

# WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS MEAN TO YOU?

## Introduction

In the December 24th edition of the Louisville Courier-Journal several years ago the following advertisement, placed by the First Unitarian Church of Louisville, appeared:

"Christmas for its own sake"

Christmas is fun, if you will make it so. It always was. It doesn't have to have a saviour. It doesn't have to have a Santa Claus. These are just lovely stories we all enjoy. We really like Christmas for its own sake. It didn't begin with Santa Claus, and it didn't begin with the birth of Jesus. It doesn't depend on them for its meaning, but they make it richer for us.

One piece of poetic doggerel puts it this way:

The fun of wrapping parcels,  
The smell of Christmas tree;  
Feasts and fun and giving --  
That's what Christmas means to me.

What does Christmas mean to you? What comes to mind when you think of Christmas? Family? Feast? Presents? Snow? Christmas tree? Christmas carols? A manger? Baby Jesus? All of the above, in a great mosaic of images? What is the meaning of Christmas?

In this message I would like to ask and attempt to answer three questions:

First, what elements are traditionally associated with the meaning of Christmas?

Second, what elements are biblically associated with the meaning of Christmas?

Third, what should our attitude be toward these traditional and biblical elements, as we seek to make Christmas meaningful?

By consideration of these questions, I hope to stimulate all of us to think about Christmas as part of our Christmas celebrations.