

December 25, 1972

This is Christmas day. Christmas is gifts--giving and getting gifts. Remember when Christmas was a matter of ~~giving~~ getting ~~the~~ ^{Christ-} the Christ child as a gift, and all/our presents were a mark of the fact that we had been given the gift of Christ Jesus in history. Then we enabled giving gifts as a mark of our decision to give thanks and to articulate the thanks by giving gifts to other people, to our families.

Then I remember that Christmas became for us rather/~~it became~~ ^{that it was} a matter a discovering that life itself ~~was~~ is a gift, in which we have been given all of life and indeed are getting life day after day after day, ^{and that} Christmas is the time to give thanks for the fact that we have been given ~~that~~ life and that we are in turn ^{our lives} giving/~~life~~ as a result of the gift that Christmas is to us, that ~~if~~ life is to us.

It seemed to me that those are two of the periods in the journey of self-consciousness in which we are now no longer in those eras of consciousness, ~~in~~ eras of the journey of faith, But rather now Christmas is electing the destiny that is ours. No, Christmas is the fact that we are, we are the gift, that we are the gift, the People of God; it is those ~~is~~, it is that body of people ~~that~~ ^{whom} who ~~that~~ ~~that~~ Jesus is the gift to history, that life itself is a ~~given~~ gift, No, that we are the gift to history. The People of God is God's greatest gift to civilization. And so it is that we have been getting ^{allof} /life day after day after day, that we have been--that we are those who give thanks for the fact that life, all of it, is given. All of the life that has been given in history is indeed ours. And thereby the giving of gifts is the giving of our whole ~~life~~ life as the embodiment, as the demonstration of the new life, of human life, of the redeemed life; oh, indeed it is the giving back ~~of~~ of every man

of the sanctified life. It is the giving^{back}/to every man of the ~~a~~ sanctus, the holiness of life itself. It is the embodiment. No longer are we in the era of simply proclamation, though proclamation is our task. We are in the era of demonstration in the twentieth century. We are the sanctified ones; no, we are those who are called to give ^{the} life/sanctus of life, to give life sanctified through history, to demonstrate what it means to live the holy life, ~~what it means to live~~ life in holiness. No arrogance here, no pride, it is simply a matter of giving ~~thanks~~ thanks for our election, electing the election that is ours, to be the sanctification of life, to show forth, to demonstrate, to ~~embody~~ embody the ~~new~~ new life that is the twentieth century resurrection, that is the twentieth century showing forth of sanctification.

So let us be this day the demonstration; let us be that celebration of the fact that we have decided to be the elected ones, decided to be the People of God, decided to be sanctified ones this day. ~~in~~

In Christ our Lord. Amen.

Don Cramer