

What Is Really Important...

10:21 PM PST, December 13, 2008

During this season of transition, with each new political appointment or announcement, we must come face-to-face every day with both the good news and the bad news... and bad news is not leaving without a fight. While we now have hope for the future, something we've been without for quite a while, our economy is still in a tailspin. We also have two active wars, immoral business practices, corrupt politicians, growing unemployment, rising costs and the fear of the unknown. We feel that we all bear some of the responsibility for our problems and we search our souls for the answers. Have we lived beyond our means? Are we guilty of excesses, uncharitable acts, being lazy or irresponsible, personal prejudice, moral failure? Are we spending borrowed money at the expense of others? What are our basic values? What is really important?

When the doorbell rang this morning, I realized that my answer to that question had just arrived in the form of Ella, our three-year old grandbaby. She had agreed to help us decorate our pre-lit, artificial Christmas tree in exchange for some breakfast while her Mommy ran errands. I had noticed her skills last week when she was in the process of trimming a tree at her house that she had helped to pick out.

When I heard the familiar 'pop' of a glass ornament striking the floor, I looked over in her direction only to hear her calmly say,

Whoops, there goes another one... I don't know why they do that...

I thought to myself right then and there that we could use some of that optimism and honesty to help us get through the season and this period of uncertainty. At three feet tall, Miss Ella was a perfect match for our four-foot tree, and she took to the tree-trimming task with an unlimited supply of hand-made ornaments, a litany of Christmas songs and a holiday spirit that just wouldn't quit.



***I'm going to hang the gingerbread man right here!
This button turns on the tree lights! That's so cool!
Isn't this the most beautiful tree you've ever seen?
Wow, Santa Claus and the elves are on a candy cane
seesaw! That's not a snowman, it's a snowwoman!
These decorations are just perfect!***

Later, as we sat in the kitchen sharing our raisin toast and cream cheese, I thought about the expense of creating this wonderful Christmas tradition and our impromptu Christmas tea party for three:

- one recycled Christmas tree – free
- old hand-made tree ornaments – free
- raisin toast and cream cheese – 50 cents
- a Saturday morning with Ella – priceless

Ella reminds us of the optimism that children bring to the world and the simplicity of their vision that can help us to clearly see values that we may have forgotten.

Please accept [Through Ella's Eyes](#) as a free download.

Merry Christmas! [Bob Magnant](#)