

PRAYER BOOK CALENDARS

Available for \$9.00 at the Besserer Entrance.

2020 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Are available for pick up at the Besserer entrance.

ST. JOE'S CHRISTMAS BIN

We are collecting gently used hats, mitts, and other winter gear along with the usual non-perishable food items, toiletries, and diapers for St. Joe's Christmas Bin. Donations will be collected at the Besserer entrance Dec 8th - Jan 5th

NEW YEARS DAY PRAYER SERVICE

Join us as we pray in the New Year at 10AM at the Bible House (315 Lisgar St.)

Merry Christmas!

DECEMBER 24TH - 2PM AND 7PM SERVICES

DECEMBER 25TH - 10AM SERVICE

MESSIAH OFFICE | 315 LISGAR ST. OTTAWA ON, K2P0E1

SUNDAY SERVICE | OTTAWA LITTLE THEATRE, 400 KING EDWARD AVE. OTTAWA, ON



CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH

Welcome!

Isaiah
THE LIGHT HAS COME

DECEMBER 22ND

**MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS GRIPPED BY THE GOSPEL,
LIVING FOR GOD'S GLORY.**

SHOULD CHRISTIANS CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?

Dear Friends,

To many of you, asking the question, "Should Christians Celebrate Christmas?" sounds very odd – maybe even unchristian. But then again, many Christians share the human problem of not liking to ask questions that require thought. A good question is a great good. Jesus knew the difference between a good and a "bad" question. He was patient and He answered good questions. In fact, He welcomed good questions. Bad questions come in many forms. One thing common to bad questions is that they are not looking for a true answer – they are often looking to hurt or embarrass – in other words, they are an attack disguised as a question. Jesus did not welcome bad questions, and He "answered" them shrewdly.

So, the Bible does not tell us to celebrate Christmas. Today Christmas is an overwhelmingly secular event. On top of this, Canadian Christmas appears to be deconstructing – turning into "Friends-mas" and "Me-mas". So, should Christians celebrate Christmas? A couple of points can be made.

First, this is an area of freedom for Christians. The Bible does not mandate a yearly Christmas celebration. So, Christians can deal with these and other questions in a wide range of ways. Hopefully we can disagree with humility, charity and prayer.

Second, there are good human reasons to celebrate the incarnation and birth of Jesus Messiah every year. A feature of human experience is that we remember what is important and also celebrate events and people of good importance. When the Raptors won the NBA Championships the city and much of Canada celebrated! People in Toronto will remember the championship series for years to come. We have yearly celebrations of birthdays and anniversaries.

(Continued on next page)

For your Prayers

To balance our books for the year, we estimate that we need \$47,500 in the month of December.

So it is natural for Christians to want to remember and celebrate simple human things like a birthday, anniversary or championship. What would it say to people if we never celebrated and remembered central truths and events of the Christian faith? I know we go to church on the Lord's Day – but to many people, the lack of a yearly celebration would be telling.

This leads to the third point. There are many good Biblical reasons to celebrate Christmas. In the Old Testament, the Covenant People not only had to keep the Sabbath every week, they also had yearly festivals to celebrate the fundamental truths and events of how the Lord had delivered them from slavery and made them His Covenant People. Because Jesus fulfilled the Law and instituted the New Covenant, we do not keep the Old Covenant celebrations. We continue to celebrate the Sabbath, the Lord's Day; a Gospel Day. But surely the Old Testament suggests that yearly celebrations and remembrances are wise for the Lord's New Covenant People. In fact, I think part of the wisdom of the Bible is that since the Church is now a transnational, transcultural, trans temporal body, it wisely does not require the celebration or the specifics. Think about it. The challenges of living as a Christian in Iran or North Korea will be very different than for those of us in Ottawa of Fort McMurray.

Finally, there are good missiological reasons to celebrate Christmas. In Canada, to refuse to celebrate Christmas will make us look more like the Grinch or Scrooge than like Jesus. Furthermore, to celebrate the incarnation of God the Son of God and the subsequent birth of Jesus; God and man; the Messiah; the "lamb of God whom came to take away the sin of the world"; the promised Prince of Peace – this shows to our neighbours that we believe Jesus is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life". If given the chance (pray for this chance!) we can explain that we celebrate His birth by giving gifts because He is God's unsurpassable gift to all who will receive Him with humble repentance and true faith. But, the heart of godly remembrance is worship – worship with the Lord's people. So brothers and sisters. Merry Christmas! Celebrate Messiah's birth well, to the glory of God!

George+

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I NEED TO DEVELOP GODLY ATTITUDES.

- A) Pray for godly attitudes in general & certain attitudes in particular.
- B) Ask others to pray the same thing for you.
- C) Repeat the attitude to help it sink in. Do this in conjunction with A & B!

ATTITUDES.

1. No one is strong enough to carry the weight of living.
2. More than the feeling of peace, I need the Lord's peaceful order in my life.
3. No "but's" or "maybe's" Jesus is Lord.

I NEED TO GROW IN PRAYER.

A great way to do this is to learn to pray the Bible. Pray this prayer until you can pray without reading:

Almighty God, I thank You for keeping Your word that a child would be born, a Son given who is Wonderful Councilor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. Please fill me with hope that You are sovereignly working to bring all things to their proper end when the Lord Jesus Messiah returns. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

I NEED TO GET GOD'S WORD IN MY MIND AND HEART.

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.."

Isaiah 9:6-7 ESV

I NEED TO DO SOMETHING OR START TO DO SOMETHING.

Complete the following sentence: "In light of God's word, the Holy Spirit is leading me to _____."

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