

The Love Net

DECEMBER 2011

THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE NOT THINGS

I took the title of this Christmas article from our church sign. I love the little cute sayings that someone puts on the sign near the entrance to our church and SAV-A-CHILD'S office.

This one really grabbed my attention because it is that time of year again. We just went through Black Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I guess that's what you call the weekend after Thanksgiving. That's the weekend with great sale prices on *things*. I don't blame people for wanting to save money, but the weekend gets a little crazy. People camp out overnight to be first in line, they push and shove their way into stores and one woman even pepper sprayed others to be sure she got an X Box. The weekend was a shopping and buying orgy because *things* became all important to the multitude of shoppers.

This year is reported to be "better" than last year—better being measured by more spending by the American public. That means more *things* were purchased this year as opposed to *things* purchased last year.

People Are Most Important

"The best things in life are not things." If things are not the best what or who is? The sign does not give us the answer so I'm coming up with my own.



*The answer is obviously **people** and **relationships** with each other in the family and in the church body.*

My own immediate family is small—just my two sons, Paul and Mark and me! We love each other dearly and I'm proud of both of my boys!

Paul is Home from Afghanistan

My older son, Paul, just got back from Afghanistan this week. He answered a call up for reservists. He is a Commander in the USNR, and served a year in the war zone as an intelligence officer.

There was much prayer that went up for him, and I want to "publicly" thank everyone who upheld him in prayer.

It is impossible to express my feelings upon having him by my side as we ate dinner together last night. I'm fully aware that many parents will never share dinner or any celebrations with their sons or daughters

because they did not come back alive from the war zone. My parent-heart goes out to these folks.

Anyone who has lost a loved one knows that all the *things* in the world

Christmas Is A Time To Celebrate Relationships

As we approach the celebration of our Lord's birth in a manger in Bethlehem, there is a mad dash for *things*. I may sound like Ebenezer Scrooge in Dickens' *Christmas Carol* but I simply want to lift up the fact that the best *things* in life are not things, but **people** and **loving relationships** with others both in our immediate family and those who are related through Jesus Christ and His Church Family.



I'm rejoicing over my son's safe return. That is all the CHRISTMAS gift I need or want. I encourage each of you reading this to think of those *persons and loving relationships with which God has gifted you, and let things take their proper place.*

A Time to Give

God's gift of His Son is an example to us. We should also be givers. Let's look for those who have real needs and give to supply those needs. The "spirit" of Christmas is to give to others who cannot possibly give back to you.

There are many folks who have *things but they are alone and need love and attention. The spirit of Christmas giving is more than gifting others with things—even necessary things—but giving of ourselves, our time, and energy to demonstrate true love.*

Bing Crosby once sang "It's not the things you do at Christmastime, but the Christmas things you do all year through"

Make a note of an elderly person, one sick and homebound or a child and any lonely person who needs you and your love this time of the year..

Hurts Surface During the Holidays

Pains from the past intensify during the holiday. Some folks raised in unhealthy families have horrible memories of the holidays. When everyone else was rejoicing during the holidays, they were abused or neglected and their memories of the holiday season is more like re-runs of a horror movie playing over a in their hearts and minds

(Please return this completed form with your tax deductible gift)

YES! Arville, I (we) want a share in the ministry to children, youth and their families.

_____ Enclosed is my gift of _____

_____ I will give \$ _____ per month.

_____ You may be assured of my (our) prayers for SAV-A-CHILD.
(Please print any of your prayer requests on the back.)

_____ Please remove me from your mailing list

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Numbers: Home () _____ Work () _____



Email:

Ask the Lord to make you sensitive to those who are hurting and give them a gift of your time and love during this wonderful Season celebrating our Lord's birth.

Christmas Candlelight Service.

Once again our service will be at Lakeview Christian Fellowship, 8300 Merrill Road, Jacksonville, Florida Dec. 24 beginning at 7 p.m. and lasting for one hour. We welcome the entire family. Child care will not be provided but the kids are urged to worship with their parents.

The program will include some of your favorite Christmas carols led by Pastor Roger Taylor and the Lakeview Praise Team.

Your attendance at this service will brighten and enrich your celebration of our Lord's Birth!!! As a pastor, counselor, and father in the faith there's nothing more beautiful, or spirit-filled than seeing you at our annual candlelight service!!! On behalf of my staff, the board members and the community we serve, I wish you the most Merry Christmas ever. Don't ever forget The reason for The season.