



Links Players

An Imagined Christmas Fades

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11).

I still remember the Christmas. Yes, the one I received what I did not ask for and did not expect. Christmas was always filled with expectation. Wanted toys graced our tinsel tree. I never remember not receiving a Santa wish. As a child, I learned Christmas was gain for my want.

But on this morning, I got the best present I could receive and better, did not expect. Under our every-year cedar tree, cut from Uncle Allen's farm, gleamed the most beautiful set of Wilson Staff, Dynapower irons.

The 2-iron through pitching wedge set of button-back irons was complete with "Adjustaback" weights and drill-through hosels. These were my first full-length men's golf clubs. I was thirteen. The joy was inexpressible.

Christmas, as I imagined, lingered, and life, by measure, would injure me to a deeper and truer meaning to the season. If Christmas means anything, it means God intended never to leave me alone. God has a certain way through life's pain, a sort of heavenly gravity, that moves his children from pagan myth to unrestrained truth, the star in our silent night.

I am complicit in perpetuating those imagined Christmases. The faint reminders surround me. They are but remembrances of childhood dreams. Here, my shallow grief resides. But in my deeper grief, in my distance and absence from God, my soul awakened to a peace I had yet to understand.

Solomon reminds us, "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose..." and since there are many things, there are many seasons. Through all my seasons, all my Christmases, my misunderstanding slowly died as God weaved his purpose within me in unexpected ways. When those childhood dreams no longer held sway, and eternity filled the void, I understood. Peace and pain share a strange, familiar home.

God's inexpressible peace returns our hearts to the manger. Like the Magi and the shepherds, we, too, say, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see the Christ child." From fields and deserts, we journey toward that silent night, past tinsel lights and neon embers' glow, past wishes and wants, and neatly tied bows. And when by hurried rush our imagined Christmas fades, and last our hearts are still, into a manger's hope we gaze upon God's holy will.

On that silent night, Jesus came not for a room in an inn or an earthly throne but for our hearts. Wise men gave him gold, frankincense, and myrrh. He gave hope. A star lit the way. He enlightened with

truth. On this silent night, an everlasting light was born, Immanuel. And into darkness, God's light did so shine upon men, in believing, our salvation was assured.

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

And God is born to us in every season, in every time.

Merry Christmas!

Prayer: May God's truth, blessings, love, and peace reign in your heart forever.

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Deck Cheatham

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