

## *Saturday "Sermon"*

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### Your Disk is Full

Sometimes when I'm trying to copy computer files to a disk I get a message something like, "Your disk is full. Nothing more can be added. Please delete files or insert a different disk." And sometimes, in the hurry and scurry of December, I imagine that I sense the message, "Your life is full. Nothing more can be added. Please delete activities or get a different life."

Have you ever felt like that? Can you sense any such feeling now that we've officially entered the pre-Christmas shopping season? In less than three weeks, Christmas 2006 will be behind us. What will these days be like for you and for your family?

No matter what the ads for Christmas sales persuasively proclaim, the truth of the matter is that life isn't really about swapping a lot of stuff. Life is about relationships.

The Bible affirms the central importance of relationships, and encourages us to "stop just saying that we love each other, and show our love by our actions" (1 John 3:18). Rick Warren wrote that "The best use of life is LOVE. The best expression of love is TIME. And the best time to love is NOW."

Now giving time is costly. We can do many things to get more money, but it is not possible to get any more time. And because none of us knows how many days have been allotted to us, the psalmist prayed, "*LORD, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered, and that my life is fleeing away*" (Psalm 39:4).

With this in mind, and since Christmas is supposed to be a celebration of Jesus' birth, here's a four-step proposal for enjoying a different kind of Christmas this year:

1. Give generously to causes that Jesus cares about. For example, I encourage you to give no less to Christian causes this month than you will spend on the person on whom you spend the most money for Christmas. Give to your denomination's ministries. Give to the Haven of Rest. Give to Bristol Faith in Action. Give to the Salvation Army. *Whose birthday is it, anyway?*
2. Do your primary giving to family members on their birthdays, not at Christmas.
3. Ask yourself whether your Christmas customs and behaviors are heart-felt or custom-driven, and then dump the things that are not genuine expressions of love.
4. Plan significant amounts of non-stressed, special time with people you love this month. To paraphrase Jesus, "Christmas was made to benefit people, and not people to benefit Christmas" (Mark 2:27).

This is going to be a GREAT Christmas!

