



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



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Where's Linus when you need him? He is the child in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* who stood on a stage and explained to Charlie Brown what Christmas is all about. He quoted Luke 2:8–14:

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Weeks before Thanksgiving, stores were already having online Black Friday sales. (Wow! A shopper's delight?!) With deals everywhere, the thought of missing that one special bargain may be too overwhelming!

This article is for those of you who have noticed Christmastime quickly

approaching; but, like Charlie Brown, are finding it hard to get into the Christmas spirit.

Like Linus told Charlie Brown, the celebration of Christmas was and is about a baby born in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. This baby came for one purpose: to redeem men from the penalty of sin.

In Galatians 4:4a we are told, *When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son . . .*" This is a remarkably profound passage. The time which God, in His infinite wisdom, counted best had come.

It was at this point in time He sent His beloved Son to die for the sins of the world. But don't miss this: Jesus' redemption only has value to those who place their trust in Him — those who are willing to receive this wonderful Gift of God! Jesus said, *For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16)

Our gifts on Christmas Day may bring excitement and cause us to feel good, but the joy they bring will only be temporary. The true, lasting joy of Christmas can only be understood if we have a relationship with God's Gift to us, His Son — even Linus knew that!

- Dr. L.W. Edwards



Sometimes a second look can be enlightening, even life-changing. In 1943, the widow of a University of Chicago paleontologist donated 2,000 drawings to the Art Institute of Chicago's permanent collection. Sandwiched between the other artwork was a chalk drawing of an upraised hand in a position of blessing (the hand looks like it is waving hello). The picture's chalk highlights had oxidized and turned black, so the scholars who examined it moved it to storage.

44 years later, the Art Institute reexamined and cataloged each work in this collection. The blessing hand drawing was again reviewed. This time, scholars thought it to be a copy of the artist Raphael's work, probably done by one of his assistants. However, Raphael scholar Konrad Oberhuber believed the great artist had done the drawing himself — no one else could match Raphael's distinct style.

Experts in England confirmed Oberhuber's claim was true. *Upraised Right Hand, with Palm Facing Outward: Study for Saint Peter* became the only Raphael original owned by the Art Institute of Chicago, and one of only 12 originals in North America.

Like this piece of artwork, Jesus was likewise dismissed as ordinary when people first saw Him. The son of a carpenter from Nazareth, born in a Bethlehem barn, no one would have mistaken Him for royalty. Throughout His life and ministry, He was overlooked and underestimated. Religious scholars who cross-examined Him wrote Him off as another prophet, nothing more.

But those who dared to take a second look discovered Jesus was more than a prophet — other prophets had preached, but none did it with His authority. He was more than a good man — other good men had done what was socially and culturally acceptable; Jesus did what was acceptable to His Father, even if it meant upending social and cultural norms. He was more than an outstanding leader — other gifted leaders had led by brute force, personality, or intellect; Jesus led with love, humility, and sacri-

vice. He was more than a patriot or martyr, a good example of how to live and die — many others had lived and died with dignity; only Jesus defeated death when He died, and His tomb is empty!

This Christmas, instead of settling for another high-tech toy or fancy item, take another look at Jesus. Other gifts will soon lose their appeal, but a relationship with Him never grows old. Trust in Him for the forgiveness of your sins, and He will save you. Nobody else can do it like He can.

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4:12



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PO Box 3862, Barrington, IL 60011

847-909-8543/biblewayministries@sbcglobal.net