Pearl: The true Spirit of Christmas which was embodied in the Messiah Jesus and which lives on.

Function: To help worshippers to catch the Holy Spirit of Christmas and to keep it for all time.

Who has the “Christmas spirit” today?

1. Weeks before the beginning of Advent those who have the most to profit from Christmas began putting it before us.
2. The wheels of this big holiday in our land are rolling right along right now with great steam.
   a. So have you caught the Christmas spirit?
3. The songs are being sung. The trees are being lit. Towns are gathering together; cheer is in the air; kids are performing pageants; business is booming; decorations are being placed; concerts are ready to go.
   a. Have you caught the Christmas spirit?
4. Maybe the true “Christmas Spirit” is not actually so much found within all of these things.

God help us all to catch the true Holy Spirit of Christmas this year!

No king living during the life of Isaiah deserved such acclaim so it is surmised that this prophecy was about someone to come in the future.

1. A leader was foretold who would possess this profound Spirit of God.
2. This one would sprout as a shoot “from the stump of Jesse” (Isa. 11: 1).
   From a barren wasteland and wilderness will come this one who will judge in righteousness and equity. This one will eventually bring about a peace and an age which has yet not been seen.
3. This “shoot from the stump of Jesse” is widely believed to be the Christ-child born to Mary whose lineage can be traced all the way back to Jesse, the father of King David.

What exactly did it say about the “shoot from the stump of Jesse?” What would be outstanding about this leader who would emerge at some undetermined time eventually?

1. Upon this one will rest the Holy Spirit which is the true spirit of Christmas.
   a. Isaiah foretells of this Messiah: “The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11: 2).
2. Our Lord Jesus did embody this Spirit of the Lord in his being and this spirit only increased in him throughout his life which lead to his fulfilling his unique mission from the Lord God.
3. So let us go back to my earlier question: Do we have the true “spirit” of Christmas this year?
   a. Maybe the Spirit of Christmas is really, truly all about something much more!
   b. The spirit of Christmas is about the Holy Spirit who was embodied in the Christ child who would establish his kingdom through his life, death, and resurrection. After ascending to the Father in heaven our Lord dispatched the Holy Spirit to be with us always and forever.
4. So having the “spirit of Christmas” is really about having the Holy Spirit in us. Isaiah’s description of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is found in wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the awe of the Lord.

Catching the “Spirit of Christmas” is catching and possessing these unique gifts from God of wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and reverence for the Lord.
This past week our world lost a great leader who possessed the true Spirit of Christmas—Nelson Mandela, the former President of South Africa.

1. President Obama gave eloquent adulation to him saying that Mr. Mandela now belongs to the ages.
2. President Mandela’s story is a great one. He was imprisoned for close to 30 years. During such imprisonment many would become embittered. Mandela, possessing the true spirit of God possessed the “might” to forgive and to stand for reconciliation. Mandela possessed the wisdom and understanding to change the world. He led his country beyond racism and division to unity and cooperation.
3. This spirit within Nelson Mandela was none other than the Holy Spirit of God.
   a. It is interesting how imprisonment was the “wilderness” out of which some of our greatest world changers emerged—Mandela, Colson, Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., most of the 12 disciples, the Apostle Paul, John the Baptist….
   b. In such wilderness settings the spirit of some does not turn to vengeance and retribution but to forgiveness and reconciliation. This is because such people are empowered by the Holy Spirit of Christmas.

Catching the true Spirit of Christmas is about possessing the power and might to love others even at the expense of self.

1. This month’s Reader’s Digest carries the story of one very brave little first grader Jesse who was bold throughout the shooting a year ago in Newtown, Connecticut. This young boy stayed by the side of his teacher as hell broke loose in that school and when the gunman paused to reload he directed his classmates by shouting to run and keep on running. “A little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11: 6). They made it out to safety but he did not. This brave little boy possessed the Holy Spirit manifestation of power and might in the face of danger and terror.
Six “gifts” of the Holy Spirit are prepared for each and every person to possess and to live by. Catch the Holy Spirit of Christmas by opening these gifts and living by them.

2. **Wisdom** in mind, word, and act.
3. **Understanding** to distinguish between the many spirits of our age.
4. **Counsel** to accept the best advice and to give the same.
5. **Power and might** to bravely operate out of love and goodness.
6. **Knowledge** so that decisions are made based on truth and fact.
7. **Reverent awe for the Lord** so that we will always remember our place in the midst of a Holy God and our place in the grand scheme of things.

Catch the “true Holy Spirit” of Christmas in these Advent and Christmas seasons and live in and out of this Spirit always.