

Taking chance out of Christmas

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.

The two symbols of this season represent for me the difference between chance and certainty. Santa Claus represents chance. If we are good, more presents will come than if we are bad. We ask Santa (or his helpers like Mom and Dad) for what we want. We might make a list of things. But we really don't expect the whole list to appear under the tree. We're satisfied if a few of the items arrive. It's a matter of chance. Santa arbitrarily chooses which gifts, if any, to deliver. That's part of the joy and frustration of Christmas, whether we receive what we really want.

Hopefully, our view of Jesus Christ is not synonymous with Santa Claus. Have we confused the chance of Santa with the certainty of Christ? Do we make lists of request hoping that a few will be answered by a benevolent God? Do we think of God as arbitrary, overworked, remote (residing at a heavenly North Pole)?

Christ Jesus represents the certainty of spiritual gifts and salvation. I love that verse in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus says, "for (your Father) maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matthew 5:45) The coming of Christ in human form is the gift of God to all mankind. We are all blessed by love, grace and goodness whether we acknowledge it or not, whether we understand it or not.

The gift is certain. Christ has come and continues to bless mankind. But sometimes we seem to confuse Christ and Claus. We make prayer lists, petition for things, make excuses when what we want doesn't appear. What a gentle opportunity for spiritual growth this season can be!

It can remind us that God is everpresent, loving and caring for us each day of the year, not merely one day. Instead of petitioning for things, we can be more like Solomon and ask God for wisdom and spiritual qualities. The gifts of God are spiritual riches like love, joy, peace. (See Galatians 5:22,23) These gifts are forever present and pouring forth in abundance to each one. By availing ourselves of the everpresent gifts of God, our lives

improve and the things that we need naturally appear. “God gives you His spiritual ideas, and in turn, they give you daily supplies.” (Miscellaneous Writings by Mrs. Eddy)

This Christmas let’s relegate chance to the celebration of Santa Claus. The reality of Christ is the certainty of Christmas.

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