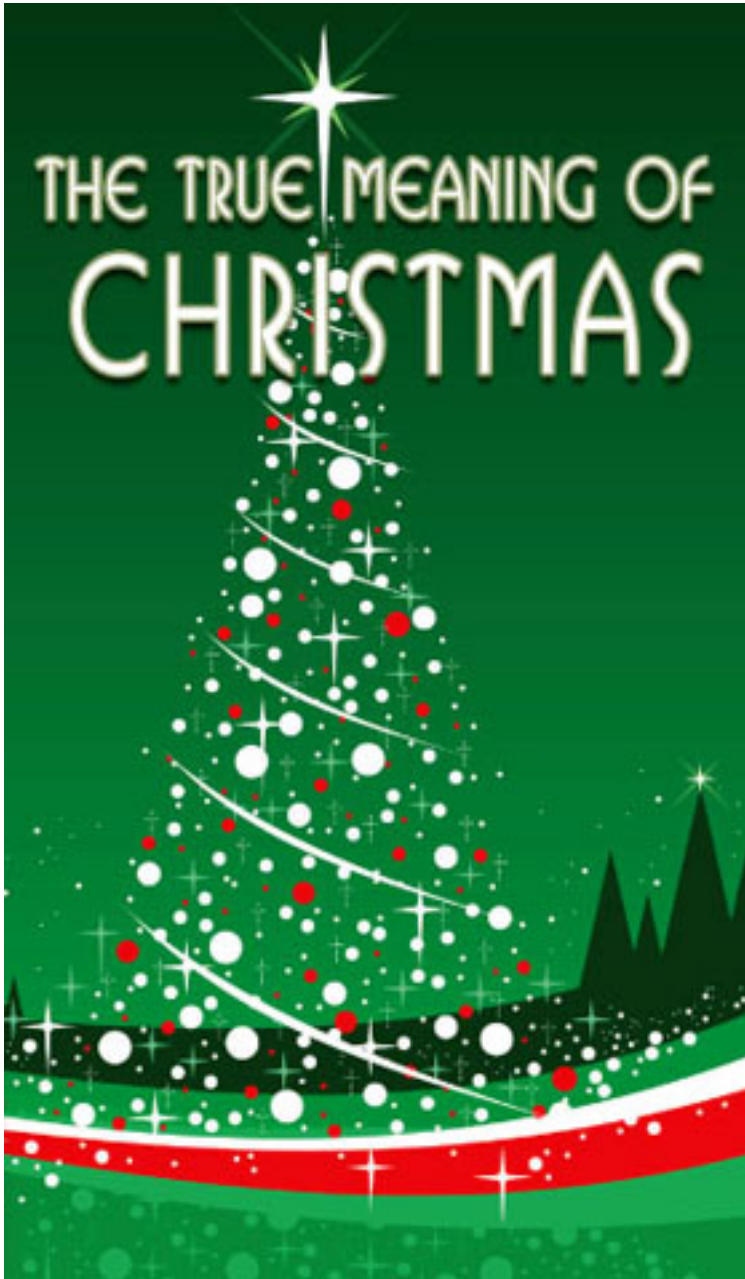


What is the real meaning of Christmas?

Written by Timothy Houston
Thursday, 26 December 2013 15:49



What is the real meaning of Christmas? With all of the hustle and bustle taking place, it is a good time to reflect on that question. In 1965, CBS debut the animated TV special "A Charlie Brown Christmas". At the beginning of the program, the main character Charlie Brown is not sure of the real meaning of Christmas. He confides in Linus that even though Christmas is approaching, he still feels depressed due to the over-commercialization of Christmas. Is Christmas over-commercialized? That is an individual question. I do believe that if we don't keep the real meaning of Christmas in mind, we may also become depressed or overwhelmed. Here are some Christmas lessons you can learn from Charlie Brown.

First, Charlie Brown discovers that there is more to Christmas than just getting presents. Christmas is about giving. On Lucy's advice, Charlie Brown agreed to direct a school nativity play. Lucy is right, we can all benefit from giving. Look around. Become more involved in the things that connect you to your family and others. Giving is the first step to connecting to the real meaning of Christmas. Secondly, Charlie Brown discovers that there is more to Christmas

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than spending money. On the way to the auditorium, Charlie Brown stops by Snoopy's doghouse, only to find out that even his own dog has gone commercial. He later runs into his sister Sally, who asks him to write her letter to Santa Claus requesting large sums of money. We should not follow Snoopy and Sally's example. Steer clear of people and events that add to your frustration. The financial pressure of keeping up with the "Jones" can be overwhelming. Thirdly, Charlie Brown discovers that there are some situations during this holiday season that are outside of your control. Choose your battles. Charlie Brown arrives at the rehearsals, but he is unable control the situation as the uncooperative kids are more interested in modernizing the play with dancing and lively music. Charlie Brown, in an effort not to let the play become too commercial, decides to focus on the traditional side of the story. To bring everyone back in focus he decides they need a Christmas tree. It's ok to go against the grain. Make sure the choices you make this season reflect how you truly feel. Finally, Charlie Brown discovers that Christmas is a wonderful time of the year. Never give up on your quest for the true meaning.

Charlie Brown was determined. With Linus in tow, he sets off on his quest. When they get to the tree market, he zeroes in on a small baby tree which, ironically as well as symbolically, is the only real tree on the lot. They return to the school auditorium with the tree and everybody laughs at him. In desperation, Charlie Brown begins to wonder if he really knows what Christmas is all about. Linus steps in to help and recites the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke, verses 8 through 14: "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were so afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And that is the real meaning of Christmas. Merry Christmas!

Timothy Houston is an author, minister, and motivational speaker who is committed to guiding positive life changes in families and communities. For questions, comments or more information, go to www.tlhouston.com.