

Apocalyptic Xmas Gift Giving

"Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts..." -- Proverbs 19:6

Here we go again: it's time for more elbow-pushing, Platinum-card-wielding - power-shopping! The birthday of Baby Jesus is upon us (and we know what that means to all prospective gift givers, don't we?)...

And it's not as if picking the perfect gift has ever been easy ...even when shopping for one's own children. Hey, just look at the legacy of *The Wise Men*. One King was crass enough to give Gold (the Biblical equivalent of a "check" ...a "gift certificate" from *Bethlehem*)! The other two equally unimaginative (gift-giving) Kings showed up with *Frankincense* and *Myrrh* (and, hey ladies -- doesn't that prove once again, that when men have no idea what you want, they are likely to give you a fragrance?). At least Baby Jesus didn't ever have to feign delight while unwrapping the packages (like the lingerie that YOU are likely to receive; 2 sizes too small or too large and in odious shades of red).

This year, the shopper is under more pressure than ever to come back from "Neimans" with something that will please even one's most discriminating friends (and truly, if they weren't discriminating, would they be your friends?). Some say that we are living in the *End Times*, and if true this will probably be our last Christmas -- so one had best choose, well... WISELY (because it might be your last shot)! Thus, while we carefully unpack heirloom Christmas ornaments to decorate a perfect, symmetrical, green-colored (albeit, plastic) Douglas Fir (and such traditions really ought to be upheld) -- the Almighty may be sending a great ball of fire towards our lovely blue planet. Upon arrival, it would vaporize every bird, fish, animal, bug, and Christmas tree -- as well as the good, the bad, the ugly -- every citizen, and every foreigner (who probably doesn't carry a green-card) thus (and indiscriminately), ALL who have not fawned over Him (of late).

It would be a gigantic holiday bonfire where everyone would have all of their "*Chestnuts roasting on an open fire...*"

Apocalyptic Christmas shopping carries the added burden of knowing that each gift you give may well be your last chance to make a good impression with the Power on High. Furthermore, returns and exchanges will be difficult once the Almighty has turned every Department Store into a smoldering ruin. But there is a bright side (you knew I was going to lighten-up sooner or later) -- it's not as if they can forward your *American Express* bill to you in *God's Glory*, once you have been tapped on the shoulder to "ascend" (...*Saint Peter, don't you call me 'cause I cain't go, I owe my soul to the company store!*) leaving behind the less worthy (like those who confused some cookbook with another book -- where "*Chicken Soup*" was in the title. It was something for star chefs like, Julia Child or Emeril -- an item that they might wish to receive in their stocking "...*Hung by the chimney with care, in hope that Saint Nicolas soon will be there.*").

To help prepare you for the inevitable Apocalypse (your lengthy stay in the ever-so-accommodating hereafter, i.e." *Glory* "), I have a very special Christmas present for all of my loyal readers (read on if your dare). While my personal assistant, Ms. "Maria-Magdalena Macarena" recently returned from Shopping Heaven -- but still alive (having survived an unpaid near-death experience known as, "*insufficient funds*", or so sayeth her Banker), I will never-the-less wish all of you an event-filled, joyous, wonderful and safe Christmas -- SAFE from Gift Certificates and hurtling asteroids (both, with the destruction of "Holiday Traditions" on their minds). Heck have fun, enjoy all the Cheer -- at least, until I see (some of) you in Heaven -- or elsewhere. It's all over (if not now, later is just as certain)...

And be close to Jesus, for one or two of his less devoted servants are probably out binge-shopping right now (ruining your credit). A last word of advice (to take or leave) -- you can spare yourself from "Apocalyptic Christmas Gift Giving" this year by giving everyone "A Gift of LOVE" (send no money).

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"One is without good excuse if one does not love with all one's heart. A sincere gift of love surpasses all numbers and cannot be counted. Such love is the fruit of the Spirit's bounty." --RCK

Merry Christmas 2003!