

My Christmas List

More Neighbors, Less Strangers

Craig Smith • December 16, 2018

Kindness and love launched Jesus into a land of strangers...

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. (Titus 3:4-5a)

She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:7b)

A selfish Christmas: ignore the “neighbors” you consider “strangers”...

“A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.” (Luke 10:30-32)

A selfless Christmas: be a “neighbor” to the “strangers” around you...

“But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came to where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him...Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” (Luke 10:33, 36)

This Christmas, be a great neighbor as you...

- **Love: open your heart** – “If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing right.” (James 2:8)

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor. 13:13)

- **Give: Open your wallet** – “He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.” (Prov. 14:21)
- **Bless: open your mouth** – “Lord, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman...” (Psalm 15:1-3)
- **Serve: open your home** – “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Heb. 13:2)
- **Share: open the gospel** – “For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts 28:30-31)

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law...Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. (Rom. 13:8, 10)