

Theological Musings from Dave's Laptop

December 19, 2017

For many years, now, I've been a fan of the **Advent Conspiracy**, a counter-cultural approach to CHRISTmas. AC provides many resources for alternative, Christ-like celebrations of Advent, and you can find them all at: <http://www.adventconspiracy.org/resources-2/> It's worth your while to check it out. "Control-click" on the link or on this graphic to be taken to AC Resources.



Here's a CHRISTmas letter from AC:

LOVE ALL: *The SIX Gifts JESUS asked for*

In Matthew 25, Jesus gives us something like a Christmas gift wish list.

He said that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, that we do unto him. Then he listed six specific gifts, saying that when we offer them to those in need, we do the same for him:

1. **Food for the hungry.**
2. **A drink for the thirsty.**
3. **Hospitality for strangers.**
4. **Clothes for those without.**
5. **Care for the sick.**
6. **Company for the prisoner.**

These are the gifts Jesus asked for, and today more than ever before in history we have all the resources and tools we need to solve address these problems.

We can direct our Christmas resources toward the mall, or toward the manger.

- With a fraction of America's holiday retail spending alone the Body of Christ could take on the world water crisis, and offer Jesus a drink everywhere in the world.
- With a fraction of the time we spend consumed by the rat race Christmas has become, we could offer presence to brothers and sisters in need of love, and in loving all, love Jesus.

***As long as we're going to celebrate Christmas,
we may as well give at least ONE gift to the birthday boy!***

LOVE ALL is a simple commitment to commit some portion of the money you save by spending less to the kind of birthday gift Jesus asked for—something for the thirsty, hungry, imprisoned, sick, and lonely.

Christmas was meant to change the world—and that change is happening. Already we've seen Advent Conspirators provide water for entire regions in water-scarce parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. We've seen countless local ministries served, captives freed, hungry fed, presence offered to others, and to Jesus.

LOVE ALL this Christmas, and celebrate your gift to Jesus with the #AdventConspiracy community online.

The Body of Christ born in that manger is *still* changing the world.

Be a part of it.

LOVE ALL this Christmas.

Conspiratorially Yours,

AC

Here's another short list that may spark your creativity:

What Gift Will Please Him?

1. **Your Heart:** Before you can be a part of “the Resistance,” you have to be born again into it. If you're unsure about your salvation, there's no time like CHRISTmas to accept the King. Let's talk.
2. **Courage in the Face of Temptation:** Satan “knows where your goat is tied”; but God promises to help us through every temptation. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13, get an accountability partner, and Let's Roll.
3. **An Intelligent, Articulate, Sharable Faith:** Each of us is called to be ready to tell others what—and Whom—we have found in Jesus (1 Peter 3:15). Many resources are available for developing confidence in this effort, and several are available in the church office. You might also check out https://smile.amazon.com/gp/product/1434799808/ref=ox_sc_act_title_1?smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER&psc=1
4. **Be a Player on the Field, not a Spectator in the Stands:** Every follower of Jesus, every member of the Resistance, has a part to play. **DO SOMETHING.**
5. **Surrender your Frenetic Busyness:** God is seldom heard in earthquake, wind, fire, or frenzied activity. If we want to grow closer to God, we do have to “be players,” but we also have to create space in which to rest deeply in God.
6. **Ask God to Change YOU instead of Someone Else:** This is a hard one, but it brings huge rewards.
7. **Learn to trust God with the Frailty of your Physical Life:** While we will, if we are in Christ, one day have transcendent and eternal bodies, the bodies we have today must be given up in God's time. Making peace with finitude and death frees us to fully live.
8. **Realize that the Legacy that Really Matters is the Faith of the Next Generation:** No one ever says on their deathbeds, “I wish I'd spent more time at the office.” The time to build faith and character into your children and grandchildren is NOW (and now you have some resources 😊).

Joy-full CHRISTmas to you!

Dave

