

Prayer Dispatch 12.20.13 / Keeping Christ In Christmas...



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In this Prayer Dispatch...

- I. Keeping Christ In Christmas
- II. A Few Examples From Our Ministry
- III. Prayer Requests: As you minister with us throughout the world through your intercessions please allow the accompanying passage from the Word of God to guide your prayers

2 Corinthians 1:11 "you also joining in helping us through your prayers, so that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the favor bestowed on us through the prayers of many."

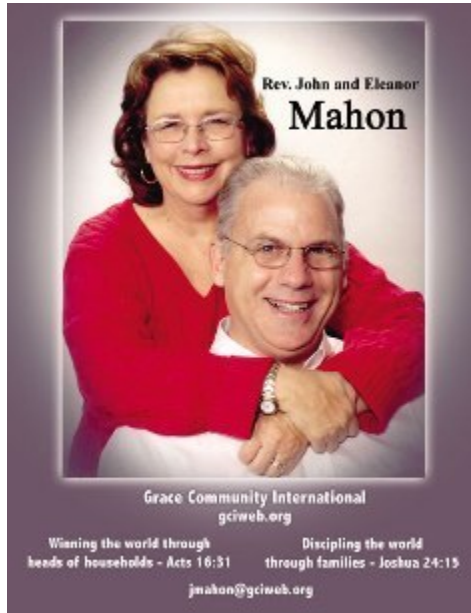
- A. Pray that we will finish the year strong in the Lord
Colossians 3:17

- 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.
Colossians 3:23-24
- 23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,
- 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

- B. Ask God to continue to bless the ministry of our "Destiny Box" by the front door**
- Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
- C. Please pray that those who hear the gospel at our Friends and Neighbors Christmas Dinner Party tonight would open their hearts so that they might experience their first Christmas as Christians.**
- 2 Corinthians 4:3-6**
- 3 & 4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
 - 5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.
 - 6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
- D. Petition the Lord as we prepare to purchase tickets and apply for visas for 2014, that He would continue to open doors**
- 1 Corinthians 16:9 for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.
 - 2 Corinthians 2:12 Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ and when a door was opened for me in the Lord,
 - Colossians 4:3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ...
 - Revelation 3:8' I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut...
- E. Call upon the Lord to give times of refreshing during the holidays**
- Acts 3:19 ...in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;
 - Romans 15:32 so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.
 - Jeremiah 31:25 " For I satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes."
- F. That God would bless the ministry materially, that we might in turn bless those to whom we minister.**
- Luke 6:38 "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and

running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

- ☐ **Philippians 4:17** Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account



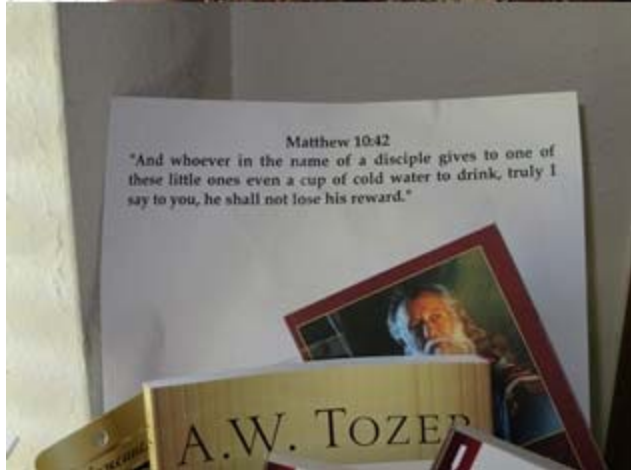
Dear Prayer Warriors,

Keeping Christ In Christmas

This is a wonderful time of the year as everywhere we look we see the word "Christ" as we prepare to celebrate His Incarnation. One of the things that I am always reminding myself of and those to whom I minister as well, is that it is not the responsibility of merchants, secular institutions and non-Christian businessmen to keep Christ in Christmas. This responsibility belongs to Christians, Christian families and to the church. To tell you the truth, most Christians have it backwards. The talk on Christian radio, conservative news networks, Bible study, Sunday School and even from the pulpit is whether merchants say "Merry Christmas" and whether they use their facilities to celebrate the birth of Christ. Now I am not against this but it is not the duty of non-Christian, unbelieving merchants to keep the message of Christ's Incarnation alive. In fact, just the opposite is true. It is the duty of Christians to bring the message of Christ's Incarnation and the resulting salvation of one's soul to merchants. We can do this in a number of ways. I would like to suggest a few...

A Few Examples From Our Ministry

The "Destiny Box"



We small keep a box by our front door. In it are English and Spanish gospel tracts; English and Spanish New Testaments; Lee Stroble's "Case for Christ"; Josh McDowell's "Who Moved The Stone"; Candy Canes with the "tradition of the candy cane attached" as well as bottled water (augmented by cokes in the fridge). Anyone who is brought to our door by the Lord receives and assortment of these. Since Thanksgiving we have given out over 36 of these packets. We wish them a "Merry Christmas" not just in words but also by giving them the opportunity to know Christ personally, that they too might know the joy of a Christ centered "merry Christmas".

Taking The Gospel To Merchants

This is a fun project you can do the week before Christmas. In the next few days I will take New Testaments wrapped in Christmas paper with bows (and in some cases Lou Strobble's "Case for Christ", a candy cane with the "tradition of the candy cane attached, a card with a Christmas gospel tract and the Four Spiritual Laws inside and visit the merchants I frequent throughout the year and leave these as gifts, wishing them a Merry Christmas. (Note: we are faithful and loyal customers throughout the year so that the merchant comes to know us.) Here is a list of merchants I will visit...

Auto Mechanic

Exterminator

Auto Parts Store

Hardware Store

Grocery Store

Accountant

Dentist

Doctor

Coffee Shop

Pharmacy

Dry Cleaners

And others

My suggestion for your family this week before Christmas - stop complaining that non-Christian merchants are not being good stewards about sharing the message of Christ's birth and start a family plan to bless and reach out to the merchants you frequent sharing with them the Good News. Sit down as a family, make a list of merchants, have a "wrapping party", pray over the pile of gifts, decide who will give the gift to whom and then go out into the market place and share the good news. The shepherds did not complain that Bethlehem merchants were not celebrating Christ's birth, rather they spread the Good News - Luke 2:18 "And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds."

Parties



Our Class Sunday School Party



Our Friends and Neighbors Dinner Party

Jesus was a great attender of parties and events and used them both to bring people to Him as well as illustrations of the plan of salvation in His messages and teachings. This past Sunday we hosted our church Sunday School party in our home. Tonight we will have a party where we invite both Christian and non-Christian friends. In fact for the last two weeks we have had a whole series of family, church and friends parties. In all of these we seek ways of presenting Christ and keeping Christ the center of Christmas.

These are just three of many creative ways you can keep Christ in Christmas. For other ideas you can scroll through the Advent Blogs which are posted daily. These contain discussion Bible study questions for the family as well as a daily creative idea for "Keeping Christ In Christmas". Just follow this link below and then choose the "Blog" tab at the top of the toolbar.

http://www.sermonaudio.com/source_detail.asp?sourceid=gci

Another resource for keeping Christ in Christmas is our website, which contains many practical tools, not just for Christmas but for all the holidays. Again, follow the link below and then scroll down to "Christmas".

<http://gciweb.org/2011/07/holidays-resources/>

I close this email, as always, with a deep and abiding thankfulness for your sacrificial and effectual prayers, which empower and drive this ministry ever forward in the cause of Christ.

By His mercy,
II Corinthians 4:1
Rev. John S. Mahon
Grace Community Int. -

Please allow me to close this dispatch with a hymn from my prayer notebook that has been especially meaningful to me...

(Psalms 104:33-34 "I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. Let my meditation be pleasing to Him; As for me, I shall be glad in the LORD.")

Link to music/tune for this hymn: <http://nethymnal.org/htm/o/c/ocomeayf.htm>

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;

Refrain

*O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord.*

True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
Lo, He shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created;

Refrain

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;

Refrain

See how the shepherds, summoned to His cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps;

Refrain

Lo! star led chieftains, Magi, Christ adoring,
Offer Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
We to the Christ Child bring our hearts' oblations.

Refrain

Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger,
We would embrace Thee, with love and awe;
Who would not love Thee, loving us so dearly?

Refrain

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing.

Refrain