

"PERSPECTIVE"  
jamie buckingham

BREVARD SENTINEL  
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#### ON MISSING CHRISTMAS

Christmas is for children....and the childlike. Everyone else will miss it completely.

Kenneth Sawyer Goodman wrote a play entitled, "The Dust of the Road". In it there is a tramp who appears every Christmas Eve and walks the roads. He is the reincarnation of Judas Iscariot. Every year he reappears, seeking to undo the wrong of so long ago.

One Christmas Eve the tramp comes to Peter Steele. Peter Steele is an officer in his church, but is on the verge of perjury and theft that could ruin his whole life. The tramp knows that even though Peter Steele will never be found out, that nevertheless he will have to live with his conscience. And so the tramp warns Peter against what will happen to him if he commits this wrong. He says to him:

"You'll miss the joy of small things crying in the grass, and the pleasant sadness that comes of watching the fall of yellow leaves. You'll take no comfort in the sound of a woman's singing, or the laughing of a child, or the crackling of a fire in the grate. You'll walk the sunshiny roads and have only the dust of them in your throat. You'll see little lakes lying in the bosom of the hills, like purple wine in cups of green jade, and have only the pain of daylight in your eyes. You'll lie down to sleep with the crystal stars blinking at you, and have only the empty blackness of night in your heart. I know how it will be with you, Peter Steele."

And who should know better than Judas. Who should know better of the emptiness and shame of a life that that has betrayed Christ. A life that has betrayed all things honest, decent, and good.

There are others among us, beside Peter Steele, who will miss Christmas this year. There are some of you who will miss it because there are things in your life that will blot out the real meaning. You'll miss it because you don't want to have the discipline and self control to put

first things first. You'll miss it because you will become emmeshed in "things" and will get all tangled up with money, and toys, and parties, and liquor.....

You'll miss it because you are hard and cynical....and like Dicken's "Scrooge" all you will be able to say will be "Bah, Humbug!" You'll miss it because you refuse to be "tender hearted, forgiving one another".

Christmas is for children....and for those who love children.... and for those who are childlike.

But somehow, across the years, some of us have become hard and cold. And in our haste to put away childish things, we have put away childlike things as well, and we are much poorer for it.

Thomas Hood describes the feelings of many of us when he wrote:

I remember, I remember

The house where I was born--

The little window where the sun

Came peeping in at Morn--

I remember, I remember

The fir trees, dark and high:

I used to think their slender tops

Were close against the sky--

It was a childish ignorance,

But now 'tis little joy

To know I'm further off from Heaven

Than when I was a boy.

Don't miss Christmas this year....because you are too dignified... too stuffed in your shirt....too poured into your bed....too busy to turn aside and become as little children and thrill over the many happy adventures of childhood.

Jesus said, "Only those who become as little children will enter the Kingdom of Heaven". And the same applies to Christmas. Don't miss it.