

Patron Saint of Children:



The Real Spirit of Christmas 'IS':

- Identifying Somebody in (22)_____.
- Identifying how you can (23)_____ that need.
- (24)_____ something of yours to see somebody else's need met.
- Expecting (25)_____ in return.
- Meeting those needs on behalf of (26)_____.

INTRIGUING THOUGHT: If every American Christian spent as much money on the poor, the widows, and the orphans as they do on family and friends at Christmas would the world ever try to remove/ ignore this holiday?

NEXT WEEK: "When Santa Got Fat – When the Spirit of Christmas Got Lost"

Additional Notes: _____



Today's message will be available online at www.ffc.org, both to view as an archived message and to download from a podcast. To purchase today's message on CD for \$5 or on DVD for \$10, please stop by the First Family Inspiration Book and Gift Store located in the Grand Foyer.

Answers: 1-original 2-Reformation 3-Santa Claus 4-monastery 5-ministry 6-Provider 7-Bishop 8-Defender 9-truth 10-Children's 11-died 12-saint 13-2500 14-Seamen 15-Crusades 16-Vikings 17-6th 18-special 19-poor 20-orphans 21-children 22-Need 23-meet 24-Sacrificing 25-nothing 26-Jesus Christ

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"Why I Believe In Santa Claus: The Spirit of Christmas Lives On!"
Sunday Evening, November 22nd, 2009

Message #1: "The Real Santa Claus: The Real Spirit of Christmas?"

James 1:27/Acts 4:33-37

Pastor Christian Newsome

IMPORTANT QUESTION: What has happened to the Spirit of Christmas and the Christian church?

The rejection of Santa Claus has led to the rejection of Saint Nicholas – and with it the (1)_____ spirit of Christmas.

Key Verses of our Christmas Series:

James 1:27—"Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

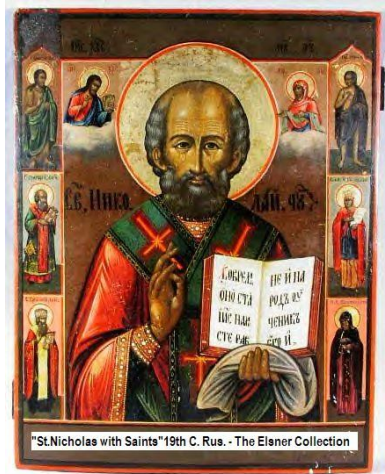
Acts 4:33-37—"And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ³⁵ and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

³⁶ And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, ³⁷ having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

THE FALL OF SAINT NICHOLAS:

- The Protestant (2)_____ – 1517 Martin Luther's 95 Thesis.

- The Catholic Church’s Reaction to (3) _____
– 1969 Vatican Ruling.



TONIGHT: Who Was Saint Nicholas?

Glimpse #1: The Early Life of Saint Nicholas:

- Nicholas was born in the city of Patara, in modern day Turkey.
- Nicholas was raised by his uncle in a (4) _____ after the death of his parents.
- While at the monastery Nicholas was called to the (5) _____.

Glimpse #2: The Ministry of Saint Nicholas:
Saint Nicholas’ Ministry is known for three things:

- (6) _____:
 - Nicholas became the (7) _____ of Myra – one of the most esteemed positions a minister could serve in.

- (8) _____:
 - Nicholas was willing to lose his life for the (9) _____ of the gospel.

3. (10) _____ Minister:

Glimpse #3: The Legacy of Saint Nicholas:

Tradition states that Nicholas (11) _____ on December 6th, 343 A.D.

Nicholas became a “people’s (12) _____”, though he was not officially canonized by the Catholic Church.

By the end of the 15th Century there were (13) _____ churches, chapels, monasteries, hospitals, schools, and works of art were devoted to Saint Nicholas.

The Legacy of Saint Nicholas had two important “marketing opportunities”:

1. Merchant (14) _____ traveling the world.
2. The (15) _____ and the Crusaders.

One specific group of sailors adopted Saint Nicholas as their own: the (16) _____.

The day of his death, December (17) _____, is now remembered as “Saint Nicholas Day”.

Glimpse #4: The Legend of Saint Nicholas:

The “legend” of Saint Nicholas revolved around his (18) _____ acts and his special day.

The gifts of Saint Nicholas Day were reserved for three groups of people:

- The (19) _____.
- The (20) _____.
- The (21) _____.