

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2018

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Well, ready or not Christmas is upon us and here we are again breaking out all the family traditions we have become so accustomed to every year. So, as we hang up lights, erect and decorate trees, prepare for feasts, and eat more treats than we consume every other time of the year, we do whatever our customs dictate in order to establish that we are officially in the Christmas spirit. And inevitably every year I ask myself, why is it just this time of year I feel this overwhelming joy of what it feels like to be a good human? You know the feeling. The feeling of joy you get when you put the final star on the tree and your favorite Christmas song in the background as you smell pine tree or candy cane fragrances slowly makes its way from the candles in the kitchen. For me, that is Christmas spirit, and for some reason, I get so happy and carefree that I am overly joyful for the entire Christmas season. Consequently, every year I do some thinking to try and find out what is the meaning of Christmas and try to figure out why can't I feel this way all the time, not just during the month of December. In the beginning, I learned from childhood that presents are the most quintessential part of Christmas. Then I got older, more mature, and had children of my own, and realized giving, or charity, is what makes up a large part of Christmas for me. Charity has always made me happy, because I get satisfaction out of helping others, but I never felt giving monetary items or a little cash was enough to express the joy I truly felt. Thus, this year I decided to conduct a little research into what charity means, the origin of the word, and how to better harness the joy of Christmas, so that I may try to be a better human throughout the entire of the year.

Upon conducting my research, I came across several concepts that caught my eye. One of which we are all familiar with, which is the character of the Christian Knight. I believe we all know how and why these knights rose up, but the most important thing I want to discuss is the name of their code of conduct and the main focus of that code. It was called Chivalry and the number one focus of the Christian Knight was, none other than, charity. Now, here comes the interesting part. During the middle ages, charity was not only viewed as giving monetary items to the needy or poor. It also meant to give the most precious commodity of all, which is love. In modern terms, we have our own ideas on what love is, but back then, love was caritas, which is the Latin word for love and means to love someone without expecting or wanting anything in return. Hence, charity was this idea of giving yourself in a way that establishes a strong bond and relationship with another person. Of course they loved our heavenly father, their parents, and their siblings, but this also meant that they were able to love one another as brothers.

A bond I know we are all extremely familiar with, for the reason that it models the love our heavenly father and Jesus feels towards us. I believe this is the reason Charity was the main focus of Chivalry, because we should all model ourselves after Jesus and give Charity to all who deserve it.

After discovering this concept, I realized I have a new perspective on the idea of charity and, by extension, Christmas. Now, I understand the Christmas spirit I was looking to understand was nothing more than the overwhelming feeling of love that I feel towards my family, friends, and brothers. I can now look back on all my past experiences during Christmastime and remember it was all the love I have had in my life that helped shaped me into the person I am today. Therefore, I am very excited to show my children and wife what I now think the meaning of Christmas is by giving them a big hug to show how much I love them. I am really excited to greet my friends with Christmas cheer as I see them throughout this year. Finally, I am thoroughly excited to wish all of my brothers a very merry Christmas, not just a wish for happiness and good fortune, but a wish of love and friendship. One that says I know we have a strong bond with one another, one that says I will always be there if needed, and one that says how honored I am to be called a brother myself.

Merry Christmas

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