

We The People
Program 68
Yuletide Algebra



Cast your mind back to school days and recount those interminable days of chanting your times tables and later the introduction of Algebra. Just in case you've forgotten Algebra is the arithmetic use of letters and symbols to represent values and their relationship for solving equations. It's an abstract form of maths and while I don't remember too much about it I do recall that Y and X played a big part and that we had to work out what these letters meant within the formula. The job at hand was to calculate their value which I must admit escaped me most of the time. However the teacher would instill in us that working out these unknown quantities was essential and that the letters of A and B or Y and X really did have meaning. Their real value ultimately varied depending on the context of the master mathematician.

So I calculate another Christmas is at hand and yet it seems like only yesterday the last one was measured in. It's a time we wish peace and good will to all and it's a celebration of Christ's birth. Given that, why is it so many call it Xmas. I really dislike this and I find it especially offensive when I see X-M-A-S written down. Abbreviating Christmas saves just a few letters and I don't know why we do it because introducing the algebraic X is the same as saying Christ is an unknown quantity. Not in my book he's not. Xmas takes away the real meaning of Christmas so you are left with a zero sum and in reality Christmas is somewhat hollow for many as its often a time to worship the dollar and the giving of presents to people you don't really like. An alternative this year might be to call Christmas Y-mas just to shuffle the algebraic function around a bit.

Now there is nothing in the Bible which commands us to celebrate Christmas so it's a man made seasonal formula. However it should be a lovely time of year and indeed a time of good will and peace but is it. Perhaps X as the unknown factor is right because many people don't believe in Christ Jesus so why bother celebrating the life of the greatest man who ever lived. Why bother mentioning his name and take Christ out of Christmas and then we are left with a spiritual zero. Perhaps I just think too much and should have a more simplified approach to the yuletide equation. I find the Christmas calculus to be the season of rush and credit cards and shopping frenzy, of endless gift buying and tinsel and plastic trees and so on. Christmas must not be reduced to X-mas else mankind forgets that we have a spirit and are on earth with a set of timeless rules to follow and rewards at hand which are far greater than any worldly gift.

This Christmas why not use the correct factors of peace and thanks giving and do something for others. If you must give a gift make it yourself using your own hands so it truly comes from you no matter how humble. Perhaps help those less fortunate over the break and take a moment and truly wonder how we got here and more importantly why we are here. There is a greater purpose and there is reason for celebration and there is a better way to celebrate life. To all the loyal 4CRB listeners and to all the wonderful folk who help run this radio station we have reason to celebrate and welcome a new year. You see we have the gift of certainty because we will never replace Christ with an X.

A happy peaceful and wonderful Christmas to you all.

Until next year this is Kent Bayley