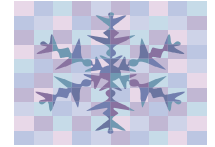


## My View from the Hill



### The Devotion of the Magi

A few days after Christmas, a mother was busy cleaning up the den, taking down the Christmas tree. Her son came in and said, "Mama, what are you doing?" She said, "I'm putting our Christmas stuff away." He asked, "Why?" She answered, "So everything will be back to normal." He responded, "Mama, I don't want things to get back to normal."

As the new year begins, we think that Christmas is over. What if after Christmas we could keep life from getting back to normal again? What if we could take it with us into the good days ahead in 2010? I want to suggest that we can do just that. The example of the Magi, or three wise men, and their devotion can instruct us.

**1) Keep Christ as the object of your devotion.** We see in those three men who came from so far away that Jesus was the object of their devotion. They came all that way for one reason and one reason only, to worship him.

Perhaps this year when you put all the decorations away, choose one to leave behind to remind yourself

that Christmas is not just one day, or one season. That ornament can be a reminder that Jesus is with us every day of the year.

**2) Give to Him the best that you have.** The Magi presented to Jesus their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh – expensive treasures in that day. Each of those men brought the best they had. It was a sign of their dedication to Christ.

Could we dare to do what these men did? Would you dare to give to Christ, the King, the best thing you have, the best part of you? And if you did, what might that look like?

**3) Let your life take a new direction.** Now we come to my favorite verse in this story: "And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way" (Matthew 2:12).

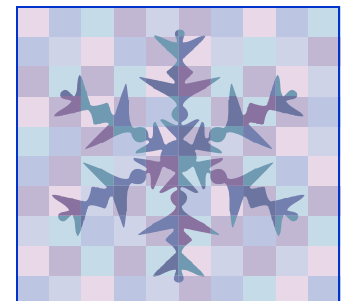
Perhaps this is the real test of Christmas. Have we found something that will carry us into the new year by another way, a way that requires new depths of courage and resolve?

A man noticed his young son seemed restless, so he found a picture of the world in a magazine and cut it into small pieces. He placed the pieces on the floor, with some tape, and told the

boy to see if he could put the world back together, as a puzzle. Soon the boy came to him with the world all taped back together. The man said, "How did you do this so quickly?" The boy replied, "It was really easy. There was a picture of Jesus on the side of the page. I just put that picture together right and it made the whole world right."

If we keep our eyes on Jesus, it will make our lives right and as more of us do this, it makes the world right. In following Him, we return by another way. It is the way of devotion to Christ.

Blessings, *Pastor Allynn*



## ***Before you throw your Christmas cards away....***

St. Jude's Ranch for Children in Nevada has a mission of St. Jude's is to provide healing and nurture to abused, abandoned and neglected children.

One of their fund raising programs uses recycled greeting cards. The children at the Ranch make new cards by removing the front and attaching a new back.

Cards are then sold in packets of ten for \$10. The benefits are two fold:

customers receive "green" holiday cards for payment for their work and learn the benefit

The Program accepts all greeting cards -Christmas, birthday, thank you, etc.

To donate cards, send them before February 2

Children, Recycled Card Program, 100 St. Jude

For more information, their website is [stjudgesranch.org](http://stjudgesranch.org).



## **“Colossians: Against the Tide”**

Pastor David Blackburn will be leading a men's course on Colossians, which teaches principles for living a Christian life in the midst of a non-Christian culture. Sometimes this calls for us to stand against the tide of public opinion or popular trends. This 9 session course addresses such issues as:

- ◁ how to please God
- ◁ develop a stable walk with God
- ◁ think like a Christian
- ◁ practice spiritual self-defense
- ◁ live with a focus
- ◁ become a prayer warrior

Class begins January 14<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm at Bethany. Classes will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month. Cost is \$7.



*My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,*

*Once more I am humbled by your love and generosity. Thank you so much for the Christmas love gift and for your many kind words of encouragement. I am grateful for the privilege of serving as your pastor. I promise you I will continue to rely on the power of God and seek His will for all that we will do together at Bethany in 2010. May He receive all the glory!*

*In Christ, with love, Pastor Allynn*



*Again this year our Bethany family overwhelmed us with generosity. Thank you for all the cards and gifts you gave us. Words cannot begin to express our gratitude and feelings for our friends here. We look forward to serving you in a prosperous and wonderful new year for Bethany!*

*Pat & Lindell*



## Community Prayer Luncheon

**As Jesus prayed that “all might be one,” so** our community and in our world. Join Pastor Allynn at a Community Prayer Luncheon celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, sponsored by the Columbia Clergy Association.

**The luncheon and Bible study will be held Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 11:45 –1:00 pm, at Christ Community Church. Join Christians from the whole community as we come together for table fellowship and a time the lunch is \$5 and tickets are available in the Office.**