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Christmas Unwrapped

So now you know - did Christmas live up to expectations? Were the gifts right for everyone, the food fit for a king, the decorations perfection, the gathering of family and friends a wonderful experience. I hope it was but wouldn't be surprised if it didn't quite reach the heights promised by all those adverts.

Sadly, as we all know, Christmas was cancelled for Newtown in Connecticut - a town in grieving for the loss of so many innocents.

Why is it we love to dress Christmas up so that it becomes a fantasy? That first Christmas was not a dreamland affair - a young expectant mother torn from her own family and delivering her first child in a stable. Her son who, when reaching adulthood, she would watch die slowly and painfully on a wooden cross - a death reserved for criminals.

'Evil' visited Newtown and that's a word we've edited out of our lives - it doesn't fit the marketing image. We don't yet know the full circumstances, and what happened was appalling, but we do know that a young man who was shunned by society, didn't fit the American hero image, called a nerd, wacky and misfit took upon himself to kill and then kill himself. And that's evil. Strange, isn't it, that the great creator God, with the power to do all things, on that first Christmas should take the form of a helpless, vulnerable child?

- God - not as we imagined him - remote and unknown. But God in a child.
- God - not as we imagined him - the divine dictator, the big boss. But God the servant, washing our dusty feet.
- God - not as we imagined him - the fond father, favouring us above others. But God tempted, suffering, rejected.
- God - not as we imagined him - pacified by our worship. But God seeking the lost until He finds us.

If this world is to become a better place, it has to start with you and I and a quiet revolution that turns this world's values on their head. The Christmas gift is unwrapped and it's the gift of God - will you accept Him?

May the love and peace of God surround you and yours as we look forward to 2013.