

knightwatch weekly



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Don't Judge a Gift by Its Wrapping

I only wanted one thing for Christmas.

I knew that if I could get an inflatable inner tube to use at the sledding hill, it would be the BEST. WINTER. EVER. So naturally, when I walked into my grandparents' living room and saw a present shaped like a humongous donut sitting next to the tree, my heart skipped more than a few beats.

I had gotten exactly what I wanted, and I couldn't wait to put it to good use! Sometimes things work out that way . . . just how we planned—and wrapped up in such a way that it's simple to identify all the goodness inside.

That's not really the way this year has gone.

I remember all the Facebook and Instagram posts I scrolled through 12 months ago from hundreds of people rounding out a good year—a good decade. Many people made resolutions, set goals, or planned trips for 2020. They saw the New Year as a beautiful beginning, a chance to start over with new priorities and a refreshed focus.

Well, the world was in for a strangely wrapped present, one that at times no one would recognize for the gift that it was. One that would often cause tears because it was so different from what had been written on our wish lists. But strangely wrapped gifts can bring unexpected blessings. I don't know that I've ever looked forward to going back to school as much as I do right now. I can't remember a season of life when meeting a friend for a hike gave me such a visceral feeling of joy. I can tell you with confidence that I will not take church for granted anytime soon.

We've heard messages like "God's in control" and "God's working this out for good somehow" over and over. Let's not take these comforting truths for granted as we reflect on this crazy year! They are not an excuse for us to dismiss our problems, but an invitation to confront them head-on, knowing that our infinitely wise heavenly Father hears our prayers, knows our hearts, and has already decided how it all weaves together into his story of time. He's been weaving tricky things together for good for a long time.

When mankind screwed up and brought the curse of sin upon the world, God could have walked away from his creation for good, but he made a promise to deliver us instead. Two thousand years ago he sent the greatest blessing to ever grace this earth in the most unexpected packaging possible. Jesus, God's own Son, was born of a virgin and placed on top of a donkey's lunch.

This Christmas, whatever it looks like for you, we at MLC pray that God would help you to fix your eyes on the Christ Child who embodies hope. May his birth be proof that our God truly does have a plan that surpasses our understanding. Even more, may you be reminded that every battle has already been won through the perfect Lamb that was placed in a manger and on a cross for you and me.

God's blessings to you this Christmas!

