

A Prayer All Christians Should Pray This Christmas

It's estimated close to 2.5 billion people will celebrate Christmas this year! Think about that for a moment: Many of them know of Christ, yet still don't know Him as their personal Savior. We're talking about hundreds of millions of people, from "all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues" (Rev. 7:9b). Some will observe the Christ child's birth by hanging a candy cane on a tree. Some will exchange greeting cards. And others will swoop their kids and grandkids off to the mall to see Santa.

Whether they realize it or not, they're all commemorating the rescue mission Christ undertook 2,000 years ago to save all those given to Him by the Father (John 6:35-40). We all love this image of Jesus as a baby in the manger. My concern is our culture at large prefers to keep Christ as "Baby Jesus" forever. And we shouldn't let them. In other words, they like Him as "Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). But they tragically reject Him as "Mighty God" (Job 9:4).

Let's be clear: The same Christ child who appeared so innocently in the manger later stormed the temple to overturn the moneychangers' tables. He allowed Himself to be put to death on the cross as the perfect Lamb atoning for our sins, *mine and yours*. Then He rose on the third day and ascended to sit at the right hand of God. And soon He will return!

Compare the Christ presented in Revelation to the manger image favored in our culture: "Out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, with which He may strike the nations. 'He shall rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury and wrath of God the Almighty" (Rev. 19:15, MEV). That's quite a contrast from Christ's humble beginnings in the manger, isn't it? I point this out because if we are to serve as His salt and light, we must boldly share the truth of who our Savior really is. That means by God's sovereign grace we must

transcend the message that's been popularized by our culture. And we do this by sharing His love.

So this blessed Christmas, please join with me in prayer that millions of people all around the world would come to discover a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, who in Matthew 28:18-20 pronounced: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." {eo}

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