

7 Christmas Gems

By Chaplain Paul Vescio 12-25-2020



God's Gift of JOY

Standing in the rain filled with so much sorrow and pain, why do the dark clouds of despair continue to haunt me day after day?

I saw a homeless man, he praised God then he tried to lift up my day, O why am I so sad as I sit in my BMW and drive away?

Now even as I drive and try to get away the dark clouds of despair continue to follow me throughout the day.

Turning the corner entering the on ramp that leads to the parkway that points the way home, I looked to see what appears to be makeshift houses made out of cardboard and still others crafted out of tin and Styrofoam.

Now traffic slows to a snail's pace, red and blue lights flash all around, I can hear the sirens of an ambulance as a hurt man lies motionless laying on the ground.

An hour later I finally pull in the driveway of my five bedroom home, and as I take a look I could see my poor neighbor standing outside in the rain talking on his cell phone once again.

I guess I hadn't really noticed but the rain had turned into snow and all of the Christmas lights were beginning to glow.

I sat in my car, boxes and bags of presents piled all around, my family in the house decorating and laughing but still I felt depressed and so dreadfully down.

“Hey Phil how’s it going? Are you getting along Ok during this time of the year?” You see my neighbor Phil lost his wife Sara about six months ago and this was his first Christmas alone without her.

“We are all praying for you Phil, Merry Christmas.” Then I paused and had a thought, “Hey Phil, please come on over tonight for dinner and spend Christmas-Eve with us.”

For with that one little act of kindness God opened His hand and placed a little joy into mine, and as I stopped looking at myself and began to look towards the light of God's Son the clouds of despair seemed to just float gently away, for God had given me the gift of His Son's joy on this Christmas Eve day.

You see happiness comes from happenings, but Joy comes from above.

Psalms 30:5

Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy comes in the morning.

Joy is a gift from God and no matter what your circumstances may be He is faithful to fill your cup with His joy, the key is to focus on His Son Jesus in obedience and love...

Luke 2:10-11

Then the angel said to them,
“Do not be afraid for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord.”

Merry Christmas and my God fill all of your hearts with His Son's peace, love and Joy,
In the name of Yeshua Messiah I pray...Amen

The Little Christmas Tree

Way down deep in the misty green forest of the mighty Christmas trees, there lived the tiny little village of the Look-at-meeeezzzzzz.

Now all of the Look-at-meeeezzzzzz were only out to please; themselves that is with simple ease. They always tried to out do the other, I tell you man it was always brother against brother.

Yes it was always brother against brother, you see they didn't take the time to care very much about each other.

Then one Christmas-Eve they all got a really bright idea, "Hey let's see who'll give the Pastor the biggest Christmas gift this year.

Well I tell you that was it, they all ran over each other, pushing, yelling and shoving on one another, I tell you man it was brother against brother as they all set out to out do each other.

They ran straight down to the stores and they cleaned them all out, then they pushed their way into the church without even a doubt.

And there they all were piling junk upon junk trying to out do the other, I tell you it was a mad house, brother against brother.

They were all pushing and yelling, it was quit something to see, then one of the Look-at-meeeezzzzzz shouted out,

"Hey Look At Me"!!!!!!!

"I have the biggest Christmas gift, wait, just wait you'll see."

Now while all this mess was going on, a little girl walked in from the church back door, you see she had only a little Christmas tree to give because she was so very poor.

And in the midst of all the pushing and yelling she softly and gently set the little Christmas tree down upon the stone church floor, then she tip toed back out the old church door.

Then the Pastor came in and said with a smile, “O now that's the nicest Christmas gift that I've seen in a while. You see friends Christmas isn't about stuff or things or about how much you have, or about tarring each other apart, it's about the love of Christ Yeshua through your very own heart, and It's about love, forgiveness, family and joy, you see it's about helping one another in the true spirit of giving and love as we celebrate the birth of God's little Boy...

Then after all of the Look-at-meeeezzzzs had heard what their Pastor had said they all fell to their knees and bowed their little heads.

And has they all prayed upon their knees, they stopped thinking about themselves and only as they pleased.

Our Lord had opened up their hearts and allowed them all to see, Praise God for their now called,

“Hey Look-it's-Not-About-Meeeezzzzzzz”

Yes they all thanked our Lord for opening their eyes to see, as they all sang a song of thanksgiving around the little Christmas tree.

And on that faithful lit night, the light of our Lord Christ Yeshua did shine so heavenly bright. Then they all held hands by candle light as they all sang a song of peace, and love called Silent Night. And now all of the,

“Hey-it's-Not-About-Meeeezzzzzzs”

would very much like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a very blessed night, in the name of Christ Yeshua may you all be blessed and may you all be healed by His heavenly light...Amen

The Angles Announce Jesus to the Shepherds
Luke Chapter 2:8-14

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold an angel of the Lord stood before them and they were greatly afraid.

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

And this will be a sign to you; You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God saying;

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life...Amen

A Very Special Gift at Christmas

There once lived a very rich King who lived in the land of plenty, all was peaches and cream, it was truly a land of milk and honey. The King was not yet married, he had no children, his father had passed on, but his mother was still alive and it was through her encouragement and love that she helped the King to grow and to thrive. A few years later the Queen Mother became very ill, in-fact the Drs told the King that she may not survive. The King was told of a cure in a far off land, the doctors said to the King, “You need to go get it, understand?” At this point the King knew exactly what to do but before he would leave to a far off land of another, he asked all of the people to please bring a special gift so as to cheer up his poor sick mother. Within a day thousands of people lined up to offer their special gifts and prayers.

Each humble servant quietly walked by the Queen Mother, they placed their gift on the floor, then they quietly walked out the bedroom door. This went on for three days and for three nights without any improvement in sight. Then on the morning of the third day two poor children came walking through the Queen's bedroom door. They were brother and sister about the age of ten, they had no gift to give but sat by the Queens bed. The Queen opened her eyes and said “O Now what a wonderful surprise.” The children sat and they held the Queen's hand, they listened has the Queen told family stories, they laughed, and they cried together. Suddenly the Queen sat up in her bed, she asked the guards, “Please I'd like to be fed.” All in attendance were truly amazed, they all got on their knees giving God all the praise.

The children came back to sit with the Queen and pray each and every day and soon she was back on her feet walking around, then on Christmas morning the King returned shocked not making a sound. The Queen was then given the cure but we all know what really helped cure the Queen, it was her faith in God and the children's visits and their heartfelt prayers, it was the true gift of their love and their compassion through the gift of their presence because they really do care.

After Job lost everything his three friends came to visit and they stayed with Job for 7 days and for 7 nights without speaking a word, the comfort was in their presence, just being there listening is of great comfort. It is an act of love when we give of ourselves in the sharing of our time with others.

Job 2:11-13

Volunteering in a nursing home, care center, medical rehab etc. has such a positive impact on lives of the people who live there, in-fact it is very safe to say that the Body of Christ is the healing medicine of compassion, kindness and love in so many incredible ways...Amen John 14:27

Eggnog the Christmas Frog

One very cold and snowy day in the month of December the pond froze over with a thick sheet of ice. Well one little frog didn't know quite what to do so he decided to go for a walk in the woods to find what he could see.

The frog came upon a house towards the edge of the woods, the house was all decorated with Christmas lights and ornaments, the little frog couldn't believe his eyes for he had never seen such a thing before in his life, the house was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen.

The little frog decided to spend the night in the barn sleeping very cozy in the warm hay with the chickens and two cows. Now as the little frog was sleeping a little girl came running out to the barn and scooped up some hay and brought it back to the house. Her family gathered around to set up the Nativity set with the baby Yeshua and Joseph and Mary and some lambs and two cows and three Wise Men, it was very beautiful. Then something amazing happened the little frog woke up and to his amazement he was now in the Nativity Scene. The little frog looked all around he couldn't believe his eyes then to his shocking surprise all the family members gathered around and started singing Silent Night and while they were singing they all saw the little frog. The family thought it was the coolest thing ever, so they named him Eggnog the Christmas Frog and he lived with them until the Spring. Then when Spring finally arrived, he went back home to live in the pond out in the woods but every Christmas after that Eggnog the Christmas Frog would return to the house to be part of the Nativity Scene in being a true blessing to the family... The end John 14:27

A Winter Wonderland

Stamford CT at Christmas time was a very magical place especially during a snowfall. My father would decorate the house with me and my brother Kevin helping. Dad would get the lights out of the box and then we would walk down to the street making sure there were no tangles then we decorated the house during a gentle snowfall with cold gray skies as our hearts were being warmed by the love that we had in our family.

Our house had evergreen bushes along the front and my father would string the lights around the bushes later that night as the snow continued to fall you could look up and see as it passes by the streetlamp. We would walk outside without looking at the house and walk across the street turn around and see the lights on the house, by this time the snow had surrounded each lightbulb and it was glowing in the snow as it really enhanced the Christmas spirit.

The next morning after it had been snowing all night one could look out the window and see a winter wonderland as icicles glistened overhead; all the yards on the street were covered with a blanket of white snow. It was perfectly untouched, it looked like white icing on a cake. The snow was clean, and you just wanted to look at it and not spoil it but very soon kids will be kids and we hurried to dress up in our snow suits, hats, scarfs and boots and run outside as we grabbed our sleds and off we went across the street to the hill that was waiting for us to sleigh ride on.

You have to imagine it being a kid for me in Stamford CT was like a mixture of a Charlie Brown Christmas and Peter Pan as all the kids in the neighborhood came pouring out of their homes and began to sleigh ride down the hill across the street. Christmas in Connecticut was a very magical time that I will never forget. We went sleigh riding, we had snowball fights and we played in the snow. We made snow angels and we built good ole jolly snowmen of all sizes then later in the day mom would call us in for dinner we would come in all cold and shivering and wet then dad would light a fire and we would have dinner as the jolly snowman looked through the windows and smiled.

Jasper the Christmas Mouse

Way back in the day they lived a little mouse by the name of Jasper. Jasper lived at the Russo residence at 99 Maple Ave. in Rye New York. Each year before Christmas Patrick and Jane would go out in the woods by where they lived and cut evergreen branches and take them back home to make beautiful handmade Christmas wreaths for the Holidays. The Christmas wreaths were decorated with ribbons and bows, pinecones and walnuts and Christmas ornaments. All of Patrick and Jane's neighbors loved having one of these beautiful Christmas wreaths on their front door. Oh what a time it was, it was a simpler time filled with the love of family and friends as they all gathered together for Christmas.

Now little Jasper lived in a hole in the wall in the playroom upstairs. Patrick and Jane lived in a 3 story apartment building, the building housed three families one family per floor, Patrick's brother Frank lived on the 1st floor with his family and the Russo family lived on the third floor sometimes moving to the second floor at times. Patrick and Jane had two daughters Patricia and Alice, Alice being the older of the two.

like I said it was a simpler time but it wasn't without its problems but things were simple back then, people went to work, they went to school, they went to Church, oh and for fun they would go to Rye Playland which was very close by. Rye Playland is an amusement park that sits on Rye Beach which is where Long Island sound is. A family could go to the beach and swim and hang out at Rye Playland and ride the rides and play games and have a lot of fun.

One year on Christmas Eve Patrick, Jane and their two daughters went to go see a Christmas play called Scrooge A Christmas Carol it was being performed at the local Church and it was a really big deal. all of the Christmas wreaths and toys we're back at the house and we're going to be delivered to the neighbors and to children in the neighborhood after the play. Patrick had locked the toys and the wreaths in the cellar with a very heavy padlock. When they returned home after the play Patrick went outside to get the wreaths and toys but while reaching for his keys the key to the padlock fell out of his hand and went down the sewer. Now what? He thought, Patrick did not have a lock cutter or a spare key he ran upstairs to tell Jane and little Jasper just happened to hear the whole story.

Jasper loved the Russos and decided to risk his own life by going outside and down into the sewer to retrieve the key and bringing it to Patrick. Jasper took off running with all his might he had to get that key back because it was a very special night. Jasper went into the sewer and found the key and then rushed back up the stairs to give the key back to Patrick and Jane.

Little Jasper came back into the house and very carefully climbed up onto the kitchen table where Patrick was sitting with his hands to his face trying to figure out how to get into the cellar. Little Jasper walked over and gently placed the key in front of Patrick. Patrick open his eyes and could not believe what he was seeing Jane and their daughters shrieked but Patrick told them to be very quiet, "Don't scare the little mouse." Then Patrick picked up the little mouse and thanked him and said,

"You will always be safe here in our house, we will feed you and take care of you, we will always be very grateful for what you have done, thank you my little friend."

Jasper was pleased with a very warmed heart, he smiled at Patrick and Jane and Alice and Patricia and gently climbed off the table and went back in his hole in the wall and the next day for Christmas all was well, all was very peaceful.

Merry Christmas to all and to all have a very blessed night.

John 14:27

It Happened One Christmas Eve

I received a phone call from Pastor Shon who is a patient in the care facility where I serve, he said he was having a very hard time of things being all alone at Christmas. After talking to him for a while and praying for him I decided to go and see him. When I arrived it was after dark and the care facility was very quiet. I dressed in the necessary surgical gown, N95 mask, face shield and gloves and went to see Pastor Shon in his room.

Pastor Shon was very happy to see me, we talked for about 15 min then something amazing happened the window opened and to our shocking surprise an Angel was calling us to come join him, he reached out and took hold of our hands and off we went.

The Angel told us that he was taking us to Christmas past, we both thought the Angel was talking about our past but he had a better idea instore for us. We traveled very far back in time and when we finally arrived at our destination we were in Bethlehem standing out in the fields surrounded by sheep who were giving birth. There were shepherds in the fields protecting their flocks and the newborn lambs from predators, the Angel told us that the shepherds were not able to see or hear us and as we watched a bright light appeared and a heavenly host of Angels appeared in the night sky, the shepherds fell to their knees terrified as the lambs scurried about then the Angel said,

“Behold I bring you tidings of great joy for today in the city of David a savior is born who is Christ the Lord, Now go, you will find a baby lying in a manger wrapped in swaddling cloth's, go to Him and then tell others of the good news”

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God saying;

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

Then in a blink of an eye the Angel, Pastor Shon and I found ourselves standing by a feeding trough in the middle of a courtyard of what looked like a lodging place, there were animals all around and there laying in the hay was Christ the Lord with Mary and Joseph and people standing around then Pastor Shon and I dropped to our knees and began to cry as we each realized no matter how bad things are God is always nearby to comfort us, watch over us, strengthen us, encourage us, and help us along the way.

Then in a blink of an eye we found ourselves standing at one of our own past Christmases, Pastor Shon could see himself as an 8 year old kid excited opening presents surrounded by the love of his family on Christmas Day and at the same time I could see myself as a 12 year old kid with my Mother and my Father and our dog Hanz and my dog Champ with my brother Kevin in our home back in Stamford CT on Christmas morning. I was surrounded by the love of my family as we all opened gifts in giving thanks to God for his blessings and love.

Then after a few moments we suddenly found ourselves back at the care facility. Pastor Shon and I both sat and cried for a few moments then we prayed in giving thanks to God for we knew that everything was going to be Ok as all things work out for His good purpose, we know the Lord loves us and even though things are very difficult right now we know that weeping may endure for night but joy comes in the morning through the Lords love and heavenly light. Pastor Shon and I want to wish all of the patients, family members and staff at North Mountain a very blessed Christmas and a very blessed night.

God bless you all from Chaplain Paul 193 John 14:27

Bonus

And That's What Christmas is Truly all About

My prayer for this Christmas is that there will be a true awakening by the American people that it's not about them and that the true meaning of Christmas is about reaching out and sharing the love and the compassion of Christ with those who are suffering and all alone. This Christmas morning millions of patients who are on 24 hour lock down in American healthcare across our nation will be spending this Christmas all alone in their rooms and yes they can see and talk to their loved ones on Face Time or Zoom but there is nothing like having the love and the compassion of family being by our side.

And what about the ones who can't Face Time with their loved ones? What about all those who are coma or simi coma or paralyzed and on life support what about all those with cognitive issues like dementia and Alzheimers? I pray that on this Christmas people will come to the realization that it's not about us its about Christ and those who are suffering in His Name. It's about reaching out in showing the compassion, kindness, encouragement and love of Christ that millions of our Brothers and Sisters in Christ and our fellow Americans so desperately need right now.

Please consider contacting the Activities Director at any healthcare facility and offer to be a blessing from home there are still many things we can do right from home such as providing Christmas cards to the staff and patients and providing homemade Christmas ornaments and drawings and providing Bibles and devotionals and even tablets or other devices so the patients can Face Time their loved ones. Sadly these devices are limited in the facilities so the more they have on sight the better it is for the patients who can use them. Even providing support, encouragement and prayers to staff and the patient's family members you can be a huge blessing this Christmas and that's what Christmas is truly all about Charlie Brown...

God Bless You all From Chaplain Paul 193 John 14:27

