



# THE PATRIOT POST

## The Spirit of Shepherds

By Seth Johnson

December brings with it many things: snow, lights, Christmas trees, presents, time with family and friends, and time off from school. The TV has countless ads that come in unending waves. Radios are tuned in and turned up to hear the music. Stores are packed with busy shoppers wandering about to buy gifts. Among all of this, there is one phrase that continually comes up-- the Christmas spirit. According to various ads, you can get into that spirit by shopping at certain stores or by watching certain television networks. What exactly is the spirit of Christmas though? Is it just happiness that we've flipped the calendar to the last month or that Christmas and vacation are close at hand? Well, as Christians, we should know and have true Christmas spirit.

It's found throughout the Bible, just not in those precise words. In Luke 2 and verse 20, when "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen" they demonstrated this spirit. The wise men from the east also understood this spirit when they were "come to worship him." Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, proclaimed, "blessed is the fruit of thy womb" when she heard the news of Mary's pregnancy. Mary herself said, "my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." All these people were there at the first Christmas. All these people rejoiced and praised God for the birth of Jesus, their awaited Savior. That is the true spirit of Christmas. Dan Schaeffer defines it as "a deep-seated joy in knowing that the story of the Christ Child is gloriously true!" This knowledge will bring, undoubtedly, a glorifying of our magnificent God. I think the earlier Bible passages show this.

However, this spirit shouldn't be defined by and relegated to Christmas. It should be the Christian spirit throughout the year as we should worship the "I AM" for His love. Love enough to become flesh and die. Yes, we have set apart December 25 for that purpose specifically, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't have this spirit apart from Christmas as well. To do this would be pure folly.

So, as we prepare for Christmas, let's have that true Christmas spirit. Not the one that many secular stores portray for sales, but the one dealing with the only true reason for this glorious season. The one the shepherds and wise men had. Let's gather around lighted trees giving gifts, loving all, and praising the Prince of Peace. Then, let's keep that spirit all year long. Imagine what great things for God you can accomplish by His grace in 2017! MERRY CHRISTMAS!

### Survey Says...

Christmas time is here. Men are sent to hazard life and limb for the purpose of hanging colorful lights. Women walk the fine line between delicious and disaster in the kitchen, hoping not to set off the fire alarm. Children pray for snow days or snow in general. It's a busy time; it's a wonderful time. It's a time we look forward to for many things, one being the annual Christmas traditions unique to each and every home. How different are we in these traditions, though? We sent out some *Post* members to find out this very question that you've been asking, and the results are in.

What is on top of your tree?

Star- 51%

Angel -26%

Other- 23%

Is Christmas your favorite holiday?

Yes- 92%

No-8%

Do you believe in Santa Claus?

Yes- 49%

No-51%

Do you read the Christmas story?

Yes-61%

No-39%

**11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

**12** And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

### Luke 2:11-12

Well, it's that time of year again! The time of giving and family. But what deeper meaning does Christmas have. Is it only about getting gifts and eating nice dinners with family? Here's a hint; it's not! We wouldn't even be celebrating this sacred holiday if it weren't for Jesus being born. Sure, presents and family are fun, but as we celebrate this Christmas season, let's remember Jesus and thank him for his life, love, and ministry to all!

## Have A Merry Christmas!

### Be Our Friends!

