



The Cross & Steeple

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From John

How do you answer roll? I am a “here” guy.

When the roll is called, you can count on me to say “here”. There always seem to be some people who think roll call is a time to be different. So you might be a “yo” person. Or a “present” person.

Not me. Even in good old ROTC in college I was “here”. Even when raised to the exalted rank of corporal (awarded to the person who was tallest in the platoon), I still said “here”. I was probably afraid that if I said “present” my faithful squad might think I was saying “Present Arms”. Then they would have jumped and moved their rifle forward in their hands to be inspected by the platoon leader. He would not have like that.

“Present arms” has a different idea for the word “present”. It derives from that other kind of present. Not being here. But giving someone something. So the rifle is presented.

And we all like that kind of present. The kind we give to someone we love (but probably not our platoon leader). We hold it in our hands and give it to them. We watch closely to see how they react. Maybe we continue to hold our hands out, now empty.

And that is what God did. He gave us Jesus. He held Him out and then watched to see how we would react. God’s hands extended toward us. And watching to see how we will react. What we will do with this wonderful present.

Something to think about at Christmas. Look at the manger scene. Are they all there? Mary – here. Joseph – here. Shepherd – here. Wise Man – here. Jesus – present. Aren’t you glad?

Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift. II Corinthians 9:15

