

Christmas Eve Year C 2006 - Luke 2:1-14

I suppose it had to happen sooner or later

- a. *Time* magazine, famous for choosing as its person of the year
 - i. everyone from Mao tse Tung to Bill Gates
- b. Finally chose someone
 - i. who is not a film star, a great scientist or powerful politician.
- c. Or maybe they are. I dunno - are you?
2. That is right. Because *Time* magazine's Person of the Year for 2007- is you.
 - a. It says so, right on the cover of their most recent edition.
3. The strange thing about the article is the picture they chose of you.
 - a. It isn't the one of you at your prom,
 - i. in your lime green tux and your afro;
 - b. Nor that one of you on the beach in the thong
 - i. (you thought you destroyed the negatives of THAT one, didn't you?)
 - c. It isn't one of you with your family,
 - d. nor even the *Olan Mills* portrait you got last fall, dressed up in your Sunday best.
4. No, the picture they chose of YOU - PERSON of the YEAR. . .
 - a. is a blank computer screen.
 - i. Because that is the point of the article; that in this past year the way we use computers changed
 - ii. From Facebook to YouTube from iTunes to SecondLife from wikipedia and MySpace
 - iii. went from using computers to get information from others
 - iv. To using them to share ourselves with others.
 - b. We are everywhere now, and our children are in even more places, communicating and sharing themselves all over the world.
5. And moreover, since the communication is all virtual
 - a. A teenager can be a film star,
 - b. A highschool drop out can be a great scientist
 - c. A guy who delivers newspapers can be a politician
 - d. And a balding middle-aged priest can be . . . well who ever I want to be!
6. And really that is the hidden point behind *Time*'s choice.
 - a. That in the 21st century I can create myself, shape myself make myself whoever I want to be - it is really all about ME!
7. IN the past such power has been
 - a. Something spoken of mostly in fairy tales and myths,
 - b. Something that most of us could only fantasize about,
 - c. Dreaming that we had the power to make ourselves . . .

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- i. whatever we wanted to be.
 - ii. Because then our lives would be better; people would respect us more, want us more, love us more. Then our lives would have meaning.
- 8. In the past such power did exist;
 - a. But only the powerful enjoyed it.
- 9. We hear of one such person tonight; Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor.
 - a. A man born to wealth and power amidst the palaces of Rome
 - b. A man who brought such a period of peace to the empire that he was literally called Prince of Peace by some.
 - c. The world truly revolved around him.
 - i. for some he was like a god,
 - ii. for most he was a god,
 - iii. And even he himself knew that one day he would be, why?
 - iv. Because he could make himself whoever he wanted to be . . . even a god.
- 10. The reason why we remember HIM tonight is because we remember someone else. who, according to Luke, was born during the time Caesar Augustus was emperor.
 - a. Unlike Caesar, Jesus was not born to wealth and power
 - i. His parents were little more than peasants.
 - b. Unlike Caesar He was not born amidst the palaces of Rome
 - i. But in a stable a feeding trough or animals
 - c. Unlike Caesar The birth of this baby was no different than the birth of any one of millions of babies born to the poor each year for all the thousands of years of human history
 - i. And yet according to the Gospel writer Luke
 - (1) Jesus was more important than Caesar,
 - (2) more powerful than Caesar,
 - ii. And was truly God and truly the prince of peace.
- 11. Because unlike Caesar, For Jesus
 - a. When he preached, he taught others
 - b. When he healed, he cared for others
 - c. When he served, he fed, washed healed and cared for others.
 - i. IN a world where a few had power and everyone else wished they did
 - ii. Jesus and in that did not use power to become whoever he wanted to be, but rather became the one we needed him to be;
 - iii. The one who showed us that power is service of others.
- 12. That message, was not very popular back then.
 - a. IN fact, it was part of the reason he was killed.

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13. And truth be told, it is even less popular now,
 - a. despite all the supposed religiosity of the American nation.
 - b. Because when faced with the choice;
 - i. which is more important my happiness or yours,
 - (1) my life or yours,
 - ii. Who is more important me or you, who are you gonna choose?
 - c. We choose ourselves and for most of history we always have;
 - i. because life really is all about US -
 - ii. And why *Time* magazine
 - (1) after so many years, finally chose us too.
14. But the birth of Jesus we celebrate tonight means nothing if it is not about choice;
 - a. -not our choice, but God's.
 - i. God chooses us in Jesus and becomes one of us in him,
 - ii. precisely so we would see that if we want our lives
 - (1) to be more filled with love,
 - (2) if we want our lives to be more meaningful;
 - (3) if we want our lives to be more;
 - b. We do not have to be a famous film star, great scientist or powerful politician - God knows there are precious few of those;
 - i. All we have to do is serve;
 - ii. to see to it that life doesn't revolve around us, but rather around others.
 - c. And in that service, modeled after his
 - i. we will find a power
 - (1) that maybe not make us whatever we want to be;
 - (a) but will do something far more important
 - (2) it will make the world the way God wants it to be.
 - (3) And friends, given everything we have seen in our world over the past year.
 - (a) That is quite a Christmas present.
 - (i) Tell me; when will you choose to open it?