



Sunday 27th November 2016

David Ratten (One Community Church)

The Commercialisation of Christmas

Today (adjusting for inflation) we spend three times more at Christmas than was spent in the 1960s. There is pressure to buy the right gift at the right price for the right person.

1. Do you find it difficult at Christmas to keep your mind and heart focussed on the Christ child? Dave talked of Christmas being not only the 'silly season' but also the 'Advent' – the arrival of a notable person or thing.
2. How can you celebrate 'Advent' during the silly season? What can you do to remind yourself or your family that Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ? Dave reminded us that as Christians we can stand up against what Christmas has become (spending, commercialised, pressure) and stand up for what Christmas should be (the celebration of Advent – the birth of our Saviour).

Give More

This doesn't mean spending more and giving more expensive gifts. Read 2 Corinthians 9:15, Romans 8:31-32, John 3:16, Isaiah 9:6

3. Discuss what the above verses remind us about gifts and giving. Dave suggested we can give more by..

A. Giving more presence and less presents

4. Are there ways you and your family can spend less on gifts, while spending more time together?
5. Do you have fond family memories of Christmas – what is it about these memories that stand out? The presence or the presents?



B. Giving more hope and less hoopla

Christmas has become a lot of hoopla – unnecessary fuss surrounding something. Gifts are bought and given, and then given away as unwanted ‘re-gifted’ gifts. God sent his son Jesus as a gift of hope. Read Matthew 1:20-21

6. What does the above verse say to us about hope? (this verse doesn't actually use the word hope – but where do you see hope in this verse?)
7. How can you give more hope? And less hoopla? Dave suggested a few ways in which we can give more hope.
 - NewHope's 65th anniversary Thanksgiving offering towards the building of a community kitchen.
 - A charity gift, such as Baptist World Aid's 'Little Book of Big Gift Ideas'. Look out for the TEAR Useful Gift stall next Sunday morning.
 - Ethical Christmas Night Market, at One Community Church, December 13th from 5pm.

Perhaps you can think of a creative way as a small group to give more presence and less presents, or give more hope and less hoopla? You might like to buy a goat or a chicken for your group; you could commit to supporting a mission partner who is giving hope in a distant place; or host a Christmas meal and invite those who have no family presence.