

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD - GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING!

HAS CHRISTMAS LOST IT'S TRUE MEANING?

We have probably heard that troubling query expressed hundreds of times over the course of the past few weeks. Each of us, no doubt, has lamented the misplaced emphasis and focus during this season when we are supposed to be commemorating the BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOUR. Through the years, we have watched helplessly as Christ has effectively been taken out of our celebration of Christmas. "Receiving" has become more important than "giving." Solemnity has given way to revelry. When we attempt to speak out against those who have distorted the meaning of this sacred day, we are truly "a voice crying in the wilderness!" Consequently, we find ourselves saying little about it – except those who share our sentiments. As we witness the self-indulgent way that today's society observes a day that should be filled with spiritual joy, we are tempted to echo the words uttered by Ebenezer Scrooge: "Christmas? Bah, humbug!"

We must truly remember that CHRIST IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON. God gave of Himself for the benefit of all mankind. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son . . ." Christ brought peace to the world . . . He brought hope to the world . . He brought salvation to the world. Only those who willingly give of themselves for the benefit of others can receive these wonderful "gifts" offered freely by our Lord.

Perhaps it involves giving a gift to your favorite charity. Perhaps it involves a donation of your time or talent to a person in need. It could even be something as simple as a kind word of encouragement or an attentive ear. All of these acts are viewed positively by our Lord above.

It is refreshing to see that the true message of Christmas has not been lost. Hopefully this restores our faith in humanity, melts away our cynicism and reminds us what Christmas is all about. May the "SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS" live on in the hearts of those who love and serve the Lord.