

The third Sunday of Advent is also known as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means "rejoice". So let us shout with joy! True joy only comes in living as Christ did. Like people from today's we come to John the Baptist and we ask "What should we do?" What should we do to rejoice? What should we do to experience in our daily lives that the God of the universe is so close to us? What Jesus wants us to do? Recently I have received an email that could be from Jesus about Christmas. I think this email tells us what we should do, that the celebration of His birth will bring us a lot of joy and blessings. It goes like this:

If you want to give Me a present in remembrance of My birth here is my wish list. Choose something from it:

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way My birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terribly afraid and lonely this time of year. I know, they tell Me all the time.
2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.
3. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Tell them the story of My birth, and why I came to live with you down here. Hold them in your arms and remind them that I love them.
4. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.
5. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take their own life this season because they feel so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile; it could make the difference.
6. Instead of nit picking about what the retailer in your town calls the holiday, be patient with the people who work there. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. Even if they aren't allowed to wish you a "Merry Christmas" that doesn't keep you from wishing them one. Then stop shopping there on Sunday. If the store didn't make so much money on that day they'd close and let their employees spend the day at home with their families.
7. If you really want to make a difference, support a missionary especially one who takes My love and Good News to those who have never heard My name.
8. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no "Christmas" tree, but neither will they have any presents to give or receive. If you don't know them, buy some food and a few gifts and give them to the Salvation Army or some other charity which believes in Me and they will make the delivery for you.
9. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, when behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in My presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine.

Don't forget; I am God and can take care of Myself. Just love Me and do what I have told you to do. I'll take care of all the rest. Check out the list above and get to work; time is short. I'll help you, but the ball is now in your court. And do have a most blessed Christmas with all those whom you love and remember :

I LOVE YOU,

JESUS