



my way, I'll enjoy some of the best *people watching* anyone could do, anywhere. I'll enjoy all the fans of two major college football programs, there to support their teams later that afternoon in the *Grand-Daddy of Them All*, the Rose Bowl game.

The families from all over Southern California and

and take it—another misguided message of someone else's Jesus. An angry, retributive Jesus those making the most noise believe they're serving.

**I must confess** the message of their Jesus I can't run away from quickly enough. This is not the Jesus I have come to know. This is not the Jesus I'd want anyone to come to know. I say "come to know" as I too have come out of a difficult religious background. And, I'm still unlearning as much as I've learned. This Jesus loves, accepts and includes. **I must confess**, I love that

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**I must confess** I enjoy a special tradition on the morning of each new New Year's Day. I like to bundle up, coffee up with a large *to-go* thermos and sneak quietly out of the house. As I do, the sun is rarely up.

What could be my destination so early on the first day of each New Year? That's simple. I like to make my way with the crowds of excitable spectators hurriedly streaming toward a world-famous piece of real estate. I like to join in with one million or so other fans on their way to the narrow sidewalks of Colorado Boulevard. Together in eager anticipation of taking in the wonder and pageantry of the annual Tournament of Roses Parade, we wait.

Although my one million friends and I will have to sit out the 2021 Rose Parade due to Corona virus concerns, we all look forward to the 2022 parade with great, and no doubt, pent up, anticipation.

When next I reach Colorado Boulevard, I'll turn westward and walk the parade route in reverse, all the way back to Old Town Pasadena. The trek will be just short of three-and-a-half miles. As I make

beyond will be there to see the flora and fauna of the colorful floats and the tight rhythms and ranks of the well-rehearsed marching bands. It will be a spectacle like no other, once again.

But sadly, without fail, all the happy faces, all the flora and fauna, rhythms and ranks and wonder and pageantry of a perfect parade morning will most likely be pierced by the sound of angry megaphones. They will be out there again in full force—those who feel called to witness and warn a captive audience of their sins and the coming judgment of God. They will again present Jesus as the judge, jury and high-executioner of all who don't confess their sins and do as they've done, repent and conform to their religious ideals.

All those poor people. Stuck. Trapped even. The freezing, under-caffeinated, huddled masses, there just to enjoy a parade, won't be able to budge an inch in any direction. They'll have no choice but to just sit there

message. That Jesus makes for a wonderful New Year's Day, and every day thereafter. □

*Ed Dunn is a writer, editor, blogger, member of the Plain Truth Ministries Board of Directors and host of This Month at PTM. See the back cover of this issue for more details on this new video resource from CWR/PTM.*

