

Topic: All I want for Christmas is..., PS Lorna Khoo

Text: John 1:1, 14

Reality of the world

- Many unexpected things happened this year (for which the consequences are still unclear): Brexit, Trump's win.
- Terrorist threats that appear to be probable rather than just possible- Not a matter of if, but when it will come
- Time does not stop and growing older brings with it new challenges (eg. health). We may feel like we are the person in Thomas Coles' 3rd painting in his *Journey of Life* series – trying to stay afloat amidst turbulent waters and dark clouds in the horizon.

There is a seeming disconnection between the often Disneyland-esque representation of Christmas and the realities of life. How then can the celebration of Christmas speak to us about our fears and anxieties?

What I want for Christmas is new lenses to reframe my perspective of current reality so that it is in sync with God's.

Reality of Christ's birth

Purple Spectacles:

- Purple is the colour of royalty. It is also the colour of Christmas as we celebrate the coming of the King of Glory (John 1:14b) who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.
- Because He has come, we have hope for transformation of our broken world
- Because we have hope, we can do our part to bring about that change
➔ Example: There was a man called Joel Velasco who wanted to teach his children to be more appreciative of the food put before them. To do this, he took photos of slum children and depicted them around the Lord's table in his painting - *Table of Hope*. The painting subsequently led him to be involved in slum ministry. This painting and his other painting, *Table of Love*, envision what can be achieved because Jesus has come.

HE IS KING. ALL WILL BE WELL.

Red Spectacles:

- Red is commonly associated with Christmas due to symbols such as Poinsettia (which means "flower of the holy night")

- But red also represents the blood of Christ, who is the Word made flesh (John 1:1,14a)
- The translation of “Word” in Mandarin is Tao (the same Tao as in Taoism). In Taoism, the Tao is an undefinable and mysterious way that holds everything in the world together.
- Contrast this understanding with our Christian faith: Here, the Tao became flesh and made his dwelling among us.
- He is not a mysterious force but a God who came to us in human form because He loves us. Nothing can separate us from His love (Psa 34:18, Rom 8:28, Rom 8:37) He has gone and will go to the uttermost for us.

HE LOVES ME AND WILL NOT LET ME GO.

Our response:

A Nosegay of Devotion

Background: The term came from Sir Francis Salles, who drew a parallel between our devotion and those who walk in a beautiful garden. Those who have been walking in a beautiful garden do not leave it willingly without taking away with them a few flowers for their scent. Similarly, we should choose a few points from our meditations to remember through the day, and inhale their spiritual perfume.

An example of this is the “Yellow Car Game” – where for example during a long drive, we choose something we deign as “special” to look out for.

Similarly, we can use visual reminders, things we see in our everyday lives to remind us of who God is.

Purple! - HE IS KING. ALL WILL BE WELL.

Red! - HE LOVES ME AND WILL NOT LET ME GO.