CONSUMERISM EATS ITSELF

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Category: Observations

Every year around this time, the British tabloid press gets on its high-horse to publish articles about parents (usually single mothers on benefits) who spend enormous amounts of money on presents for their children (here is one example - there are plenty of others).

At the same time, the same papers are full of adverts for expensive gifts, articles on how to have the perfect Christmas and reviews of the latest must-have (expensive) technology.

Does anyone else note a slight whiff of hypocrisy here?

The same media which create the impossibly glamorous images of the ideal family Christmas, who bombard us for months with advertisements for things that we can't afford and who continuously depict the wonderful lives of celebrities, turns round and attacks people who actually take their message to heart and try and create their own family Christmas after the image of the ones in the papers.

Now, I'm not trying to defend excessive spending at Christmas, or any other time of the year. My point is that the tabloid media are in no place to condemn people for trying to live the lifestyle that they try so hard to sell to us.

We are exposed to a constant stream of stories and opinions which suggest that relationships are temporary, looks are all important and having things is what makes you happy. Under this bombardment, people (even if they convince themselves that this is not the case) start to believe the lies they are told. How do you show you love your children? Not by spending time with them, reading to them and playing silly games, but by buying them expensive presents. Things are what counts (and incidentally, an iPad makes a great baby sitter).

The stories that the tabloid press get all self-righteous about are the logical conclusion of the lifestyle that the tabloids promote. The problem is, that they find the results of their own outlook distasteful. If you can't live with the results of your own worldview, then their must be something profoundly wrong with it.

Perhaps there is a better model to follow:

You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

Though he was God,
Â Â Â Â he did not think of equality with God
Â Â Â Â as something to cling to.

Â Â Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;
Â Â Â Â he took the humble position of a slave
Â Â Â Â and was born as a human being.
When he appeared in human form,

ÂÂ Â Â Â Â he humbled himself in obedience to God Â Â Â Â and died a criminalâ€™s death on a cross.