

MEN'S MINISTRY

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Proverbs 27:17

The Drum By: Jeff Searcy

It's that time of year again. Yes, it's Christmas. The time for decorations, lights, sweaters (everywhere except Florida), cider, great food, friends, family, traffic, stress, overcrowded malls, and gifts. It also means carols that began just after July 4th and will go through Memorial Day. Sorry, maybe it just seems that way. No, I like Christmas carols and Christmas music ... during Christmas. I digress.

The song "The Little Drummer Boy" was always a favorite of mine growing up. But I never really understood the meaning or took the song's message into context as it relates to "the giving of a gift." Now, I have to be honest when I say that I am not the biggest fan of the Christmas holiday. Yes, you read it right. No typo here. I know that I have just thrown many of you, and those in ear shot of your audible reaction to this, as well as those who just saw you throw your copy of *Power Source Magazine* across the room, into an uproar and simply cannot believe that a Christian, especially one who claims to be an "outspoken and highly motivated servant of the Almighty" would say that he was not a fan of Christmas. I am going to pause here for a second ... or two ... Good. Hopefully things have calmed down where you are, you didn't lose your testimony, and your blood pressure has come back to a relatively normal level. If it hasn't, please take some deep breaths and think happy thoughts. It's okay. I'll wait for you. I don't want you to miss out on the rest of the message.

I said I wasn't a fan of the Christmas *HOLIDAY*, not the reason why we celebrate Christmas. Christ was the greatest Gift ever given. Period. And, the gift He brings is eternal life with Him in Heaven. While I could jump into full pastoral discourse, I see no need for it. Bottom line: It really doesn't get any better than God's Gift and the gift of salvation. Now, what I am not a big fan of is what the Christmas holiday has turned into ... a "keepin' up with the Jones' and trying to get everything that's hot this year while making sure the kids get more than last year in order to outdo the neighbors and coworkers in a quest — to the death if necessary — for the ultimate gift despite the mounting debt ... but it's never quite enough" holiday. I have to ask you, does that sound like a holiday where Christ is at the center? You don't have to respond.

We know the answer.

We as people, especially us men, need to realize that we bring absolutely nothing to the table. It is God's unlimited grace that allows us to enter into His presence. It's not what we bring through our abilities, talents, or our works. He doesn't need us. He created the heavens and the earth for crying out loud. He is the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and the Omega. But despite our inadequacies, He wants to be involved in every single little aspect of our lives. All He asks of us is ... us. We think His love is because of us and what we do for

Him. Is this you? However, as Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) tells us, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works so that no one can boast." On the other side, many of us feel so unworthy, so undeserving of anyone's love, much less God's love, because of what we have done or even continue to do, that the gifts of grace and forgiveness are far beyond our reach or comprehension. We feel there is no way God wants to hear from us, could ever love us, or would ever want a "gift" from us. Is that you? Romans 5:8 (NIV) says, "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Back to the drum...

As I said earlier, the song "The Little Drummer Boy" was a favorite of mine growing up, but I never really got it, or at least what it means to me, until just recently. A small boy, in a humbleness that only a child can bring, stands before Christ, the newborn King, the Savior of the world, and brings all he has, a gift of noise made by two sticks on an animal skin draped over a piece of wood. If you listen to the words of the song, it says, "I'm a poor boy too ... I have no gift to bring ... that's fit to give the King ... Shall I play for you ... on my drum ..." His gift was not the beautiful tones from a violin, or a flute, or a harp. He banged on a drum. I can only imagine what God must have thought as He looked proudly down at the boy, His child. No doubt His response must have been, "That's all I want you to do. I gave you a drum. And all I ask is that you do your best with what I have given you; then give it, your life, back to me as a gift." By the way, He wants the same from us today. The song goes on, "I played my drum for Him ... I played my *best* for Him ..." What happens? The last line of the song says it all ... "Then He *smiled* at me, pa-rum-pa-pum-pum, me and my drum."

How awesome, humbling, incredible, and unbelievable is it that we can stand before the King of kings and Lord of lords empty-handed and with nothing more to offer but our messed up and shallow lives ... *noise*, and receive unconditional grace, love, and forgiveness ... a *smile*? Wow. That's my God. Men, our worth in this life is not in the status we achieve, in the possessions we have acquired, in the fortunes we have amassed, or in the gifts we are able or unable to give. Our worth resides in the eyes and arms of our Heavenly Father and in the life, and noise, we bring to the manger of Christ. Merry Christmas. Keep it real. **PS**

Jeff Searcy is an outspoken and highly motivated servant of the Almighty, a husband, father of two boys, Founder and President of Servant Warrior Ministries, Founder and Principal at KBGroup Consulting, a speaker, evangelist, and an average golfer. For more information about Jeff or any of the organizations he is involved in, visit www.jeffsearcy.net.

