



*Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church
Cumming, Georgia
Established 1881*

December 2008 Pastor Randy Richards *Sunday School 9:45 ~ Worship Service 11:00*

A Note From Our Pastor:

Yuletide Greetings! It's hard for me to believe that Christmas is already practically here again. Now that I've turned 40 and have truly topped the hill, I realize that the older I get, the faster time seems to swiftly pass by. I have many fond memories of Christmases past. It was truly a special time of the year for me as a child. I want my children to have the same kind of fond memories of Christmas that I have. Yes, I enjoyed and anxiously waited to see what I might find under and around the tree on Christmas day, but somehow Christmas was more than just "getting what I had asked for". It was about time being spent with family and sharing our love and God's love with each other. Somehow, over the years we have allowed our society to over commercialize Christmas so much that they have "kidnapped" or "hijacked" the whole meaning of Christmas. We need to take Christmas back! Someone once said that Christmas is often a time when people buy presents with money they don't have for people they hardly know who will then take the gifts back for a cash refund. We have lived to a time, when the overwhelming desire to get "door buster specials" on "Black Friday", ends up with someone being trampled to death by basically a herd of people who are so focused on saving a few dollars on the latest new item on sale that the value of human life has been almost diminished.

So, what do you want for Christmas? This question is probably the most asked question this time of the year. When asked, we start trying to think of something we want or don't have. We get caught up in what we don't have and try to come up with things that we might need or want. If we have to come up with things we don't really need so that people will know or have something to get us, then is this type of giving really what Christmas is truly all about? We forget that most people we buy for already have many things, but we buy more simply because it's Christmas. Don't get me wrong, I'm not against the giving of gifts, but things have definitely gotten out of hand, and I'm guilty too. Why not bring back the real reason for the season? At Christmas we celebrate a gift of immeasurable worth. In giving us Jesus, God has given us everything: life and hope, salvation and deliverance, joy and peace. Our response can and should only be to give in return — to God and to one another and to strive to make this world a better place. A world filled with love, peace, and tranquility. Instead of wracking our brains to think of something that we don't need, let's find out what others *really do* need. Often it only takes very little to make a big difference in other peoples' lives and even the world. Let's try to resist the tide of commercialism and "take back Christmas!" The real reason to celebrate on December 25 or any day of the year, is the fact that "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Also, Jesus came into the world to save sinners and while on the cross, he accomplished the redemption of his people. This is why all Christians can have a Merry Christmas regardless of their circumstances or situations. May God bless each of you and Merry Christmas!

In Christ's Love,
Randy