

## Post-Christmas Blahs?

The brightly colored wrapping paper – once adorning packages of mystery and anticipated delights but now torn and crumpled – is discarded into a waste basket or trash disposal. In most households, a glittering tree, standing empty and alone, no longer the center of attention, will soon be put away. Just a few hours ago, December 25, 2005, was eagerly anticipated and celebrated. We were in an emotional crescendo. Now, it is Christmas past.

Do you have the post-Christmas blahs? For many, the roller coaster ride is headed down, and the mood swing is apparent. How do we check it? Can we keep the feel-good attitude of Christmas? Yes. Here are a couple of suggestions:

- Continue to focus outwardly. While Christmas is a time when we receive gifts, the best part of the observance is what we can do for others. After all, it is known as the season of giving. And giving should never be reserved exclusively for the rituals of December. A good friend of mine, the late Rev. M.E. Littlefield, was known as the pastor of the city of Cleveland because of his commitment to the poor and struggling of our town. Each year, dating back to the 1940s, he secured funds and gifts for a Christmas party for needy children, providing toys and clothing – a tradition now carried on by his grandson, Steve Hartline. The attendance at the annual party ranged from 500 to 1,000. It was always – and is again this year – very successful. The Rev. Littlefield often said, however, that it's great what the community helped him do at Christmas, "but what about December 26, or May 15, or August 20? The needs don't pass away with December 25." Fortunately, the associates of Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home don't have to look very far to find people who can use a touch of care and concern in their lives. They demonstrate a giving nature personally and professionally every day.
- Approach 2006 with enthusiasm, thankfulness and preparation. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Christmas and New Year's Day come one week apart. We don't have much time to linger with thoughts of that mountain-top experience before we realize there are opportunities before us. As soon as Christmas is over, we should begin considering where we may be with respect to personal and professional goals. Are we making progress in what we want to achieve? More importantly, are we fulfilling the plan God has for us? It is one thing to rejoice at the birth of His Son, and we should, but it is quite another to allow Him to live within us, and His love to flow out of us. So now is a good time to have a spiritual examination. Such

(more)

a tune-up – occasioned by prayer, meditation and Bible study – makes the coming year both interesting and exciting.

Post-Christmas blahs? Looking back is not nearly as rewarding as looking ahead.

--Beecher Hunter