

Christmas is not your birthday
The joy of living & giving like Jesus
by Mike Slaughter

It's not your birthday; It's Jesus' birthday & it's about making Him happy, not you

Jesus the messiah would also suffer & would make those who are poor & suffering his priority.
God is with us in the midst of pain & poverty.
Jesus did not condemn the sinner- he identifies with the weak.
God has nothing to give except Himself
Jesus- Emmanuel= God with us.
jesus spoke about money and greed more than anything else except for the kingdom of God. e
cannot serve God & money

Miracle= the visible interruption of the laws of nature.

God works miracles and changes the world by acting through your life.

Are we willing to be used?

God's grace is free, but it is never cheap.
Jesus tried to show us hat it is like to live sacrificially
are you willing to let your life be the place where can can work his miracles of love?
Miracles don't just happen, they are born through labor pains.
Are you willing to let God move you out of your comfort zone.

Every miracle of God is conceived in the heart of a believer, grows through conviction and delivered through committed action.

God plants miracles in the hearts of ordinary people who are willing to dream God's dreams & act on his vision.

Prayer and passionate living are the ways God reveals what he wants to accomplish through you.

Are you ready for God to work a Christmas miracle through you?

You don't wait for you & your life to become perfect for this miracle- they happen mysteriously in the midst of a mess. He is knocking.
You cannot earn God's favor. he comes when we are doing nothing or even everything wrong. he comes because we are highly favored. Just as parents favor their children, God favors his. This does not mean bad & painful things will not happen. jesus & the Bible never promise that a life of faith leads to an easy or predictable path. Life is not about living comfortable & safely. It's about giving your lifer to God and participating in his mission of saving the world. Our reward is not in this life. Our job is to be his servant, no matter what happens
Like Mary, our role model who is faithful and never quit, even though she does not know the outcome, we refuse to be paralyzed by fear and remain faithful and serve, even when things don't make any sense. God never intend for us to handle these unexpected turns alone.
We are not supposed to use God to achieve our desires. We are supposed to allow him to use us to create what he desires. In the midst of the horrors of this world God shows up.

To avoid rejection we often compromise our fundamental beliefs and put up layers of defenses to protect ourselves from emotional & relational pain.

Christmas not your birthday notes
continued

God reaches out to us in spite of our imperfections-beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Magnificat Luke 1-46-49- our job= to magnify the Lord

He is in love with humanity.

We sell out to materialism & greed, celebrating Christmas with gluttony, drunkenness & shopping.

Materialistic self-indulgence= spiritual malaise. We are held captive by our desires

How to change- pure love- if you love me feed my sheep.

Jesus does not save us for heaven. He saves us to bring heaven to earth- channel the gifts of heaven to earth. Loaves & fishes in your hands Mat-14:18-19

Sow generously, reap generously.

The savior is actively restoring the broken people, systems & societies. setting captives free.

We are not created for ourselves. We exist to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world.

Poverty= any brokenness, personal or cultural, that restricts people from living in the fullness of humanity that God intends

One child dies every 5 seconds of hunger-related causes.

16,6 million AIDS orphans

How we spend our money determines our values= the window into our true character.

Are we disciples of Jesus or the culture of consumption?

Overspending, debt, attachment to material possessions.

Kingdom of God, or kingdom of consumption?

Self-centered attachments and expectations.

We use God to attain our desires or be used by God for His desires?

The kingdom of God is where God's invisible rule is made visible; where evidence of God's presence is made visible and demonstrated through a community living under His authority.

Heaven's resources are channeled through our obedience.

Jesus orders us to keep it simple because the more we have, the more energy we have to expend to maintain it.

Let the light of Christ shine through the love we show to others

God opposes the proud, blesses the humble.

We can only have one true life devotion.

Mary suffered ostracism, was despised and insulted.

She knows what it feels like to be us.

How many miracles are aborted due to sarcasm, name-calling, negativity?

We are going against the tide of: "Me! More! Bigger! Better! Newer!"

God is sending you to bring Jesus' light to intervene in the world of evil., to bring light to dark places, to spread the Good News- you think this is boring?= you didn't get it