

Part Two

Christmas Meditations

I love
my Ginsu



Clap On! Clap Off!

It's that time of year again when the TV is filled with visions of sugar plums, Chia Pets[®], rosy-snouted reindeer, and those ever-popular commercials for The Clapper[®]—that favorite Christmas gift perfect for everyone in the family!

What a cleverly wonderful little gadget. Plug it in and then clap your hands all ye people and shout with a voice of triumph when your stuff goes on and off from way across the room.

The Clapper turns things on and off. The apostle Paul exhorts us to put things off and put things on. In Ephesians 4:22-24, he says "to put off your old self...and to put on the new self." Or, un-deck yourself of the old and don ye now your new apparel.

But unlike with The Clapper, what Paul says to put off is supposed to stay off. What is put on is totally different and to be kept on. Often, though, we allow circumstances to clap us on or clap us off spiritually!

Life is good...clap on...shout "Glory!" Life hurts...clap off...woe is us, take us back to Egypt!

Wouldn't it be better to be like the amazing Ginsu Knife! It cuts nails, saws lumber, and still slices tomatoes—tough, yet gentle. It has a lifetime warranty—an eternal benefit. But wait, there's more! It comes with several handy gadgets—equipped to deal with a wide variety of circumstances. No matter what it comes up against, the Ginsu can always cut it.

As we move into yet another new year, may we clap off the old, clap on the new, grow in the Spirit like well-watered Chia Pets, and live on the cutting edge of God's amazing promises. *Don't delay! Act now!* And have a wonderful year.

1 John 3:18

Love Poem

LOVE

arrows
 through
by act and deed
 deep
 to the heart
 and the mind
 where words
 only
 touch
barely.

The Angels

THE presses of heaven
were stopped.
The rumored event had happened,
and cherubim had the scoop.
It was Christmas for the first time.
And as if they couldn't wait
for the morning's first edition,
the angels burst brilliantly
over the front page of the sky
with a joyous banner headline
and a miraculous news story.
And the shepherds, like excited paperboys,
delivered the heralded word
from street corner to stable
as they made their way
to the scene of this sensational event.
And as they gazed at the child,
they kept one ear tuned toward the sky
just in case
late breaking additional information
was to come over the wire
from the choring heavenly press room.

The Wisemen

MINIATURE magi march majestically
down the middle aisle of the church
mistakenly placed in the annual
Christmas pageant.
They really came two years later
to give their gifts and long considered
adoration to the patient child.
But in our modern reenactment
of this eternal event,
the kings come to the stable
along with the sheep and the shepherds.
God doesn't mind
this once-every-year-error,
because the message is still clear.
Magic is vanquished by the intense reality
of this fragile fatal incarnation
worshipped in remembrance
at every church that is our Bethlehem.
Bathrobe wrapped wisemen
bearing gifts of gold painted cardboard
and mom's empty perfume bottles
make up an inexact scene.
But draw us just as strongly just the same,
to that holy point beneath the star
that burns His perfection into our hearts,
daily becoming His wisemen.