

Who Stole Christmas?

Jeremiah 31:10-17; Matthew 2:1-18

As soon as the clock strikes midnight on December 26, it sure feels like someone _____ Christmas. Technically, Christmas lasts until January 6, Epiphany, AKA _____ Day, when the Wise Men show up.

Corporations weren't the first to steal Christmas, nor was the Grinch. That honor belongs to _____, who, after hearing of the birth of _____ and being tricked by the Wise Men, killed all boys 2 and under in Bethlehem.

As heartwarming and festive as Christmas can often be, this story is a _____ reminder that the Newborn King did not enter a "warm and fuzzy" world, nor did his arrival instantly make our lives perfect.

What lurked behind the smiles on Christmas cards and social media posts you sent or received this year? _____

2000 years ago the anguished cry of mothers and fathers losing their _____ filled an *entire region*.

"Rachel..._____ for her children..." hearkens back to a devastating time in Israel's history where the pain and grief engulfed all the land of Judah.

It turns out that even after the birth of Jesus, God doesn't _____ us from all pain - at least not yet.

I heard a preacher share a comment made by someone who heard this story for the first time: *"Is that the kind of _____ you want? He saves his own son, but not anyone else's?"*

The trouble with this kind of thinking is that if we put ourselves in God's place and reject the King of Kings because we don't like how he runs the universe, we easily become like the monster _____.

The truth is, God asks nothing of us he isn't willing to _____ himself in and through his Son, our Savior, Jesus.

God rules the heavens and the earth. He has and is orchestrating events for our _____ good...even when it doesn't make _____.

If Jesus _____ before his time, the boys of Bethlehem and all our loved ones, die with no _____ of a return.

Until we see Jesus again, our life in faith is one of living with _____ and _____ God even when it's hard. It is a faint voice of hope and confidence in the work of God in the face of the reality of _____.

Don't let go of _____ because of life's pain. In our efforts to harm him somehow, we do more harm to _____.

What kinds of things have “stolen” Christmas from you over the years?

How have you tried to dethrone the King of Kings and Lord of Lords?

What part of the Christmas story gives you the most hope despite all the evil?

Who in your life may be wrestling with a “stolen” Christmas?

How might God be asking you to reach out to them to comfort them in their grief?