

"How to Enjoy the GREATEST Christmas EVER!"

BEFORE VIDEO INTRO---

- Osama still taunting the US after 9+ years of evading US forces with Taliban still a force in Afghanistan
- In spite of huge strides forward...Iraq still in a state of general unrest.
- Greece, Ireland, Spain threatening to take entire EU financial system down.
- Unemployment @ 9.6%...longest recession since Great Depression. Several of you are desperate for a job.
- Middle and upper Lower Class families are struggling to stay in their homes w/ foreclosures at unprecedented levels...our county, Kendall County, being the highest in the nation and set to break a new all-time record in 2010. Again, several here in this room are wondering how long they can hold on and will it be long enough?
- Many of mega-rich and those who recklessly, impatiently jumped into homes and cars they could never afford are enjoying bailouts and benefits of cash flow while smaller companies and the middle class are frozen by debt, uncertainty of future taxes, future insurance plans and a lack of credit. All of this has created a lack of morale in the sector of our economy the normally creates the majority of any prospective new jobs.
- Even here @ Jacob's Well... we've had a year of challenges... Ken & Kelly announce re-entry into senior pastorate, solid contributing families re-locate to other states, we entered the year concerned about the sale of the "shrinking lot" and rising development costs and then in June, when praise God we finally closed, we were hit hard by adding \$70K to our debt vs. walking away with 80K all while we have our growth curve stunted by our annual 2-week eviction for floor re-surfacing at the schools and then to dwarf all of that...little Robbie Tesmond's diagnosis.

SO---GIVEN ALL THIS...WHOSE READY TO HAVE THE GREATEST CHRISTMAS EVER???

REALLY---HOW MANY IN THIS ROOM EXPECT THIS TO BE THE BEST CHRISTMAS THEY HAVE EVER HAD???

WHAT IF IT COULD BE? WHAT IF IN SPITE OF ALL THIS 2010 COULD BE THE GREATEST CHRISTMAS YOU HAVE EVER ENJOYED??? WELL...IT CAN BE!!!!!!

---During these 3 Sunday's before Christmas we will see that in fact...THIS CAN BE THE GREATEST CHRISTMAS EVER. I promise, as I did last week with Thanksgiving, that I won't try to sell you some pie in the sky or trite self-help "mind-over-matter" tricks. NO...THESE TRUTHS WE WILL BE FOCUSING ON ARE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN TO GURANTEE THAT THIS CHRISTMAS IS THE BEST CHRISTMAS YOU HAVE EVER ENJOYED...PERIOD!!!!!!

[-Now, as we turn to week 1 of our series let me direct your attention the screens as a famous TV couple discusses the first key to enjoying the Greatest Christmas EVER!!!](#)

NOW--- let's turn our hearts toward our favorite book in the world and see what it has to say...

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

¹So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

---Now honestly, let me ask you, if you were Son of God and decided to “visit”... how would you come? How would you arrive?

---But Jesus didn't do it that way...WHY?

---Not only was His arrival in human flesh an astounding way to enter the world He created...its said he came to serve... And serve He did...

JOHN 13:1-5

¹Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

²During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

---CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT???---He EVEN washed the feet of the one who would betray Him!

FINAL SLIDE (from Phil 2) IS A REPEAT OF A PORTION OF FIRST TEXT...I HAVE REMOVED THE TEXT CHAPTER AND VERSE NUMBERS...

*“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being **born in the likeness of men.**”*

SO--- even on the eve of His greatest act of service Jesus does what?...SERVES. If anyone ever had the right to make an evening all about Him it was Jesus...and yet instead He isn't self-absorbed, He's focused on others to His Father's glory. WOW!!!!!!!!!!!! He knew the Father received glory by His laying His life down for others...in death and yes, if life as well!

When we can follow His example and live FREE of the distorted view of life that has everything revolving around us and our interests we too are unleashed to magnify the GLORY OF THE FATHER through acts of service.

I promise you... you wake up out of the American Consumer's Marketing Trance that plays to our fallen self-absorbed nature and instead make life all about HIM and loving and serving Him and others through His grace for His glory and you are certain to enjoy the GREATEST CHRISTMAS EVER!!!!!!!!