on our minds throughout the New Year.

What should the New Year bring us if we are holding tight to Christmas? Well, what does Christmas mean? What is it we are holding on to? Maybe it is hope? Is Christmas not when God sent Hope to the world? Hope has a name. His name is Jesus. He brought us Hope for a new beginning, Hope for a fresh start, Hope for better health, Hope for a closer relationships with our loved ones, Hope for good returns on your investments, Hope for paying down credit card debt, Hope for that job promotion you've been hoping for, Hope for a friend to receive Christ, Hope for a family member returning to church, Hope to stop worrying. Your list may be different from the above but I bet it includes things you need to improve on and are praying for. What about Joy, Peace, Love? Does the bible not tell us, this is what God sent us. This is Christ. This is Christmas. This is what we are to hold tight. This is what the bible tells us we need and it tells us, the only way to live with hope, joy, peace, love and power is to hold tight to Christ, to Christmas. Doesn't this make perfect sense?

Stepping into a new year will never deliver on what WE want when what we want takes priority over what we need. What we need is someone to save us, to forgive us, to provide the way to life. Jesus said, "I came that you might have life and have it in abundance."

Remember what Jesus told the rich man who said, I want to follow you. Then Jesus said, "That's awesome, Go and sell everything you have, give the money to the poor and you can follow me. Well, well, well! How'd that turn out?"

So what do we do now? I want to live with hope, with joy, with peace, with love and with power! I want my needs met. What should I do?

Hold tight to Christmas every day of your life! And what are you holding tightly to? To Jesus! And what does Jesus offer me? A promise! And if you have put your faith in Jesus His promises are guaranteed. His promise to save your life from eternal death which results from our sin. His promise to live forever after this life is over in Heaven. His promise to wake up each day with real hope, real peace, real joy, real love, and real power...none of which will ever end. God's promises are forever. They are real. They are for you because you are His child and He loves you no matter what you've done.

Here's how you hold tight to Christmas every day of your life. Wake up each day and remember these five simple things. Hope, Joy, Peace, Love and Power. You will need nothing more. With Jesus, you have all you need to experience life in abundance.

With my deepest love for you, your families and most of all...your personal relationship with the one who died for all of our poor choices. Hold tight to Christmas.

Pastor Steve

PS What Do You Need in 2024? What Does God Want You to have? Everything you need!