

"LIFE THROUGH THE LENS"



ONE PART OF A SET

Many years ago, while visiting a friend in England, we had the wonderful experience of spending a week on a "long boat" cruising some English canals.

Returning home, we purchased a set of display plates depicting the twelve stages of the "long boat" barging industry during its heyday. We each have our favourite plate, but if we only ever focused on that one, we would miss the benefits, blessings, and memories of the whole.

The season of Christmas is upon us, and how we focus on Christmas will be many and varied. Probably one of the most focused on aspects is a baby, born in a manger. Some will say it was Jesus, the Son of God. Others will see it all as a quaint story, while others will focus on partying, holidays and presents.

Maybe solely focusing on the "Baby in the manger, God's Son ", which I totally believe in, may cause us to see only one part of a much larger "set" with much more to see and experience.

The Baby in the manger is only part of the whole story, part of the "complete set. "Look at Jesus and see the entire story.

Love: When being unjustly killed on a cross, he looked at his executioners and said, "Father forgive them. They don't know what they are doing". (**Luke 23:34**)

Joy: Jesus enjoyed the company of friends and helping them also enjoy life. (**John 2:1-11**)

Peace: Jesus was a man of peace and at peace, so much so he could sleep in a small boat in a storm. He also tells us, "My peace I leave with you: my peace I give to you". (**John 14: 27**)

Patience: Jesus never "gives up" on people. He even forgave Peter for the hurtful act of cursing and saying he didn't know Jesus. (**John 21: 15-17**)

Kindness: Jesus often went out of his way to heal and encourage people. (**Matthew 12:15**)

Faithfulness: He came to make a way for us to be friends with God again. As he hung on the cross, he cried, "It is finished". He had been faithful right to the end. (**John 19:30**)

Gentleness: Jesus stands up for a woman about to be stoned for adultery. He does not condemn her as the crowd wanted but tells her to go and sin no more. (**John 8:6-11**)

Self-control: When confronted by a governmental official and false accusers, Jesus did not fight back but demonstrated self-control. (**Matthew 27:12-14**)

Looking at all the plates, not just one, brings back many beautiful memories.

Maybe this Christmas, let Jesus help you think about all he is and all he offers to those who love and trust him. Try looking at the "whole set", the many blessings of the whole Jesus story.

Kevin