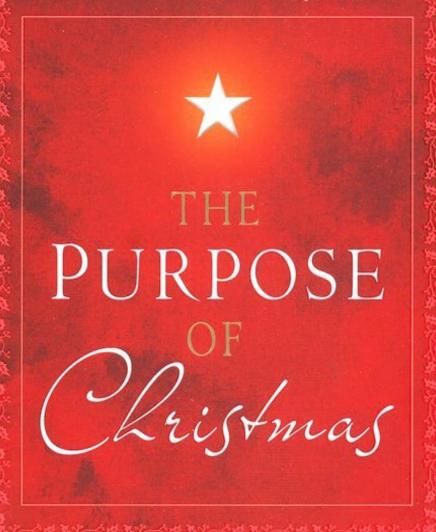
### RICK WARREN

Author of #1 New York Times Bestseller The Purpose Driven Life



# THE PURPOSE OF Christmas

#### RICK WARREN



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## The Purpose

Of

Christmas

To everything there is a season, an a ti! e to every "#r"ose #n er the heaven\$ ECCELIASTES %& () \*V+

### , H- IS CHRISTMAS SUCH A BI. /EAL0

It's the 2argest 3e2e4ration aro#n the 5or2 ea3h year\$Other ho2 ays get a sing2e ay, 4#t Christ! as is e! "hasi6e 7or an entire! onth, one t5e27th o7 every year\$/#ring the Christ! as season, 4i2ions o7 "eo" 2e set asi e their nor! a2 ro#tines to e3 orate their ho! es, sen o#t greeting 3ar s, 4#y gi7ts, go to Christ! as "arties, atten 3h#r3h servi3es, sing Christ! as songs, 5at3h Christ! as TV s"e3ia2s, an trave22ong istan3es to 4e 5ith their 7a! i2es\$ Christ! as sights an so#n s 7i22the air every5here\$ There are stores, an even 3 areers, that are e832#sive2y e i3ate to "re"aring 7or an 3e2e4rating this ho2i ay\$, hen Christ! as 3o! es, yo# 3anlt! iss it\$ltls every5here\$

17 yo# sto" to thin9 a4o#t it, it is asto#n ing that the si! "2e, #nass#! ing 4irth o7a "easant 4oy 4orn t5o tho#san years ago in the Mi 2e East has 3a#se

s#3h 3o!! otion: his 4irth ay even 3a#ses tra77i3;a! s to ay in "2a3es 29e Ne5 - or 9 City, To9yo, an Rio e \*aneiro\$

- o#! ay have never rea26e that every ti! e yo#
3he39 yo#r 3a2en ar or re7er to a ate or 5rite one
o5n, yo# are #sing \*es#s Christ as yo#r re7eren3e
"oint\$Be3a#se o7\*es#s, history is ivi e into BC
<4e7ore Christ+an A/ (anno /o! ini, in the year o7
the Lor +\$Every other event in history an every
event on yo#r 3a2en ar to ay is ate 4y ho5! any
ays an years it has 4een sin3e \*es#s Christ
a""eare on earth\$

Even yo#r 4irth ay is ate 4y his 4irth ay\$

The night \*es#s Christ 5as 4orn in Beth2ehe!, a s! a22gro#" o7 "oor she"her s 5as =#iet2y ten ing their 72o39s o7 shee" in a near4y 7ie2 \$Loo9ing #" at the stars, nothing see! e any i77erent 7ro! a tho#san other nights\$B#t 5hat 5as a4o#t to

ha""en 50#2 trans7or! not on2y the she"her s1 2 2 2 3 4 4 4 1 2 3 2 2 5 0 4 2 never 4 e the sa! e\$\$ = en2y a 4 right 2 3 1 4 the s9y, an an ange2 7 ro! o a""eare a 4 ove the! an 4 egan s"ea9ing to the! \$\$ It see! e #n4e2 eva42 e an s3 are the! \$\$

The Bi42e gives #s the origina2Christ! as story&

There 5ere she"her s 2iving o#t in the 7ie2 s near4y, 9ee"ing 5at3h over their 72o39s at night\$An ange2o7 the Lor a""eare to the!, an the g2ory o7 the Lor shone aro#n the!, an they 5ere terri7ie \$B#t the ange2sai to the!, >/o not 4e a7rai \$I 4ring yo# goo ne5s o7 great; oy that 5i224e 7or a22 the "eo"2e\$ To ay in the to5n o7 /avi a Savior has 4een 4orn to yo#? he is Christ the Lor \$This 5i224e a sign to yo#& o# 5i227in a 4a4y 5ra""e in 32oths an 2ying in a ! anger\$@

S# en2y a great 3o! "any o7the heaven2y host

a""eare 5ith the ange2, "raising. o an saying,

@ 2ory to . o in the highest, an on earth "ea3e to ! en on 5ho! his 7avor rests\$

#### LU) E A&C' D NIV

The ange2sai that Christ! as 50#2 4ring @ great; oy\$\$\$for a22the "eo"2e\$PRea22y0 For! any "eo"2e, getting rea y 7or Christ! as see! s! ore o7a hass2e than a so#r3e o7 ha" "iness\$It is a so#r3e o7 stress\$ They 7ee2 "ress#re, not "2eas#re, 5hen it 3o! es to Christ! as\$It\s a #ty, not a e2\ght\\$They en #re Christ! as rather than en; oy it\\$

There are! any "ossi42e reasons yo#! ight 7ee2
#neasy or 2one2y or even e"resse #ring the
Christ! as season\$- o#! ay rea s"en ing ti! e
5ith o 4a22 re2atives\$May4e re2ationshi"s are
straine an #n3o! 7orta42e in yo#r 7a! i2y\$May4e

yo# on thave anyone to 4e 5ith this Christ! as \$
Christ! as! ay re! in yo# o7 2osses or h#rts or ho5
things have 3hange \$- o#! ay have a re2igio#s
4a39gro#n that oesn thin 32# e Christ! as, or yo#! ay have no 7aith at a22 5at3hing others 3e2e4rate! ay! a9e yo# 7ee2 #neasy\$May4e yo#lire; #st
e8ha#ste an 5orn o#t 7ro! a22 that is ha" ene in
yo#r 2i7e this "ast year\$This Christ! as, . o 3ares
ee" 2y a4o#t ho5 yo# 7ee2 an so o I\$It is 5hy I
have 5 ritten this 4oo9\$

Regar 2ess o7 yo#r 4a39gro#n , re2igion, "ro42e! s, or 3ir3#! stan3es, Christ! as rea22y is the 4est ne5s yo# 3o#2 get\$Beneath a22 the visi42e sights an so#n s o7 Christ! as are so! e si! "2e yet "ro7o#n tr#ths that 3an trans7or! yo#r 2i7e 7or the 4etter here on earth an 7or 7orever in eternity\$Right no5 there's nothing! ore i! "ortant 7or yo# to #n erC stan than the i! "2i3ations o7 Christ! as 7or yo#r 2i7e\$

I7 yo#122s2o5 o5n 7or a 7e5! in#tes, ta9e the ti! e to rea this 4rie74oo9, an "a#se to 3onsi er the "#r"ose o7 Christ! as, yo# 3an re3eive an en;oy the 4est Christ! as gi7t yo#122 ever 4e given\$It is . o 1s Christ! as gi7t to yo#\$

. o 1s Christ! as gi7t to yo# has three =#a2ties that ! a9e it #ni=#e\$First, it is the ! ost e8"ensive gi7t yo#122ever re3eive\$It1s "ri3e2ess\$\*es#s "ai 7or it 5ith his 217e\$Se3on , it1s the on2y gi7t yo#122ever re3eive that 5i222ast 7orever\$Fina22y, it is an e8tre! e2y "ra3ti3a2gi7t: one yo#122#se every ay 7or the rest o7 yo#r 217e\$Intereste 0

It is no a33i ent that yo# are rea ing this 4009\$. o
"2anne yo#r 4irth, an 4e7ore yo# 5ere even 4orn,
he 9ne5 this! o! ent 5as 3o! ing\$In 7a3t, it! ay 4e
that a22yo#r 5ho2e 217e #" to this! o! ent has 4een
"re"aring yo# to re3eive. o 1s Christ! as gi7t to yo#\$

On the 7irst Christ! as night, the ange2anno#n3e three "#r"oses 7or the 4irth o7\*es#s&

Christmas is a time for celebration!

Christmas is a time for salvation!

Christmas is a time for reconciliation!

### A Time

For

### Celebration

This is the ay o7 the Lor 1s vi3tory?

2et #s 4e ha" "y, 2et #s 3e2e4rateE

PSALM ' ' B&AD (TEV+

Christ! as is a "arty\$S"e3i7i3a22y, its a 4irth ay "arty : 7or \*es#s: an 4irth ays are! eant to 4e 3e2e4rate \$Its 5hy 5e say @Merry Christ! as E@

Ironi3a22y, at ! ost Christ! as "arties the "erson 5hose 4irth ay 5elre s#""ose to 4e 3e2e4rating is 3o! "2ete2y ignore \$He1s never even! entione \$ A2tho#gh \*es#s is the reason 7or the season, he1s o7ten over2oo9e or! ere2y! entione a2ong 5ith R# o2"h, Frosty the \$no5! an, \$anta C2a#s, the . rin3h, e2ves, an a 2ong 2ist o73e2e4rate 7i3tiona2 3hara3ters\$

As I 5as 5riting this 2tt2e 4009, I e3i e to ta9e a s#rvey o7Christ! as sho""ers\$I as9e , @ hat are yo# 3e2e4rating this Christ! as0@Most ans5ers ha nothing to o 5ith \*es#s&

• @1! 3e2e4rating that I! a e it thro#gh another year

- ❖ @1! 3e2e4rating 4eing ho! e 5ith! y 7a! i2y
- ❖ @ got a Christ! as 4on#s
- ❖ @My son is ho! e 7ro! Ira=\$@
- ❖ @The 3an i ate I vote 7or got e2e3te 5@
- ❖ @1! 3e2e4rating that l1ve 7inishe a22! y sho""ing
- @1! not 3e2e4rating anything\$I1! ;#st trying to s#rvive\$@

Pre"aring 7or Christ! as 3an 4e a 2ot o7 5or9, es"e3ia22y 7or! o! s\$, ith the "ress#re o7 4#ying gi7ts, sen ing greeting 3ar s, e3orating o#r ho! es, "#tting #" 2ights, 3oo9ing, atten ing "arties, an 32eaning #" a7ter5ar, 5e have 2itt2e ti! e to a3t#a22y en;oy the! eaning o7 Christ! as\$

The 7irst "#r"ose o7 Christ! as is 3e2e4rationE, e 2earn this 7ro! the ange2s o"ening state! ent to the

she"her s o7 Bethæhe! \$. o ha 5on er7#2ne5s 7or #s that 5o#2 3a#se #s a22 to re;oi3e, 3e2e4rate, an thro5 a "arty&

#### > 4 4 ring yo# goo ne5s o7 great ;oy that 5i224e 7 or a22 the "eo" 2e 9 P LU) E A& F NIV

The goo ne5s o7 Christ! as is 5 orth 3e2e4 rating 7 or three reasons\$It is "ersona2% 4 ring - OU\$ It is "ositive&@ OO / ne5s o7 great; oy\$ An it is #niversa2% 7 or ALL the "eo"2e\$ It oesn1t! atter 5 ho yo# are, 5 hat yo#1 ve one, 5 here yo#1 ve 4 een, or 5 here yo#1 re hea e: this ne5s is 7 or yo#\$

A nationa2! aga6ine #se to 3arry a 7eat#re 3a22e @Ne5s - o# Can Use @I a25 ays rea that se3tion 7irst \$
The ange24ro #ght #s ne5s 5e 3an #se \$It\$s the 4est ne5s in the 5or2 & God loves you!

God is with you!

God is for you!

### CHRISTMAS IS A TIME TO CELEBRATE THAT. O/LOVES - OUE

The ! ost 7a! o#s state! ent in the Bi42e is \*es#s1 e8"2anation o75hy . o sent hi! to earth&. o 2ove the 5or2 so! #3h that he gave his one an on2y Son, so that everyone 5ho 4e2eves in hi! 5i22 not "erish 4#t have eterna2217e.

The entire reason 7 or Christ! as is the 2 ove o7. o \$
. o 2 oves yo# so! #3 h that he 3 a! e to earth as a
h#! an so yo# 3 o#2 get to 9 no 5 hi! an 2 earn to
tr#st hi! an 2 ove hi! 4 a 3 9 \$ Theo 2 ogians 3 a 22 this
the In 3 arnation \$. o 4 e 3 a! e one o 7 #s, a h#! an
4 eing, so 5 e 3 o #2 #n erstan 5 hat he is rea 2 by 2 9 e \$

o has given #s, as h#! an 4eings, the 3a"a3ity to 9no5 hi! in 5ays ani! a2s 3an1t\$He 3reate #s in his i! age0 5hi3h in32# es the a4i2ity to en;oy a "ersona2 re2ationshi" 5ith hi! \$Then he too9 the initiative to

sen \*es#s so 5e 3o#2 #n erstan his 2ove an o#r nee 7or hi! \$

O730#rse, 5e 9no5 a 2itt2e a40#t. o 4y si! "2y o4serving his 3reation\$For instan3e, 4y 2oo9ing at nat#re 5e 9no5 that o#r Creator 2oves variety&he 3reate an in3re i42y iverse #niverse\$Thin9 o7 the 2i! it2ess array o7 "2ants, ani! a2s, ro39 7or! ations, sno572a9es, an "eo"2e\$No t5o h#! an 4eings, even t5ins, are e8a3t2y a2i9e\$. o oesn1t! a9e 32ones or 3o "ies\$Every one o7 #s is an origina2\$A7ter yo# 5ere 4orn, . o 4ro9e the! o2 \$

By s#rveying nat#ra2"heno! ena, 5e a2so 9no5 that . o is "o5er7#2an organi6e, an that he 2oves 4ea#ty\$, e a229no5 that . o ! #st en;oy 5at3hing #s en;oy 5hat he1s 3reate \$Other5ise, 5hy 5o#2 he give #s so! any 5ays to en;oy it0 He gave #s taste 4# s, then 7i22e the 5or2 5ith in3re i42e 72avors 2i9e 3ho3o2ate an 3inna! on an a22the other s"i3es\$ He gave #s eyes to "er3eive 3o2or an then 7i22e the

5or2 5ith a rain4o5 o7sha es\$He gave #s sensitive ears an then 7i22e the 5or2 5ith rhyth! s an! #si3\$-o#r 3a"a3ity 7or en;oy! ent is evi en3e o7. o 1s 2ove 7or yo#\$He 3o#2 have! a e the 5or2 taste2ess, 3o2or2ess, an si2ent\$The Bi42e says that. o @ri3h2y "rovi es #s 5ith everything 7or o#r en;oyC! ent\$Pe He i n1t have to oit, 4#t he i, 4e3a#se he 2oves #s\$

Sti22, #nti2\*es#s arrive, o#r #n erstan ing o7. o 1s 2ove 5as 2i! ite \$So. o inva e earthElt 5as the greatest invasion in history, an nothing has 4een the sa! e sin3e\$. o 3o#2 have 3hosen tho#san s o7 5ays to 3o!! #ni3ate 5ith #s, 4#t sin3e he esigne #s, he 9ne5 the 4est 5ay to 3o!! #ni3ate 5ith #s 5o#2 4e 7a3eCtoC7a3e\$

17. o ha 5ante to 3o!! #ni3ate to 4ir s, he
5o#2 have 4e3o! e a 4ir \$17. o ha 5ante to
3o!! #ni3ate to 3o5s, he 5o#2 have 4e3o! e a 3o5\$
B#t. o 5ante to 3o!! #ni3ate to #s, so he 4e3a! e

one o7#s\$He i n1t sen an ange2or a "ro"het or a "o2ti3ian or an a! 4assa or\$He 3a! e hi! se27\$17 yo# rea22y 5ant "eo"2e to 9no5 ho5! #3h yo# 2ove the!, yo# 3an1t sen a re"resentative to 3o!! C #ni3ate it\$- o# have to say it "ersona22y\$That1s 5hat. o i at Christ! as\$

The Bi42e te22s #s that . o is 2ove\$It oesn1t say . o has 2ove, 4#t . o is 2ove\$Love is the essen3e o7 . o 1s 3hara3ter\$It is his very nat#re\$The reason that everything in the #niverse e8ists is 4e3a#se . o 5ante to 2ove it\$@The Lor is goo to a22 he has 3o! "assion on a22 he has! a e\$G

Thin9 a4o#t this\$17. o i nlt 5ant to 2ove so! ething, he 5o#2 not have 3reate it\$Everything yo# see, an the tri2dions o7 things yo# 3anlt see, 5as! a e 4y. o 7or his en;oy! ent\$He 2oves it a22 even 5hen 5e! ess it #" 5ith o#r sin\$He sti22 has a "#r"ose 7or it\$Every star, every "2anet, every "2ant, every ani! a2 every 3e22, an ,! ost o7 a22, every

- o# 5ere 3reate as an o4;e3t o7. o 1s 2ove\$He! a e yo# in or er to 2ove yo#EHis 2ove is the reason yo#1re a2ive an 4reathing an rea ing this 4oo9\$Every ti! e yo#r heart 4eats an every ti! e yo# ta9e a 4reath, o is saying, 4 2ove yo#\$P- o# 5o#2 not e8ist i7. o ha not 5ante yo#\$A2tho#gh there are a33i enta2"arents, there are no a33i enta24a4ies\$ The "arents! ay not have "2anne the!, 4#t. o i \$

/i yo# 9no5 that . o 5as thin9ing o7 yo# even 4e7ore he! a e the 5or2 0 In 7a3t, it is 5hy he 3reate itEHe esigne this "2anet1s environ! ent 5ith; #st the right 3hara3teristi3s so h#! an 4eings 3o#2 2ive on it\$The Bi42e says, @ o e3i e to give #s 2i7e thro#gh the 5or o7 tr#th so 5e! ight 4e the! ost i! "ortant o7 a22 the things he! a e@, e! atter to . o ! ore than anything e2se he has! a e\$

Be3a#se. o is 26 ve 7 or yo# is #n3on itiona2; he 26 ves yo# on yo#r 4a ays as! #3h as on yo#r goo ays\$ He 26 ves yo# 5 hen yo# on it 7 ee 2 his 26 ve as! #3h as 5 hen yo# o\$He 26 ves yo# regar 26 ss o7 yo#r "er7or! an3e, yo#r! oo s, yo#r a3tions, or yo#r tho #ghts\$His 26 ve 7 or yo# is #n3hanging\$Everything e2 in 5 in 26 yoe 7 or yo# is 3 on stant, stea y, an 3 on tin #o #s\$It is the 7 o #n ation 7 or #nsha9a42 son7 en3e\$

There is nothing yo# 3an o that 5i22! a9e. o sto" 2oving yo#\$- o# 3o#2 try, 4#t yo#1 7ai2: 4e3a#se. o 1s 2ove 7or yo# is 4ase on his 3hara3ter, not yo#r 3on #3t\$It1s 4ase on 5ho he is, not 5hat yo#1ve one\$The Bi42e says, @Christ1s 2ove is greater than anyone 3an ever 9no5, 4#t I "ray that yo# 5i224e a42e to 9no5 that 2ove\$G

One "otentia2" ro42e! o7 o#r ann#a2 Christ! as 3e2e4 rations is that! any "eo" 2e on2y thin9 o7\*es#s as a 4a4y ETheir 3on3e" tion o7 hi! is on2y as a

he2" 2ess ne54orn in his! other 1s ar! s\$17\*es#s ha never gro5n #" to o5hat he i, he1 have no "o5er to trans7or! o#r 2ives\$

B#t the 4a4y 4orn in Beth2ehe! i not stay a 4a4v\$\*es#s gre5 to! anhoo! o e2e 7or #s the 9in o7 217e that "2eases . o , ta#ght #s the tr#th, "ai 7 or every sin 5e 3o!! it 4y ying on a 3ross, then "rove that he 5as. o an 3o#2 save #s 4y 3o! ing 4a39 to 27eSThis is the . oo Ne5sS. hen the Ro! ans nai2e \*es#s to a 3ross, they stret3he his ar! s as 5i e as they 30#2 \$, ith his ar! s 5i e o"en, \*es#s 5as "hysi3a22y e! onstrating, @ 2ove yo# this! #3hEl 2ove yo# so! #3h it h#rtsEl1 rather ie than 2 ive 5 itho #t yo #B@The ne8t ti! e yo # see a "i3t#re or stat#e o7\*es#s 5ith o#tstret3he ar! s on the 3ross, re! e! 4er, he is saying, @ 2ove yo# this ! #3hF@

### CHRISTMAS IS A TIME TO CELEBRATE THAT. O/IS, ITH - OUE

As I! entione,! any "eo" 2e o7ten 7ee2 a2one at Christ! as\$Right no5, yo#! ay not 7ee2 29e. o is 5ith yo#\$B#t. o 1s "resen3e in yo#r 217e has nothing to o 5ith yo#r 7ee2ings\$- o#r e! otions are s#s3e"ti42e to a22 9in s o7 in72#en3es, so they are o7ten #nre2ia42e\$\$o! eti! es the 5orst a vi3e yo# 3an get is @/o 5hat yo# 7ee2@O7ten 5hat 5e 7ee2 is neither rea2nor right\$- o#r e! otiona2 state 3an 4e the res#2t o7! e! ories, hor! ones,! e i3ines, 7oo, 2a39 o7 s2ee", tension, or 7ears\$, henever I start to 7ee2 an8io#s a4o#t a sit#ation, I re! in ! yse27 that 7ear is o7ten Fa2se Evi en3e A" "earing Rea2\$

. o 3a! e to earth at Christ! as to re! in yo# that he is a25ays 5ith yo#, no! atter 5here yo# are\$
That's a 7a3t, 5hether yo# 7ee2it or not\$The Bi42e says, UI 3an never es3a"e 7ro! yo#r \$"iritEI 3an never get a5ay 7ro! yo#r "resCen3erH B#t yo#! #st

3onne3t or @#ne in@to his "resen3e on a ! o! entC 4yC! o! ent 4asis, an that is a s9i22that 3an 4e 2earne \$I ta29 a4o#t it in ! y 4oo9 *The P#r"ose /riven Li7e\$* 

So! eti! es 4a4ies are given t50 or three! i 2e na! es to honor re2atives\$. o 3o!! an e that \*es#s 4e given severa2na! es to e8"2ain his "#r"ose 7or 3o! ing to earth\$One o7\*es#s1na! es is I!! an#e2\$It! eans. o is 5ith #s\$ It's no 5on er the ange2to2 the she"her s, @/o not 4e a7rai Re-o# 2ose yo#r 7ear 5hen. o is near\$. o 1s "resen3e tr#!" s o#r "ani3\$

- o#! ay have 4een a4an one in 217e: 4y a s"o#se, 4y yo#r "arents, 4y yo#r 3hi2 ren, or 4y "eo"2e yo# tho#ght 5ere 7rien s\$Everyone has 7a3e the "ain an hearta3he o7 re;e3tion in so! e 5ay\$- o#! ay have e8"erien3e the sting o7 ra3ia2or ethni3"re;# i3e, gen er 4igotry, or re2igio#s into2eran3e\$17 so, I a! sorry\$B#t. o has not a4an one yo#EHe never 5i22EThe Bi42e says, @ o has sai , 11 5i22 never

One o7. o 1s great "ro! ises in the Bi42e is this& @ hen yo# go thro#gh ee" 5aters, I 5i224e 5ith yo#\$, hen yo# go thro#gh rivers o7 i77i3#2ty, yo# 5i22not ro5n\$, hen yo# 5a29 thro#gh the 7ire o7 o""ression, yo# 5i22not 4e 4#rne #"? the 72a! es 5i22not 3ons#! e yo#\$GI on 1t 9no 5 5 hat i77i3#2ty yo# 7ee2yo#1re ro5ning in right no 5 or 5 here the heat is on in yo#r 2i7e, 4#t I o 9no 5 that 5 hatever it is, o 9no 5s a 4o #t it, 3 ares a 4o #t it, #n erstan s it, an is going thro #gh it 5 ith yo #\$-o #1re not a 2one\$ That 2ea s #s to a thir as "e3t o7. o 1s. oo Ne 5s\$

### CHRISTMAS IS A TIME TO CELEBRATE THAT. O/ IS FOR - OUE

The "hrase @for yo#@is #se o7ten in the Bi42e\$For instan3e, 5hen \*es#s! et "eo"2e, his 7irst 5or s to the! 5ere o7ten a =#estion&g hat o yo# 5ant! e to o 7or yo#+, hen \*es#s instit#te 3o!! #nion he sai , @This is! y 4o y, 5hi3h is given 7or yo#\$\text{301}! Saint Pa#2sai , @for o is 7or #s, 5ho 3an 4e against #s0@, hen yo#1re 7a3ing a "ersona2atta39, it is great to have o 5ith yo#, 4#t it is even greater to 9no5 he is 7or yo#E

Many "eo" 2e 7ee2 that . o is se3 ret2y o#t to @get@ the!: that he is 3onstant2y "2aying a ga! e o7 @ ot3hal@an; #st 5aiting 7or the! to! ess #" an 7ai2 so he 3an say, @ to2 yo# sol@They i! agine. o as so! e 9in o7 sa isti3 3os! i3 gro#3h 5ho en; oys 7r#strating o#r "2ans an is a25 ays 2oo9ing 7or 5 ays to 3riti3i6e,; # ge, or get even 5 ith #s\$B#t. o hi! se27 says other 5 ise&l 9no 5 the "2ans I have 7or

yo#,Gsays the Lor \$1They are "2ans 7or goo an not 7or isaster, to give yo# a 7#t#re an a ho"e\$

No one 5ants 5hats 4est 7or yo#! ore than. o \$No one 9no5s 4etter 5hat 5i22! a9e yo# tr#2y ha""yE. o oesnIt 5ant yo# to 4e a7rai o7hi! \$He 5ants yo# to r#n to hi!, not 7ro! hi! \$In 7a3t, %I J ti! es in the Bi42e, o says, @/onIt 4e a7rai E@Thats one Fear not@7or every ay o7 the year ESo 5hat are yo# a7rai o70 None o7 #s 9no5s 5hat 5e122 7a3e this ne8t year, 4#t 5e 3an 9no5 that. o 2oves #s, o is 5ith #s, an o is 7or #s\$One "2#s. o is a! a;ority in any sit#ation\$

So 5here oes o#r 7ear o7. o 3o! e 7ro! 0 Pri! ari2y t5o so#r3es&a g#i2ty 3ons3ien3e an ignoran3e o7 5hat. o is rea22y 219e\$The Bi42e says, @There is no 7ear in 2ove\$B#t "er7e3t 2ove rives o#t 7ear, 4e3a#se 7ear has to o 5ith "#nish! ent\$The one 5ho 7ears is not! a e "er7e3t in 2ove\$@. #i2t! a9es #s inse3#re\$

Have yo# ever noti3e that so! e "eo"2e get e8tre! e2y nervo#s anyti! e anyone! entions. o or \*es#s in a 3onversation0 live seen "eo" a have an instant vis3era2rea3tion at the! ention o7\*es#s\$ Instin3tive2y, their sto! a3hs, 7a3es, an! #s32es a22 tighten #" 5ith a 7ightCorC72ight res"onse\$May4e yo#lve 7e2t yo#rse27 rea3t that 5ay an 5on ere 5hy\$A rena2ine starts r#shing thro#gh yo#r veins\$ One 3o! ! on reason is that 5e a223arry se3ret, hi en g#i2t 7ro! things 5elve one 5rong, an 5e 7ee2asha! e o75ays 5elve a3te an treate others\$ Ass#! ing that . o is! a at #s an that he's going to s3o2 #s 7or a22the 5ays 5elve 7a22en short, 5e see9 to avoi even ta29ing a4o#t hi! \$

B#t. o is not! a at yo#\$He is! a a4o#t yo#E

\*es#s sai, @ o i not sen his Son into the 5or2 to
3on e! n the 5or2, 4#t to save the 5or2 \$\varphi\$ 17yo#

st# y the 27e o7\*es#s, yo#122=#i392y see that 5hen

yo#! a9e a! ista9e, \*es#s oesn1t r#4 it in\$He r#4s it

o#t\$He 3a! e to erase a22yo#r sins, ! ista9es, 7ai2#res,

an regrets\$That1s 5hy the 7irst state! ent the ange2! a e to the she"her s 5as @/o not 4e a7rai Re\*es#s 3a! e to save #s, not to s3are #sElt1s a reason to 3e2e4rate\$

### CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS, ITH A BIRTH / A - PART - FOR \*ESUSE

My sister re3ent2y 70#n a "i3t#re o7! e as a threeC yearCo2, stan ing ne8t to a 4irth ay 3a9e 7or \*es#s, 3o! "2ete 5ith 3an 2es\$The 3a9e 5as! y i ea\$As a to 2er, I as9e! y! other, @ hy o 5e have Christ! as0@Mo! "atient2y e8"2aine that Christ! as is the 3e2e4ration o7\*es#s14irth ay\$In a 4#rst o7 "res3hoo2er ins"iration, I 3on32# e 5ith a 3hi2 1s 2ogi3, @ e22then, 5e sho#2 have a 4irth ay "artyE, e 3an have 3a9e an ) oo2CAi an sing ha""y 4irth ay to \*es#s1@My! other sai, @O9ay, 5e 5i221@

Th#s 4egan a 7iveC e3a e, arren 7a! i2y tra ition, o#r Birth ay Party 7or \*es#s every Christ! as Eve, 3o! "2ete 5ith ange27oo 3a9e an 3an 2es that the yo#ngest 3hi2 (an no5 gran 3hi2 + gets to 42o5 o#t\$Fo#r generations no5 "arti3i" ate in the sharing\$

I 5as a2! ost three years o2 5hen I s#ggeste 5e have o#r 7irst 4irth ay "arty 7or \*es#s\$

Besi es singing 3aro2s an rea ing the Christ! as story 7ro! the Bi42e, ea3h 7a! i2y! e! 4er ta9es a t#rn sharing his or her ans 5ers to t5o "ersona2 =#estions&

@ hat, 7ro! this "ast year, are yo# than97#2to. o
7or0@an , &in3e it\s \*es#s14irth ay, 5hat gi7t 5i22yo#
give hi! this ne8t year0@These t5o si! "2e =#estions
have "ro! "te so! e o7 the! ost "ro7o#n an
! oving! o! ents in o#r 7a! i2y\s history\s\$

Be3a#se o7 to ays "a3e o7 ½7e, 5e =#i39½y 7orget a22 the goo things. o oes 7or #s, an 5e! ove on to the ne8t 3ha22enge\$Thats 5hy I re3o!! en that yo# esta4½sh an ann#a23e2e4ration, a 4irth ay "arty 7or \*es#s in yo#r ho! e 5ith 7a! i2y or 32ose 7rien s\$ S3he #½ing a on3eCaCyear ti! e to "a#se an revie5. o s gra3e in yo#r ½7e an to re3o!! it yo#rse27 to

9no5ing an 2bving hi! 4etter is a great 5ay to ! a9e Christ! as ! ore ! eaning7#2\$

O#r "arty 3hanges ea3h year as o#r 7a! i2y 3hanges\$, hen! y 4rother, sister, an I 5ere yo#ng, the at! os"here 5as 2ight an 7#n an 7#22 o7 5 igg2es\$As 5e! at#re, o#r sharing 4e3a! e! ore intense, even "ro7o#n \$The sa! e 3y32e re"eate itse27 5 ith o#r 3hi2 ren, an no5 it is re"eating 5 ith o#r gran C 3hi2 ren\$, e a25 ays gro5 stronger an 32 oser to. o an to one another 7ro! sharing o#r hearts an 3o!! it! ents to Christ\$

enerations 30! e an go\$My "arents are no5 in heaven\$B#t in a 5or2 5here everything 3onstant2y 3hanges, the sta4i2ity o7 o#r 7a! i2y 7aith in Christ has ena42e #s to 7a3e the inevita42e "ro42e! s o7 217e& 3an3er, eath o7 20ve ones, #ne! "20y! ent,! arriage "ro42e! s, 7a! i2y 3on7213ts, 7inan3ia2 i7713#2ties, an a22 sorts o7 stresses an strains\$No! atter 5hat yo# are going thro#gh this Christ! as,

try 3e2e4rating the rea2thing\$It 5i22! a9e a i77eren3e\$

### A Time

For

### Salvation

, hen the right ti! e 7ina22y 3a! e, . o sent His o5n Son\$He 3a! e as the son o7a h#! an ! other an 2ive #n er the \*e5ish La5\$ . ALATIANS D& (TEV+ - ears ago I 5as sitting in! y "ar9e 3ar on a hot s#!! er ay 5aiting 7or! y 5i7e,) ay, to 3o! e o#t o7 a store\$A! y, o#r a#ghter, 5as three years o2 an stra" e into a 3hi2 is 3ar seat in the 4a39\$Fr#strate 4y having to 5ait in the heat an 2! ite 4y her 3ar seat, she h#ng her hea o#t the 5in o5 an ye2e P2ease, o E. et! e o#t o7 this PShe 5as 3rying o#t 7or a savior\$

Be3a#se she 3o#2 nlt 7ree herse27, ! y a#ghter nee e so! eone 4igger an ! ore "o5er7#2to res3#e her 7ro! her 7r#strating "re i3a! ent\$Ever 7e2t 219e that0, e a22 have\$May4e yo#lre 7ee2ing that 5ay this Christ! as\$-o# 7ee2219e ye22ing, @P2ease, . o E. et! e o#t o7 this Re

#### The se3on "#r"ose o7 Christ! as is sa2vationE

Sa2vation is ty"i3a22y e7ine as e2iveran3e 7ro! sin, se27, an he22\$It e7inite2y in32# es a22that, 4#t it a2so e! 4ra3es! #3h! ore\$, e are not on2y save 7ro!

so! ething 4a, 5e are save 7or so! ething goo \$
The Bi42e says, @n Christ \*es#s, . o ! a e #s to o
goo 5or9s, 5hi3h . o "2anne in a van3e 7or #s to
2ve o#r 2ves oing@

. o has a great "#r" ose an a goo "2an 7or yo#r 217e\$Sa2vation a2so! eans 4eing given the 7ree o! an "o5er to 7#27122. o 1s "#r" ose 7or yo#r 217e\$

The anno#n3e! ent o7sa2vation 7or anyone in the 5or2 5ho1 a33e"t it 5as the ange2s se3on e32aration o7goo ne5s to the she"her s o7 Beth2ehe! at the 7irst Christ! as&

@To ay\$\$\$there has 4een 4orn 7or yo# a Savior, 5ho is Christ the Lor \$9 LU) E A& 'NASB

Noti3e that this savior is @or yo# E He 3a! e 7or yo#r 4ene7it\$\*es#s is a "ersona2savior\$, hat oes that! ean0, hen so! eone says, @es#s Christ is! y

"ersona2savior,@or 5hen anyone as9s, @Have yo# 4een save 0@5hat are they re7erring to0

Its 219e2y yo# haven1t given! #3h tho#ght to yo#r nee 7or a savior or 5hat yo# nee to 4e save 7ro! \$ In! y Christ! asCsho" "er s#rvey, I as9e, @ hat o yo# nee to 4e save 7ro! 0@an the ans5ers I hear varie 5i e2y\$

- ◆ Fro! 5orry@
- ◆ Fro! the 3ost o7 gas an ! y e4t@
- ♦ Fro! "eo" 2e 5ho1ve h#rt! e@
- ◆ Fro!! y anger@
- ♦ Fro!! y "ast: I 3an t see! to 2et it go@
- ◆ Fro!! y 4a ha4its@
- ◆ Fro!! yse27@

hen "eo" 2e thin 9 o 7 s "irit #a 2 sa 2v ation, they o 7 ten have a very narro 5 3 on 3 e "t o 7 it 8 they thin 9 that sa 2v ation is 4 eing save 7 ro! he 22\$ B #t . o ha so! #3 h! ore in! in than; #st 7 ire ins #ran 3 e 5 hen he sent \*es #s to 4 e o #r savior \$. o 1s gi 7 to 7 tr #e sa 2v ation is 7 ree o!, "#r "ose, an 217 e in three i! ensions \$ 1 the 1 in 3 2 # es yo #r "ast, yo #r "resent, an yo #r 7 #t #re 8

Jesus saves you from something.

Jesus saves you for something.

Jesus saves you by something.

## \*ESUS CAME TO SAVE - OU FROM SIN AN / - OURSELF

Let ! e 4e 42#nt&yo# are the so#r3e o7! ost o7 yo#r "ro42e! s\$Even 5hen other "eo" 2e 3a#se yo# "ro42e! s, yo#r nat#ra2 res" onse o7ten ! a9es the! 5orse\$- o# tri" yo#rse27#" 7ar ! ore o7ten than yo# rea216e or 5o#2 219e to a ! it\$17 yo#lre honest 5ith yo#rse27, yo#122a ! it that yo# have ha4its yo# 3an1t 4rea9, tho#ghts yo# on1t 5ant, e! otions yo# on1t 219e, inse3#rities an 7ears yo# 3an1t hi e, an regrets an resent! ents yo# 3an1t 2et go o7, an yo# say things yo# 2ater 5ish yo#1 never sai \$Fran92y, yo# are the "ro42e! 5ith yo#\$For 3hange to ha" "en, it ! #st start in yo#r heart\$

, elre a224orn 5ith an @@"ro42e! \$, e are, 4y nat#re, se27C3entere \$\*#st as9 any "arent 5ho has raise a 3hi2 \$, e on1t have to 4e ta#ght to 4e se27ish\$It 3o! es nat#ra22y\$I7"eo"2e 5ere nat#ra22y#nse27ish, there1 never 4e any 3on72i3t, ivor3e,

a4#se, gree , 3ri! e, gossi", or 5ar on earth\$

O#r nat#ra2in32ination is to 5ant o#r o5n 5ay instea o7. o 1s 5ay\$This ten en3y to ! a9e 5 rong 3hoi3es instea o7 right ones is 3a22e sin\$The ! i 2e 2etter o7 sin is I, an 5henever I "2a3e ! yse27 at the 3enter o7 ! y 267e, I sin\$It is any attit# e or a3tion that enies . o his right7#2 "2a3e as 7irst in ! y 267e\$

Sin is o#r greatest "ro42e!, an it is #niversa25-o# an I sin every ay: 5ith o#r 5or s, o#r tho#ghts, an o#r a3tions\$The Bi42e says, @Not a sing2e "erson on earth is a25ays goo an never sins3G No4o y1s "er7e3t\$No4o y 4ats a tho#san \$No one has a "er7e3t re3or \$. o says, &for a22 have sinne an 7a22 short o7 the g2ory o7. o &for a12 have sinne an 7a22 short o7 the g2ory o7. o &for a12 have sinne an 7a22 of i! "er7e3t stan ar s,! #3h 2ess. o 1s "er7e3t onesEThis is not a "o"#2ar 3on3e"t, 4#t then, it is not e8a3t2y ne5s eitherEUn2ess yo# are in tota2 enia2 yo# 9no5 that yo#! a9e 5rong 3hoi3es a22 the ti! e\$ The Bi42e says, &for 5e 32ai! 5e have no sin, 5e are

on2y 7oo2ing o#rse2ves an not 2iving in the tr#th\$\$\$\$
I7 5e 32ai! 5e have not sinne , 5e are 3a22ing . o a 2iar\$@ live! et tens o7 tho#san s o7 "eo"2e 5hi2e trave2ing the g2o4e, an live never! et a "erson 5ho 32ai! e to 4e "er7e3t\$Never\$None o7 #s is sin2ess, an 5e 9no5 it\$

, hat is 5 orse is that sin is ha4it 7 or! ing\$The! ore 5e o it, the easier it gets\$17 yo#1 we ever trie to 4 rea9 an a i3tion,! aintain a iet, 9ee" a Ne5 - ear is reso2 #tion, or 3 hange yo #r 21 7 e 4y 5 i 22" o 5 er a2 one, yo # 9 no 5 ho 5 7 r #strating that is\$ - o # 3 an i enti7y 5 ith the a" ost 2 e Pa # 2 is 7 r #stration 5 hen he 5 rote, of on it #n erstan! yse 27 at a 22, 7 or I rea 22 y 5 ant to o 5 hat is right, 4 #t I 3 an it \$I o 5 hat I on it 5 ant to: 5 hat I hate\$I 9 no 5 "er 7 e 3 t 2 y 5 e 22 that 5 hat I a! oing is 5 rong, an! y 4a 3 ons 3 ien 3 e "roves that I agree 5 ith these 2 a 5 s that I a! 4 rea 9 ing\$B #t I 3 an it he 2"! yse 27 ii

O#r a3tions, 4oth 3ons3io#s an #n3ons3io#s,

sho#t o#t, @ on the one of El 5 ant to r#n! y o 5 n 2 17e, an I 5 ant to 4e! y o 5 n. o \$I thin 9 I 9 no 5 5 hat 1s 4 est 7 or! e! or e than of oes, so I!! going to o 5 hat I 7 ee 2 2 19 e oing Every ti! e y o # o 5 hat y o # 5 ant to o instea o 7 5 hat o te 2 2s y o # to o, y o # are a 3 ting 2 19 e y o # are o \$That 5 ar 5 ith o 3 reates enor! o # s 3 on 7 2 13 t an stress in y o # r! in , on y o # r 4 o y, an in y o # r re 2 at ion shi "s \$

This attit# e o7 "ri e7#2 se27C5i223a#ses yo# to 4e is3onne3te 7ro! . o an 7ee2 istant 7ro! hi! \$
This 7o3#s on se27 is 5hy yo# 7ee2 that . o is a
! i22ion! i2es a5ay an that yo#r "rayers are;#st
4o#n3ing o77 the 3ei2ing\$17 yo# 7ee27ar 7ro! . o ,
g#ess 5ho! ove 0 . o i n1t\$The Bi42e says, @The
tro#42e is that yo#r sins have 3#t yo# o77 7ro! . o \$\phi\$

O#r is3onne3te ness 7ro! . o , 5hi3h is #e to o#r st#44orn sin7#2ness, is the so#r3e o7 every sing2e h#! an "ro42e! on earth\$On a "ersona22eve2it 3a#ses 5orry, 7ear, an8iety, 3on7#sion, e"ression,

3on733t, is3o#rage! ent, an e! "tiness\$It 3a#ses #s to a3t in 5ays that 3reate g#i2t, sha! e, resent! ent, an regret\$- o# 5eren1t! eant to 2ive is3onne3te 7ro! . o , so 5hen yo# o, yo# 7ee2the tension\$- o# 7ee2s"irit#a22y e! "ty\$

On a g2b4a22eve2 5e see the e77e3t o7 sin a22 aro#n #s&5ar, in; #sti3e, 3orr#"tion, "re; # i3e, "overty, se8 tra77i39ing, an a22 o #r other so3ia2 "ro42e! s\$Even! any iseases are 3a #se 4y o #r re7#sa2 to 2 ve 4y. o 1s stan ar s 7or hea2thy 2 ving\$, ho 3an save #s0 Not govern! ent\$Not 4 #siness\$Not a3a e! i3s\$These 3an on2y ea25ith the visi42e sy! "to! s an res#2 ts o7 sin\$B #t any 2 asting so2 #tion! #st start in the heart, an on2y. o 3an trans7 or! hearts\$

### SALVATION IS FREE / OM

Another 5 or 7 or sa2vation is 4 ree o! Fro Bi42e says, 4 5 as in tro#42e, so I 3 a 22e to the Lor \$ The Lor ans 5 ere! e an set! e 7 ree Fro! 5 hat oes \*es#s o 77 er to set #s 7 ree0

Free 7ro! g#i2t over the "ast\$. #i2t is the! enta2 "ri3e 5e "ay 7or vio2ating o#r. o Cgiven 3ons3ien3es\$, e 9no5 that i7 5e 4rea9 a 2a5, 5e have to "ay a "ena2ty\$, hen 5e 4rea9. o 1s #niversa2! ora22a5s, so! eone has to "ay 7or that too\$B#t. o, o#t o7 his ee" 2ove 7or #s, sent \*es#s to so2ve that "ro42e! \$@The re5ar 7or sin is eath, 4#t the gi7t that. o 7ree2y gives is ever2asting 217e 7o#n in Christ \*es#s o#r Lor \$G

, hen \*es#s ie on the 3ross, he "ai 7or everything yo#1ve ever one 5rong or ever 5i22 o 5rong in the 7#t#re\$Ho5 great is that0 It has 4een 3a22e the . reat E83hange, an yo# an I get the 4etter en o7

the ea\( \mathbb{S} \mathbb{Q} \) o too 9 the sin\( 2 \mathbb{E} \mathbb{S} \mathbb{C} \mathbb{C} \mid \mathbb{I} \mathbb{E} \) o#r sins\( \mathbb{S} \mathbb{T} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{I} \mathbb{E} \) in to \( \mathbb{E} \mathbb{S} \) and \( \mathbb{E} \mathbb{I} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \) o \( \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \) in to \( \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \) in to \( \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \) in to \( \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \mathbb{E} \) in to \( \mathbb{E} \ma

. o 1s 7orgiveness is 7ar ! ore "o5er7#2than a22o7 yo#r! ista9es an sins "#t together, so yo# get a 32ean s2ate\$That1s 7ree o! \$Even i7there 5ere no heaven or he22 (there are+, the gi7t o7 not having to 3arry the 2ba o7 a g#i2ty 3ons3ien3e every ay is 5on er7#2\$

Free 7ro! 4itterness an resent! ent\$Un o#4te 2y, yo#1ve 4een h#rt 4y 5hat others have sai or one to yo# in the "ast\$, e 3an1t 3ontro25hat others o to #s, 4#t 5e 3an 3hoose ho5 5e res"on \$Resent! ent is a 3an3er o7yo#r e! otions\$Un2ess yo# a22o5 \*es#s to 7ree yo# 7ro! it, it 5i22event#a22y estroy yo#r ha" "iness\$

Free 7ro! the e8"e3tations o7 others\$Ho5 o7ten have yo# sai or one things yo# i n1t 5ant to o

si! "2y 4e3a#se yo# 5ante to avoi the isa" "rova2 o7 others0 The Bi42e says, @The 7ear o7 h#! an o"inion isa42es\$@Constant2y 5orrying a4o#t 5hat other "eo" 2e thin9 a4o#t yo# is a angero#s tra" \$It 5i22 ro4 yo# o73on7i en3e, 2i! it yo#r "otentia2, rain yo#r energy, an 9ee" yo# 7ro! 4e3o! ing a22. o inten s 7or yo# to 4e\$

The anti ote to 7earing isa" "rova2 is to 4#i2 yo#r 2/7e on the 7o#n ation o7. o 1s #n3on itiona2 2ove 7or yo#\$Love 2/4erates\$It is a 3on7i en3e 4#i2 er\$The Bi42e says, @There is no 7ear in 2ove\$B#t "er7e3t 2ove rives o#t 7ear, 4e3a#se 7ear has to o 5ith "#nishC! ent\$The one 5ho 7ears is not! a e "er7e3t in 2ove@

No! atter 5hat yo# o in 217e, so! e "eo" 2e aren 1t going to 219e it \$An the 4 righter the 21ght, the! ore 4 #gs it attra3ts\$, hen The P#r" ose / riven Li7e 4e3a! e 5e229no5n, I 4e3a! e a target o7! ean C s"irite 3 riti3s 5ho see! e to re21sh atta39ing an! isre" resenting! e\$I trie to 7o3#s on s#"" orting

! y 5i7e, ) ay, 5ho 5as 4att2ing 3an3er at that ti! e, 4#t the atta39s 5ere is3o#raging\$/#ring that e8"erien3e, I 5as en3o#rage 4y . o 1s 7re=#ent 2tt2e re! in ers o7 his 20ve 7 or ! e\$One 5ee9en , the great Lon on "astor an a#thor \*ohn Stott an I 5ere 3oC "rea3hing a ser! on at Sa 2e4a39 Ch#r3h\$\*ohn is a s"irit#a2giant 5ho has 4een a ear 7rien an ! entor to ! e\$A7ter s"ea9ing together, 5e 5ere having a =#iet 3onversation, an \*ohn as9e ! e to 5 rite the 7 ore 5 or 7 or Basi3 Christianity, his 32 assi3 4estse2er\$ | 5as h#! 42e that hel 5ant to 4e "#42/32y asso3iate 5ith! e\$For 5ee9s, every ti! e l re! e! 4ere it, l1 thin9, O7 a22 the "eo" 2e aro#n the 5or2 that \*ohn Stott 9no5s an res"e3ts, he 3hose ! eEHis 2ove 7or ! e, an that o7 other great "eo" 2e I res"e3te, gave! e the 3on7i en3e to ignore the isa""rova2o7"eo"2e 5ho i n1t 9no5 ! e\$

A77ir! ation 7ro! others is en3o#raging, 4#t 7ee2ing ee"2y 2ove an 3hosen 4y. o is 7ar greaterEThe Bi42e says, Even 4e7ore he! a e the 5or2, o

20ve #s an 3hose #s in Christ to 4e ho2y an 5itho#t 7a#2t in his eyes\$@/i yo# 9no5 that0 Be7ore the 5or2 5as 3reate, o 2ove yo#\$The Bi42e o7ten re7ers to. o 1s e3ision to 2ove yo# #n3on itiona22y as. o 1s e2e3ting or 3a22ing o8& 3hoosing yo#\$

A22o7#s have e8"erien3e re;e3tion an 3arry the s3ars in o#r hearts\$- o# #n o#4te 2y re! e! 4er those "ain7#2ti! es in yo#r 2i7e\$- o#! ay re3a224eing! a e 7#n o7 at s3hoo24y! ore "o"#2ar 9i s or 4eing the 2ast one 3hosen 7or a tea! or re3eiving h#rt7#2 5or s 7ro! a "arent or having a 7rien or s"o#se 5a29 o#t o7 yo#r 2i7e\$- o#! ay have s"ent years trying to earn the a""rova2o7 so! eone 5ho see! s #n"2easa42e\$Un erstan this&i7 yo# haven1t gotten that "erson1s a""rova24y no5, it is #n2i9e2y yo#122 ever get it\$B#t the goo ne5s is that yo# on1t nee any h#! an a""rova2 to 4e ha""yE

In or er to 4e set 7ree 7ro! 2iving 7or the a""rova2o7

others, yo# nee to re7o3#s on ho5! #3h yo#! atter to . o an his #n3on itiona22ove 7or yo#\$Here are so! e state! ents 7ro! the Bi42e to 7o3#s on& @ hat 3an 5e say a4o#t s#3h 5on er7#2things as these10 17. o is 7or #s, 5ho 3an ever 4e against #s0@ @ ho 5i224ring a 3harge against . o 1s e2e3t0 . o is the one 5ho; #sti7ies@Even i7! y 7ather an! other a4an on! e, the Lor 5i22ho2! e 32ose\$@

So ! any "eo" 2e 4ase their i entity on the ;# g! ents an o"inions o7 those aro#n the! \$B#t that on2y 2ea s to greater inse3#rity\$Fin yo#r tr#e i entity in . o , not in 5hat others say a4o#t yo#\$In his 4ri22iant 4oo9 \*es#s o7 Na6areth, His Ho2iness Po"e Bene i3t KVI 5 rites, @Man 9no5s hi! se27 on2y 5hen he 2earns to #n erstan hi! se27 in 2ight o7. o , an he 9no5s others on2y 5hen he sees the! ystery o7. o in the! \$P

Free 7ro! a i3tive ha4its\$- o#1ve "ro4a42y 7ig#re o#t 4y no5 that goo intentions an Ne5 - ear1s

reso2#tions are not eno#gh to 4rea9 o#t o7se27C estr#3tive "atterns an ro#tines\$- o# trie to 3hange, 4#t yo# inevita42y reverte 4a39 to o2 5ays\$, ith ea3h 3y32e o7 4est intentions, 7ai2#re, an re! orse, yo# 7ee2! ore tra""e an ho"e2ess\$- o# nee a "o5er greater than yo#rse27\$- o# nee a saviorE\*es#s sai, @7 the SonCsets yo# 7ree, then yo# 5i22he rea22y 7ree01

. o never inten e 7or yo# to go thro#gh 217e on yo#r o5n "o5er\$He 5ants yo# to tr#st hi! an e"en on hi! \$That\$ 5hy he a22o5s "ro42e! s in yo#r 217e that yo# have no "ossi42e 3han3e o7 so2ving on yo#r o5n\$A3t#a22y, he ha the so2#tion to yo#r "ro42e! in! in 2ong 4e7ore yo# even 9ne5 it 5as a "ro42e! \$He\$s 4een 5aiting 7or yo# to sto" trying an start tr#sting\$

Free 7ro! the 7ear o7 eath\$The a3i test o7 5hat yo# 4e2eve is not ho5 yo# a3t at 5e ings an 4irths an gra #ations\$- o# 3an "retty! #3h 4e2eve

anything yo# 5ant 5hen things are going great\$B#t 5hen the e! otiona2stor! s o7 2/7e 4eat o5n yo#r rea! s, 5hen re2ationa2earth=#a9es ri" a"art yo#r re2ationshi"s, 5hen 7/1nan3ia27/res t#rn yo#r assets to ashes, 5hen "hysi3a2"ain "#!! e2/2s yo#r 4o y, an 5hen the event#a2 eaths o7 2/2ove ones 2/2eave yo# 2/2one2/2y an 2/2ost, 5hat 5i22#"ho2 an e! "o5er yo# then0 It is 7/2o2/3sh to 2/2ve in enia2, #n"re"are 7/2or 5hat everyone 9no5s is inevita42/2e\$

As a "astor, I have "arti3i" ate in 30#nt2ess 7#nera2s, so I 9no5 5e22 the i77eren3e that a "ersona2 re2ationshi" 5ith \*es#s! a9es in ho5 eath is han 2e \$11ve 2oo9e into the eyes o7 "eo" 2e 5ho have no ho"e or ass#ran3e o7 heaven, an 11ve sense the terror an es" air in their hearts at the gravesi es\$ ) no5ing \*es#s! a9es a22 the i77eren3e in the 5or2 5hen yo# 7a3e eath\$

I7 yo# a33e"t 5hat \*es#s i 7or yo# on the 3ross, yo#r eterna2 estiny 5i224e se3#re, an yo#122 no

2onger 7ear eath\$The Bi42e says, &in3e 5e, . o 1s 3hi2 ren, are h#! an 4eings: ! a e o7 72esh an 42oo : he I\*es#sM4e3a! e 72esh an 42oo too 4y 4eing 4orn in h#! an 7or! ? 7or on2y as a h#! an 4eing 3o#2 he ie an in ying 4rea9 the "o5er o7 the evi25ho ha the "o5er o7 eath\$On2y in that 5ay 3o#2 he e2ver those 5ho thro#gh 7ear o7 eath have 4een 2ving a22 their 2ves as s2aves to 3onstant rea \$60

## \*ESUS CAME TO SAVE - OU FOR A PURPOSE

At so! e "oint in 27e, ea3h o7#s str#gg2es 5ith three 4asi3 =#estions\$The 7irst is the =#estion o7 e8isten3e& 5hy a! I a2ve0 The se3on is the =#estion o7 signi7i3an3e& oes! y 217e! atter0 An the thir is the =#estion o7 intention&5hat is! y "#r"ose0

o has never 3 reate anything 5 itho#t a "#r"ose\$ Sin3e yo# are a2ve, yo# 3an 4e 3 ertain that . o has a "#r"ose 7 or yo#r 27e\$The Bi42e says, @ong 4e7 ore he 2ai o5n earth 1s 7 o#n ations, he ha #s in! in, ha sett 2e on #s as the 7 o3 #s o7 his 2 ove \$\mathbb{P}B#t here 1s the "ro42e! & every one o7 #s has straye 7 ro! . o 1s inten e "#r"oses 7 or o#r 2 ves\$Li9e a train that has ;#! "e o77 the tra39s, 5e1 ve 4 een erai 2e 4 y o #r o5n st#44 ornness an sin7#23 hoi3es\$The Bi42e says, @, e1 re a22 2 19e shee 5 ho1 ve 5 an ere o77 an gotten 2 ost\$, e1 ve a22 one o#r o5n thing, gone o#r o5n 5 ay\$An . o has "i2e a22 o#r sins, everything"

A2tho#gh. o 3reate ea3h o7 #s 7or a "#r"ose, 5elve a22ta9en! any eto#rs in 217e, thin9ing 5e 9ne5
4etter\$So. o ha to sen \*es#s as o#r savior: to
re ee! #s 7ro! sin, to reset the ire3tions o7 o#r
21ves, an to restore #s to his origina2 "#r"oses 7or
o#r 21ves\$, e are not; #st save 7ro! evi22 5elre
save 7or goo E 12\*es#sM ie 7or a22\*so that a22.5ho
21ve: having re3eive eterna2 217e 7ro! hi!:! ight
21ve no 20nger 7or the! se2ves, to "2ease the! se2ves,
4#t to s"en their 21ves "2easing Christ 5ho ie an
rose again 7or the! \$@

For ! ore than thirty years, ! y 217e verse has 4een A3ts '%%I &/avi serve . o 1s "#r"ose in his generation, then he ie \$This "hrase, @he serve . o 1s "#r"ose in his generation,@is the #2ti! ate e7inition o7 a 217e 5e22 21ve \$-o# #se yo#r 217e to o that 5hi3h is ti! e2ess an eterna2(. o 1s "#r"ose+ in a ti! e2y an 3onte! "orary 5ay (in yo#r generation+\$

- o# serve that 5hi3h never 3hanges (. o 1s, or + in a setting that is 3onstant2y 3hanging (the 5or2 +\$This is 5hat it! eans to 2ve a "#r"oseC riven 217e, an there is no greater a vent#re, nothing! ore 7#2C 7122ing, no 4etter 5ay to 2eave a 2asting 2ega3y 5ith yo#r 217e\$

I! agine that "hrase 5ritten on yo#r gravestone\$My "rayer is that others 5i224e a42e to say that a4o#t yo# 5hen yo# ie: that yo# serve . o 1s "#r"ose in yo#r generation\$There is no 4etter es3ri"tion o7 s#33ess\$

o 3reates yo#, sha"es yo#, gi7ts yo#, 3a2s yo#, an saves yo# 7or a "#r"ose\$Thats 5hy the Bi42e says, every "art o7 yo#: 7or yo# are 4a39 7ro! eath an yo# 5ant to 4e too2s in the han so7. o, to 4e #se 7or his goo "#r"oses\$ Nothing 3o! "ares to the thri22o7 4eing #se 4y. o 7or a great "#r"ose\$It is the ee"est 2onging in yo#r heart, an no other e8"erien3e 3an

In The P#r"ose / riven Li7e I e8" 2aine that everyone 2 ves at one o7 three 2 eve2 & riven Li7e I e8" 2aine that everyone 2 ves at one o7 three 2 eve2 & riva2 s#33 ess, or signi7 3 an 3 e \$ Most o7 the 5 or 2 2 ves at the s#rviva2 2 eve2 Ha27 o7 the 5 or 2 1s si 8 4 i 22 ion "eo" 2 2 ve on 2 ess than t5 o o 2 ars a ay\$ Over one 4 i 2 ion 2 ve on 2 ess than one o 2 ar a ay\$ That is the s#rviva2 2 eve2 \$

I7 yo# 21ve in the Unite States, yo# 21ve at the s#33ess 2eve2, even i7 yo# 7ee2 "oor\$Most o7 the 5or2 5o#2 2ove to have o#r "ro42e! s\$B#t s#33ess oesn1t satis7y\$ - o# 3an have a 20t to 21ve on an sti22 have nothing to 21ve 7or\$- o# 3an 4e so 4#sy! a9ing a 21ving that yo# 7ai2to! a9e a 217e\$

- o# 5ere! a e 7or 7ar! ore than s#33ess\$- o# 5ere 3reate 7or signi7i3an3e\$B#t yo#122never 7in signi7i3an3e in "ossessions, "2eas#res, or "ositions\$ Signi7i3an3e 3o! es 7ro! servi3e: giving yo#r 217e a5ay 7or a "#r"ose greater than yo#rse27\$\*es#s sai,

@17 yo# insist on saving yo#r 217e, yo# 5i22 2ose it\$On2y those 5ho thro5 a5ay their 2ives 7or ! y sa9e an \$ 7or the sa9e o7 the . oo Ne5s 5i22 ever 9no5 5hat it ! eans to rea22y 2ive\$1

, hen yo# 7ina22y 4egin 7#27i22ing the "#r"ose that
. o 3reate yo# 7or an \*es#s saves yo# 7or, yo#
rea216e, @This is! y ni3heEThis is 5hy I a! a2iveEThis
is! y reason 7or 4eing\$No5 I 9no5 5hy I e8ist\$A22
the s#33ess in the 5or2 5i22never give yo# that
ee" satis7a3tion\$There 5i22a25ays 4e a ho2e in yo#r
heart 4e3a#se yo# 5ere! a e to 9no5, 2ove, tr#st,
an serve. o \$

So 2et! e as9 yo# t5o very "ointe =#estions&) no5ing that nothing e2se yo#1ve trie has 3o! "2ete2y satis7ie that 2onging in yo#r so#2, 5hat are yo# 5aiting 7or0, hy not a33e"t \*es#s as yo#r savior0 - o# get yo#r "ast 7orgiven, yo# get a "#r"ose 7or 2iving, an yo# get a ho! e in heaven\$No one e2se 3an! a9e that 2an o7o77er\$On2y. o 3an\$

## \*ESUS CAME TO SAVE - OU B- HIS . RACE

In "ra3ti3a22y every area o7 217e: s3hoo2, s"orts, 5or9: 5e are; # ge 4y o#r "er7or! an3e\$The A! eri3an 5or9 ethi3 is 4#i2t on e77ort, s5eat, 3o! "etition, an har 5or9\$. ro5ing #", A! eri3ans are ta#ght that thereis no s#3h thing as a 7ree 2#n3h? yo# get 5hat yo# "ay 7or? i7 its to 4e, its #" to! e? i7 yo# 5ant so! ething one right, o it yo#rse27? an . o he2" s those 5ho he2" the! se2ves\$

So 5hen it 3o! es to s"irit#a2! atters,! any ass#! e . o re2ates to #s on the sa! e "er7or! an3eC4ase ethi3\$- o#! ay 7ee2that yo# have to earn . o & a""rova2 eserve . o & 2ove, an 5or9 yo#r 5ay to heaven 4y oing goo or trying to 4e "er7e3t\$17 yo#1ve tho#ght that, l1ve got goo ne5s 7or yo#&that&s not at a22ho5 it 5or9sEHere&s 5hat the Bi42e says a4o#t 5hat yo#! #st o to 4e save &@The "eo"2e as9e \*es#s, 1, hat are the things . o 5ants #s to o0

\*es#s ans5ere , The 5or9 . o 5ants yo# to o is this&Be2eve the One he sent@Sa2vation is not a ! atter o7 trying, 4#t tr#sting\$It1s not a ! atter o7 "roving yo# eserve it, 4#t a33e" ting it 4y 7aith, 9no5ing yo# on1t eserve it\$

The i ea o7 gra3e is so 7 oreign an antitheti3a2 to the "o"#2ar! is3on3e"tions a4o#t. o an even other re2gions that 5 hen the Bi42e ta29s a4o#t sa2vation as a 7 ree gi7t o7. o 1s gra3e,! any "eo"2e res"on 5 ith a 42an9 stare\$ There is a! enta2 an e! otiona2 is3onne3t\$, e are so #se to re3eiving 3 on itiona2 2 ove (4 5 i 22 2 ove yo# i 7\$\$ or 4 2 ove yo# 4 e 3 a #se \$\$ a that #n3on itiona2 gra3e is an #n7a! i 2 ar an even #n3o! 7 or ta42e 3 on 3 e "t\$

they are o7ten 3ontra i3tory\$B#t the 4ig i ea 4ehin a22 re2igions is that yo#! #st 5or9, strive, an "#t 7orth great e77ort in or er to get. o to 2i9e yo#\$

So. o 3a! e to earth as \*es#s essentia22y to say&@ o#g#ys have got it a225 rongEO73o#rse oing goo things! atters, 4#t it oesn1t! a9e! e 2ove yo# any! ore or any 2ess\$My 2ove 7or yo# is #n2i! ite, #n3on itiona2, #n3hanging, an #n eserve \$So 2et! e tea3h yo# a ne5 3on3e"t 3a22e gra3e\$-o# 3an1t"#r3hase it, 5or9 7or it, or 4e goo eno#gh to! erit it\$It1s a gi7t that 5i223ost! e a 2ot, 4#t it is 7ree to yo#\$ Everything I o 7or yo#, to yo#, in yo#, an thro#gh yo#: every sing2e 42essing yo# have in 2i7e: is a gi7t o7! y gra3e\$Itve one it a227or yo#\$@

, hile religions are 4ase on the 5or @ o,@salvation is 4ase on the 5or @ one\( \mathbb{P} \), hen \*es\( \mathbb{H} \)s ie 7or yo\( \mathbb{H} \) on the 3ross, he e832ai! e , \( \mathbb{Q} \)t is 7inishe \( 01 \mathbb{P} \) It is e8tre! e2y i! "ortant to note that \*es\( \mathbb{H} \)s i \( n1 \)t say, \( \mathbb{Q} \) a! 7inishe ,\( \mathbb{Q} \)4e3a\( \mathbb{H} \)s he 5asn\( \mathbb{E} \)He ha ! ore to \( \mathbb{S} \)

Three ays 2ater, he 3a! e 4a39 to 217e, res#rre3te 7ro! eath, an 5a29e aro#n \*er#sa2e! 7or 7orty ays\$He! et 5ith in ivi #a2s an gro#"s o7#" to 7ive h#n re "eo"2e 4e7ore as3en ing 4a39 to heaven\$

So 5hat 5as 7inishe 0 The "ay! ent 7or yo#r sa2vationEThe "hrase &t is 7inishe @is a3t#a22y a sing2e 5or in He4re5 that \*es#s 3rie o#t\$It 5as sta! "e on 4i22s that ha 4een "ai o77 an on "rison senten3es that ha 4een 3o! "2ete \$It! eant &'ai in 7#22E@Re2igion says, @ oE@\*es#s says, @ oneE@He has a2rea y ta9en 3are o7 the e8"ense o7 yo#r sa2vation\$

- ears ago, a g#y as9e ! e, @ hat ! #st I o to get to heaven0@l sho39e hi! 4y re"2ying, @ o#1re too 2ate\$@ He i n1t e8"e3t that ans5er an an8io#s2y res"on e , @ hat o yo#! ean, it1s too 2ate to o anything0@l sai , @ hat nee e to 4e one 5as one 7or yo# t5o tho#san years ago 4y \*es#s\$A22yo# nee to o is a33e"t 5hat he1s a2rea y one 7or yo#E

There's nothing! ore to a \$\text{lts} gra3e"2\text{#s nothing}\$\text{\$\pi\$}

The Bi42e says, 4t is 4y gra3e yo# have 4een save, thro#gh 7aith: an this not 7ro! yo#rse2ves, it is the gi7t o7. o: not 4y 5or9s, so that no one 3an 4oast\$40 Noti3e that yo#r Christ! as gi7t 7ro! . o 3o! es 4y gra3e an thro#gh 7aith\$

#### B- . RACE

- , hat is gra3e0 . ra3e is . o 1s 2ove in a3tion\$
  . ra3e is 5hen . o 7ree2y gives yo# 5hat yo# nee
  even tho#gh yo# on1t eserve it an 3an never
  re"ay hi! \$. ra3e is 5hen . o so2ves yo#r greatest
  "ro42e! 4e7ore yo# even 9no5 it is a "ro42e! \$. ra3e
  is the 7a3e o7 . o 5hen he 2oo9s at yo#r 7a#2ts,
  7ai2#res, an 7ears\$. ra3e is . o 1s Ri3hes At Christ1s
  E8"ense\$
- . o says, @ 9no5 that yo#1ve 7ai2e to! eas#re #" to! y "er7e3t stan ar \$For everyone has sinne? 5e a22 7a22 short o7. o 1s g2orio#s stan ar \$An sin3e heaven 5o#2 n1t 4e a "er7e3t" 2a3e any! ore i7 1 7122e it 5ith sin7#2, i! "er7e3t" eo "2e, there1s no 5ay 1 3an a22o5 yo# into heaven #n2ess I so2ve yo#r greatest "ro42e!: one yo# 3an1t so2ve 4y yo#rse27\$- o# nee 7orgiveness an a tota2! a9eover\$So here1s! y "2an&15i223o! e to earth as a h#! an 4eing, an 15i22 sa3ri73e! yse27 in 2ove to "ay o77 the! assive e4t

yo# o5e 4e3a#se o7 yo#r sin an the a! age it has one PThe Bi42e te22s #s, He 3an3e2e the e4t, 5hi3h 2iste a22 the r#2es 5e 7ai2e to 7o22o5\$He too9 a5ay that re3or 5ith its r#2es an nai2e it to the 3ross P

Christ! as 50#2 have no! eaning i7\*es#s ha nIt ie on the 3ross 7or #s an then "rove that he is . o 4y rising again three ays 2ater on Easter S#n ay\$@He I\*es#sMis the atoning sa3ri7i3e 7or o#r sins, an not on2y 7or o#rs 4#t a2so 7or the sins o7 the 5ho2e 5or2 \$GBy ying to save yo#, \*es#s "ai o77 yo#r e4t, 3o! "ensate 7or the a! ages o7 yo#r sin, re ee! e yo# 7ro! s2avery to evi2, an s#4stit#te hi! se27 to ta9e the "#nish! ent yo# eserve \$That, ! y 7rien , is 5hat "eo" 2e are singing a4o#t 5hen they sing @A! a6ing . ra3e@E

- o#! ay 4e "riviæge to 7ee2 ee" 2y 2ove 4y others, or yo#! ay 7ee23o! "2ete2y #n2ove this ChristC! as\$Regar 2ess, yo# nee to thin9 a4o#t this&no! an or 5o! an 5i22 ever 2ove yo# as 3o! "2ete2y an

ee"2y as \*es#s oes\$His eath 7or yo# "roves it\$@This is 2ove&not that 5e 2ove . o , 4#t that he 2ove #s an sent his Son as an atoning sa3ri73e 7or o#r sins\$G The 4etter yo# #n erstan 5hat \*es#s i on the 3ross, the ! ore yo#122#n erstan 5hat 2i7e is rea22y a22a4o#t\$

/o yo# 9no5 5hy the tra ition o7 gi7t giving at Christ! as 4egan0 Be3a#se. o gave the 7irst an greatest gi7t at the 7irst Christ! as: the gi7t o7 his Son\$@Than9s 4e to. o 7or his in es3ri4a42e gi7tEG

O#r 5or2 is 7i22e 5ith 7r#strate "eo" 2e 5ho on 1t 9no 5 5hat they are 2oo 9ing 7or an 5o#2 n1t 9no 5 5here to 7in it i7 they i \$They; #st 9no 5 that so! ething is! issing, so! ething is in 3o! "2ete in their 2ives\$It is a gna 5ing 7ee 2ing that there is got to 4e! ore to 2i7e than a "ay3he 39 #nti2 retire! ent\$May4e yo# have trie to 7in 7#27i22! ent in stat #s or se 8 or sa 2ary or se 3 #rity or s #33 ess, to no avai 25, hat yo #1 re! issing: 5hat yo # rea 22y nee: is sa 2vation \$-0 #

5ere! a e 4y. o an 7or. o, an #nti2yo# #n erstan that, 27e 5i22never! a9e sense\$

# >A Savio#r has 4een 4orn to yo#? he is Christ the Lor IG LU) E A& ' NIV

- o#! ay 4e 2oo9ing 7or a savior in the 5rong "2a3es& I7 I 3o#2; #st 7in the right! an or 5o! an, every C thing 5o#2 4e great\$ I7 I ha a 3ertain; o4 or got a "ro! otion or ha a 4a4y or attaine a 3ertain 2eve2 o7 5ea2th, then I1 7ee2 "ea3e7#2 an 7#27i22e \$17 on2y I 3o#2 a3hieve a 4ea#ti7#2 4o y, i! "ress the right "eo" 2e, o5n the right things, or es3a "e to Tahiti, then! y e! "tiness 5o#2 4e 7i22e \$

The ans5er is not in a "2a3e, a "rogra!, or a "i22\$The ans5er is a "erson\$It1s \*es#s\$, hat yo#1re! issing is a re2ationshi" 5ith the One 5ho 3reate yo# so he 3o#2 2ove yo#\$@For as yo# 9no5 hi! 4etter, he 5i22 give yo#, thro#gh his great "o5er, everything yo#

nee 7or 2iving a tr#2y goo 2i7e&he even shares his o5n g2ory an his o5n goo ness 5ith #s1@

#### THROU. H FAITH

. o a2so te22s #s, @Peo"2e are e32are righteo#s 4e3a#se o7 their 7aith, not 4e3a#se o7 their 5or9\$@ The theo2ogi3a2ter! 7or the "hrase @ e32are righteo#s 4e3a#se o7 their 7aith@is @#sti7ie \$PTo 4e ;#sti7ie 4y. o ! eans to 4e! a e @#stCasCi7I1 @ never sinne EThe 5arrant 7or yo#r arrest is 3an3e22e \$The 3harges are ro""e \$The s2ate is 32eane \$The g#i2t is gone\$The "ena2ty has 4een "ai \$ Li9e an o2 Et3h A S9et3h t#rne #"si e o5n an sha9en or a 3o! "#ter har rive that has 4een 3o! "2ete2y erase of ata, the evi en3e o7a22yo#r sins an ! ista9es is 5i"e o#t\$An ho5 oes this great; #sti7i3ation ha" "en0 Thro#gh 7aith\$

\*#st as "arents ee" 2y esire an 2ong 7or their 3hi2C ren to tr#st their 2ove, . o 5ants yo# to 2earn to tr#st hi! \$The Bi42e says, @ itho#t 7aith it is i! "ossi42e to "2ease . o , 4e3a#se anyone 5ho 3o! es to hi! ! #st 4e2ieve that he e8ists an that he

re5ar s those 5ho earnest2y see9 hi! @ Faith! a9es . o s! i2e\$It\$s not 5hat yo# o, 4#t 5ho! yo# tr#st, that gets yo# into heaven\$

As a young! an, I 5as a 217eg#ar 7or three s#!! ers\$ Peo" 2e "ani 3 5 hen they sense they are ro 5 ning an ty"i3a22y 72ai2their ar! s aro#n , gras"ing 7or anything \( \) Every \( \) 27eg#ar \quad 9no5s that i7 he tries to res3#e so! eone 5hols sti227#22o7a rena2ine an 7ear7#22y trying to save hi! se27, the vi3ti! 5i222/9e2y "#22the 217eg#ar #n er5ater 5ith hi! \$An e8"erien3e 217eg#ar 9no5s he! ay have to stay 4a39 a 7oot, trea 5ater, an 5ait #nti2the ro5ning "erson gives #"\$Then it 4e3o! es =#ite easy to! a9e the res3#e\$, hen the vi3ti! 7ina22y gives #", he re2a8es, an the 217eg#ar 3an ta9e over\$At that "oint the 217eg#ar si! "2y"#ts his ar! over the vi3ti! an s5i! s 4a39 to shore\$A22the ro5ning "erson has to o is tr#st the 217eg#ar \$B#t a "erson 3an1t 4e save #nti2he gives #" trying to save hi! se27\$

Have yo# given #" trying to save yo#rse270 Consi er this&i7 it 5ere "ossi42e 7or yo# to save yo#rse27 an yo# i n1t rea22y nee a savior, . o 5o#2 not have 5aste the enor! o#s energy, e77ort, an "ain to sen one\$17 there 5ere any other 5ay, on1t yo# thin9 \*es#s 5o#2 have 3hosen it instea o7 s#77ering on a 3ross0

I have no i ea 5hat 5orries or an8ieties or 7ears yo#1re 3arrying right no 5 as yo# are rea ing this\$ B#t \*es#s 9no 5s, he 3ares, an he 3an he 2" yo#: i7 yo# 5i 22 tr #st hi! 3o! "2ete 2y\$An he 5i 22 he 2" \$\*es#s sai this @/o not 4e 5orrie an #"set\$\$\$\$Be 2eve in . o an 4e 2eve a 2so in! e \$\$

. o is 5aiting to save yo#\$He 5ants to save yo#
7ro! sin an se27, save yo# 7or his "#r"ose, an save
yo# 4y his gra3e, thro#gh 7aith\$B#t yo#1ve got to
re2a8, =#it trying to save yo#rse27, 2et go, an tr#st
yo#r savior to o it 7or yo#\$

- ears ago I 5as visiting! y ear 7rien Peter / r#39er at his ho! e\$Peter 5as a tr#e Renaissan3e! an, the 7ather o7! o ern! anage! ent an one o7 the! ost 4ri23ant thin9ers o7the t5entieth 3ent#ry\$I as9e Peter, 4Ho5 i yo#3o! e to a33e"t \*es#s Christ as yo#r savior0@He tho#ght a4o#t it 7or a 7e5 se3on s, then re"2ie, 4The ay that I 7ina22y #n erC stoo gra3e, I rea2i6e I 5as never going to get a 4etter ea2than that I@
- , hen \*es#s 5as on the 3ross "aying 7or o#r sins, the s9e"ti3s stan ing aro#n ! o39e an ta#nte hi!, saying, @17yo# are the Son o7. o , save yo#rse27an 3o! e o5n 7ro! the 3ross 10 O73o#rse, \*es#s ignore the!, 4e3a#se that 5asn1t his "#r"ose in 3o! ing to earth\$He i n1t 3o! e to save hi! se27\$He 3a! e to save yo#\$
- , hat have yo# got to 2ose 4y saying yes to \*es#s0 o#122 2ose g#i2t, inse3#rity, 2a39 o7 "#r"ose, 7ear o7 eath, ho"e2essness, an8iety, sha! e, "o5er2essness,

an a 2ot o7 other 4aggage that yo# 3arry 5hen yo# atte! "t to 2ive 5itho#t. o 1s g#i an3e\$, ho 5o#2 t#rn o5n an o77er 2i9e that0 Sti22, o gives yo# the 3hoi3e\$-o# 3an e3i e to 9ee" 2iving a se27C3entere 2i7e, se"arate 7ro! o, or yo# 3an 3hoose to t#rn yo#r! in an heart 7ro! going yo#r o5n 5ay to 7o22o5ing \*es#s (that1s 3a22e re"entan3e+\$Then as9 7or 7orgiveness 7or a22 yo#r sins, an "#t yo#r tr#st in o 1s Son, \*es#s, an 5hat he has a2rea y one 7or yo#E

# A Time

For

# Reconciliation

M#3h o7 5 or 2 history is the story o7 3 on 72/3t\$/#ring the "ast J.JIF years there have 4een near2y ' J.FFF 5ars, an these are on2y the ones 5e 9no5 a4o#t\$As I 5 rite this, there are thirtyCt50 2arge an s! a225 ars going on in the 5or2 \$, e h#! an 4eings on it see! to 4e very goo at 2 ving in "ea3e 5 ith one another\$ , elre! #3h 4etter at isagreeing, 7ighting, an 7e# ing\$A h#n re years ago, "o"#2ar senti! ent 4e2ieve that i75e 3o#2; #st get the 5or2 e #3ate, a22the 5ars 5o#2 vanish\$B#t a7ter t5o 5or2 5ars o33#rre a! ong the! ost e #3ate nations on the "2anet, that naive o"ti! is! has vanishe \$, itho#t a trans7or! ation o7 the heart, e #3ation si! "2y a22o5s #s to thin9 #"! ore so"histi3ate 5ays to 9i22one another\$There are! any 4ri21ant "eo" 2e in "rison\$ An e #3ate ! in oes not a#to! ati3a22y "ro #3e a "ea3e7#2heart\$, hat the 5or2 es"erate2y nee s is re3on3i2iation\$

Re3on3i2ation is the restoration of "ea3e\$Pea3e 5ith . o , "ea3e 5ith others, an "ea3e in yo#r o5n heart\$

It is the "o5er7#2! ira32e 3#re 7or 4ro9en 2ves an re2ationshi"s\$Re3on3i2ation e7#ses 3on72i3t an t#rns 3haos into 3a2! ness\$It =#iets =#arre2s\$It s5a"s yo#r stress 7or . o 1s serenity, t#rns tension into tran=#i2ity, an "ro #3es "ea3e o7! in instea o7 "ani3 or "ress#re\$B#t the s"irit o7 re3on3i2ation see! s to 4e in short s#""2y to ay\$

Fort#nate2y the thir "#r"ose o7 Christ! as is re3on3i2ationETo the she"her s o7 Beth2ehe!, the thir anno#n3e! ent o7 the ange23on3erne the arriva2o7 the @rin3e o7 Pea3e \*\* \*es#s 5o#2 not on2y tea3h the 5ay to "ea3e 4#t 5o#2 e! "o5er #s to 2ve 2ves o7 "ea3e i7 5e 5o#2 tr#st hi! \$

@ 2ory to . o in the highest, an on earth "ea3e, goo 5i22to5ar ! en 9e LU) E A& D) \*V

Last year, I 2ogge a4o#t seventyC7ive tho#san ! i2es in internationa2trave2SIn every 3o#ntry I visite , I

5itnesse the #niversa2"ro42e! o73on733t\$-o# 3an 7in it in 4a395ater r#ra2areas as 5e22as in highC te3h 3os! o"o2itan 3ities\$E3ono! i3 5ea2th see! s to! a9e no i77eren3e at a22\$In so! e 5ays te3hno2ogy is a 3#2"rit in the "o2ari6ation o73ivi2i6ation\$The Internet has a22o5e the 7or! ation o7! i22ions o7! i3roCs#4gro#"s\$Ni3he i entities 9ee" getting s! a22er an s! a22er\$

to 3reate entertaining stories, 3ivi26ation is 7ast 2osing its 3ivi2ty\$R# eness, not 9in ness, is on the in3rease\$In! y trave2s live o4serve every i! agina42e ty"e o73on723t: 4et5een ra3es, nationa2ties, 2ang#age an re2igio#s gro#"s, "o2ti3a2 an ethni3 "arties, an ri3h an "oor\$Then, as a "astor in! y 3o!! #nity, I 3onstant2y ea25ith inter"ersona23on723ts in! arriages, 7a! i2es, o77i3es, neigh4orhoo s, Litt2e Leag#e, an 4et5een 3h#r3h! e! 4ers\$Then I go ho! e an, 2i9e every other 7a! i2y, so! eti! es have 4ig isagree! ents there\$

The sa res#2t o7a22this 3on723t is that the 5or2 is 2ttere 5ith the e4ris o7 ivi e ho! es, a! age 3hi2 ren, is3ar e 7rien shi"s, an estroye "artnershi"s\$In! y Christ! as! a22s#rvey I as9e sho""ers, @ here 5o#2 yo# 219e to see "ea3e this Christ! as0@Here1s 5hat I hear &

- ♦ @1 2/9e "ea3e 5ith! y "arents,! y e8, an! y 9i s
- ♦ @1 2/9e to see the en o7 "o2/ti3a24i39ering on TV\$@
- ♦ ¶ nee "ea3e in! y! in an! y heart
  "ea3e7#2neigh4orhoo \$En "re;# i3e against
  M#s2!! s
  \$\text{M}\$
- ♦ 47 "eo" 2e 5 ere ! ore "ea3e7#2, ! ay4e they 50#2 n1t 4e so r# e\$€

- ♦ @Honest2y, i75e on 1 7in "ea3e soon, ! y ! arriage 5i224e over 9
- ♦ @ 5ant ! y ! o! an a y to get 4a39 together
- ♦ @1 2/9e to see "ea3e every5here\$9

Is "ea3e on earth rea22y "ossi42e, or is it an #nattainC a42e 7antasy0 Is 3ivi2ity: @goo 5i22to5ar ! en@ "ossi42e 5hen 3#rrent 3#2t#re 3on itions #s to 4e 3yni3a2an sar3asti3, to #se "#tC o5ns an na! eC 3a22ing, to e! ean an e! oni6e those 5ho 4e2ieve i77erent2y0

The starting "oint to "ea3e in yo#r 217e is #n erC stan ing the 3a#ses o73on7213t\$There are! any reasons, 4#t here are t5o 4ig ones\$The 7irst is o#r nat#ra2se27C3entere ness\$, hen I 5ant everything! y 5ay, an yo# 5ant it yo#r 5ay, then! y agen a

32ashes 5ith yo#rs\$17 neither o7#s is 5i22ing to 3o! "ro! ise o#t o72ove, s"ar9s 72y\$This s3enario "2ays o#t! i22ions o7ti! es a ay in re2ationshi"s\$ Even 5hen yo# 2ove so! eone, it oesn1t! ean yo#1re going to agree on everything\$) ay an I 2earne that on o#r honey! oonESo the very 7irst Bi42e verse 5e! e! ori6e together as ne52y5e s 5as Prover4s' %& F&On2y 4y "ri e 3o! eth 3ontention\$G, e nee e that verse a 2otE

A se3on 3o!! on, 4#t 2ess #n erstoo, 3a#se o7 3on72/3t is e8"e3ting others to! eet nee s in o#r 2/1 ves that on2y. o 3an! eet\$, e!a9e e!an s o7 others instea o7 2oo9ing to. o \$\$o! any "eo"2e get! arrie 5ith #nrea2/1 sti3 e8"e3 tations an then ivor3e\$No h#! an 4eing 3an 7#22y! eet a22 yo#r nee s\$That1s a; o4 7or. o \$

Instea o730! "2aining an 42a! ing others 7or yo#r #n! et nee s, the Bi42e re30!! en s as9ing. o instea \$It says, @, hat 3a#ses 7ights an =#arre2s

a! ong yo#0 /onIt they 3o! e 7ro! yo#r esires that 4att2e 5ithin yo#0 - o# 5ant so! ething 4#t onIt get it\$- o# 9i22an 3ovet, 4#t yo# 3annot have 5hat yo# 5ant\$- o# =#arre2an 7ight\$- o# o not have, 4e3a#se yo# o not as9. o \$\mathbb{G}\$ 17yo# "raye as! #3h as yo# 3o! "2ain an =#arre2 yo#1 have a 2ot 2ess to arg#e a4o#t an ! #3h! ore "ea3e o7! in \$

- ears ago a 7rien invite! e to atten a stressC! anage! ent se! inar 5ith hi! \$One o7 the s#gC gestions the instr#3tor gave 7or stress re2e7 5as @Un2oa yo#r stress 4y te22ing it to an #n3on itiona2 2istener\$@Then he =#i392y a e , @The 4est 5ay to o this is to ta29 to yo#r "et1@I sat there a! a6e that "eo"2e 5ere a3t#a22y "aying to hear so! eone s#ggest that they sho#2 have a heartCtoCheart 5ith their ha! sterEPets are great, 4#t they 3an1t he2" yo# reso2ve the 3on72i3ts in yo#r 2i7e that are the roots o7 yo#r stress\$

The a "ost2e Pa#2ha a! #3h 4etter a2ternative&@/o

not 5orry a4o#t anything, 4#t "ray an as9. o 7or everything yo# nee, a25ays giving than9s\$An. o 1s "ea3e, 5hi3h is so great 5e 3annot #n erstan it, 5i229ee" yo#r hearts an ! in s in Christ \*es#s\$G

The reality is that there 5i22 never 4e "ea3e in the 5or2 #nti2theres "ea3e 5ithin nations\$An there 5i22 never 4e "ea3e in o#r nation #nti2theres "ea3e in o#r 3o!! #nities\$There 5ons 4e "ea3e in o#r 3o!! #nities #nti2theres "ea3e in o#r 7a! i2ies\$An there 5ons 4e "ea3e in o#r 7a! i2ies #nti2theres "ea3e in o#r in ivi #a22ives\$That 5ons ha" "en #nti2the Prin3e o7 Pea3e reigns in o#r hearts\$\*es#s 3a! e at Christ! as to 4ring to #s three 9in s o7 "ea3e&

Peace with God

The peace of God

Peace with others

## \*ESUS OFFERS - OU PEACE . ITH . O/

- o#! ay have never rea26e that i7 yo#1re trying to 2 ve yo#r 5 ay instea o7. o 1s 5 ay, yo#1re in 3 on 72 3 t 5 ith. o \$He 3 reate yo# to 2 ve 7 or his "#r" oses, 4 #t yo#1ve 4 een 2 ving in re4 e 22 ion against. o \$The Bi42 says this is a #niversa2 "ro42e! &@ elre a 22 2 9 e shee" 5 ho 1ve 5 an ere o 77 an gotten 2 ost\$, e1ve a 22 one o #r o 5 n thing, gone o #r o 5 n 5 ay\$An . o has "i 2e a 22 o #r sins, everything 5 e1ve one 5 rong, on hi!, on hi! L\*es #s 1 is this #ns o 9 en 5 ar 5 ith . o : 5 here ea 3 h o 7 #s 3 hooses to iso 4 ey 5 hat . o has to 2 #s to o: that 3 a #ses tension in yo #r! in an 7 a tig#e in yo #r 4 o y\$

The sy! "to! s o7 4eing at 5ar 5ith. o are easy to s"ot&irrita4i2ity, a =#i39 te! "er, inse3#rity, i! "aC tien3e,! ani"#2ation, arrogan3e an 4oasting, ho2 ing gr# ges, an ! any other attit# es an ha4its that the Bi42e 3a22s the @5or9s o7 the 72esh@The

Message trans2ation o7 the Bi42e gives this
"ara"hrase&4t is o4vio#s 5hat 9in o7217e eve2o"s
o#t o7 trying to get yo#r o5n 5ay a22 the ti! e&
re"etitive, 2ove2ess, 3hea" se8? a stin9ing
a33#! #2ation o7! enta2an e! otiona2gar4age?
7ren6ie an ;oy2ess gra4s 7or ha""iness\$\$\$3#tthroat
3o! "etition? a22C3ons#! ingCyetCneverCsatis7ie
5ants? a 4r#ta2te! "er? an i! "oten3e to 2ove or 4e
2ove ? ivi e ho! es an ivi e 2ives \$\$\$the vi3io#s
ha4it o7 e"ersona2i6ing everyone into a riva2i\$\$\$
#n3ontro22a42e a i3tions\$

In 3ontrast, the e77e3ts o7 4eing re3on3i2e to . o : 4eing at "ea3e 5ith hi! : are a22the =#a2ities yo#1 2i9e to have in yo#r 2i7e\$The Bi42e 3a22s these the @r#it o7the S"irit&@ hen the Ho2y S"irit 3ontro2s o#r 2ives he 5i22 "ro #3e this 9in o77r#it in #s&2ove, ;oy, "ea3e, "atien3e, 9in ness, goo ness, 7aith7#2ness, gent2eness, an se27C3ontro2\$@

Having 30#nse2e ! any "eo"2e, l1ve noti3e that

there is a 4#i2tCin 2onging insi e ea3h o7 #s to 4e at "ea3e 5ith o#r "hysi3a27athers\$This esire 7or 3onne3tion is har 5ire into #s\$Even i7 yo#r 7ather has 4een a "atheti3 to5ar yo# or a4an one yo# or even a4#se yo#, so! ething 7ee2s! issing i7 that re2ationshi" is is3onne3te \$, e 5ant it to 4e i77erent, an 5e 2ong to 4e re3on3i2e \$Peo"2e o a22 9in s o7 st#"i things in an atte! "t to earn the a" "rova2o7a "arent\$It\$s a ee" nee \$

B#t an even ee"er, #n3ons3io#s nee is to 4e re3on3i2e an re3onne3te to yo#r Creator, yo#r heaven2y Father\$Peo"2e o7ten te22! e they sense an in3o! "2eteness in their 2ives, 4#t they on1t 9no5 5hat they1re 2oo9ing 7or\$6o! ething is! issing,@they say, or, @There1s got to 4e! ore to 2i7e than; #st this1@ So they try a222an s o7 re! e ies: a3tivities, a3hieve! ents, r#gs, a77airs: in an atte! "t to "2#g the ho2es in their hearts\$, hat they nee is to 4e re3on3i2e to o \$ Nothing e2se 3an 3o! "ensate 7or a 4ro9en re2ationshi" 5ith o \$

## > 4 4 ring yo# goo ne5s o7; oy that 5i224e 7 or a22 "eo" 2e. G LU) E A& F NIV

The goo ne5s o7 Christ! as is that \*es#s 3a! e to 4e the 4ri ge o7 re3on3i2ation 4et5een yo# an . o \$ The Bi42e says, @ o 5as in Christ, ! a9ing "ea3e 4et5een the 5or2 an hi! se27\$In Christ, . o i not ho2 the 5or2 g#i2ty o7 its sins per It a2so says, Even 5hen 5e 5ere . o 1s ene! ies, he! a e "ea3e 5ith #s, 4e3a#se his Son ie 7or #s\$Tet so! ething even greater than 7rien shi" is o#rs\$No5 that 5e are at "ea3e 5ith . o , 5e 5i224e save 4y his Son1s 217e\$

Ho5 3an yo#, an i! "er7e3t "erson, 4e re3on3i2e to a "er7e3t. o 0, e22, it1s not a! atter o73o! "ro! ise or 4argaining or negotiating 5ith. o \$Pea3e 3o! es 7ro! s#rren er: tota2 #n3on itiona2s#rren er to

- . o \$-o# a ! it that . o is . o an yo# are notE-o# give #" the ri i3#2o#s notion that yo# 9no5! ore a4o#t 5hat1s 4est 7or yo# an 5hat 5i22! a9e yo# ha" "y than yo#r Creator oes\$-o# give #" the reC 4e22io#s attit# e that yo# 3an "i39 an 3hoose 5hi3h o7. o 1s r#2es yo#1227o22o5 an 5hi3h ones yo#122 ignore\$
- , hy sho#2 yo# s#rren er to . o 0, e22, one 7a3t is 3ertain&thereIs no 5ay yo# 3an 5in a 5ar against . o \$As the tit2e o7 the 'OBFs Broa 5ay "2ay "oints o#t, @ o#r ar! s are too short to 4o8 5ith . o I@As \*o4Is 7rien sai , &to" =#arre2ing 5ith . o E17 yo# agree 5ith hi! , yo# 5i22 have "ea3e at 2ast, an things 5i22 go 5e227or yo#\$@

## \*ESUS OFFERS - OU THE PEACE OF . O/

On3e yo#! a9e "ea3e 5ith. o, yo#1224egin to e8"erien3e the "ea3e o7. o in yo#r heart an in yo#r! in \$The! ore yo# "ray, the 2ess yo#122"ani3\$ The! ore yo# 5orshi", the 2ess yo# 5orry\$- o#1227ee2! ore "atient an 2ess "ress#re \$The Bi42e"ro! ises, @ o#, Lor, give tr#e "ea3e to those 5ho e"en on yo#, 4e3a#se they tr#st yo#\$@

, hat ro4s yo# o7yo#r "ea3e0 Most o7the 3#2" rits 7a22 into one o7three 3ategories&#n3ontro22a42e 3ir3#! stan3es (219e i22nesses, eaths, an 2ayo77s+, #n3hangea42e "eo"2e (5ho re7#se to 3oo"erate 5ith yo#r "2an to 3hange the! +, an #ne8"2aina42e "ro42e! s (5hen 217e see! s #n7air+\$Peo"2e res"on to these "ea3e ro44ers in one o7three 5ays&They try har er to 3ontro2everything, 4#t they1re g#arantee to 7ai2at that\$They si! "2y give #" 5ith a 7ata2sti3

attit# e, 7ee2ing 3ontro22e 4y their 3ir3#! stan3es\$
Or they gain tr#e "ea3e o7! in 4y res"on ing to sit#ations the 5ay \*es#s i an e"en ing on his S"irit to e! "o5er the! to o that\$

- o#Ive "ro4a42y hear o7the Serenity Prayer, 5hi3h 5as! a e 7a! o#s 4y Reinho2 Nie4#hr, 4#t yo#! ay have not rea the entire "rayer\$The 7irst thir o7the "rayer is o7ten =#ote an 5ritten on "osters\$B#t to e8"erien3e the serenity! entione in the 7irst thir o7the "rayer, yo# nee to 7o2o5 the ste"s 2ai o#t in the rest o7the "rayer&
- o grant! e the serenity to a33e"t the things I 3annot 3hange? 3o#rage to 3hange the things I 3an? an 5 is o! to 9no5 the i77eren3e\$Living one ay at a ti! e? en;oying one! o! ent at a ti! e? a33e"ting har shi"s as the "ath5ay to "ea3e? ta9ing, as He i, this sin7#25or2 as it is, not as I 5o#2 have it? tr#sting that He 5i22! a9e a22things right i7I s#rren er to His, i222 that I! ay 4e

# reasona42y ha""y in this 217e an s#"re! e2y ha""y 5ith Hi! 7orever in the ne8t\$

The "ath to the "ea3e o7. o 3o! es thro#gh 2ving an en;oying one ay at a ti! e, a33e"ting 5hat 3annot 4e 3hange instea o7 5orrying a4o#t it, tr#sting in . o 1s 2oving 3are an 5 is o!, an s#rren ering to his "#r"ose an "2an 7or yo#r 217e\$ \*es#s! a9es this "ro! ise&@Co! e to! e, a22o7 yo# 5ho are 5eary an 3arry heavy 4#r ens, an 15i22 give yo# rest\$Ta9e! y yo9e #"on yo#\$Let! e tea3h yo#, 4e3a#se I a! h#! 42e an gent2e at heart, an yo# 5i227in rest 7or yo#r so#2s\$G

# \*ESUS SHO, S - OU HO, TO MA) E PEACE, ITH OTHERS

On3e yo#Ive! a e "ea3e 5ith. o an yo# 4egin to e8"erien3e the "ea3e o7. o in yo#r heart,. o 5ants yo# to e8"erien3e the ;oy o7 4eing at "ea3e 5ith a22 the "eo" 2e in yo#r 217e\$He oes this 4y t#rning yo# into a "ea3e! a9er\$He gives yo# the esire, then the a4i2ity an "o5er, to re3on3i2e 5ith the "eo" 2e in yo#r 217e 5ith 5ho! yo#Ive ha 3on7213ts\$@A22 this 3o! es 7ro! the. o 5ho sett2e the re2ationshi" 4et5een #s an hi!, an then 3a22e #s to sett2e o#r re2ationshi"s 5ith ea3h other 9e, hen Christ 3o! es into yo#r 217e, one o7 the 7irst areas 5here yo# see a i77eren3e is in yo#r re2ationshi"s\$

, o#2 yo# 2/9e. o 1s 42essing on yo#r 2/7e an 3areer0 \*es#s sai, @B2esse are the "ea3e! a9ers, 7or they 5i224e 3a22e sons o7. o 1/2e Anyti! e yo# atte! "t to restore a 4ro9en re2ationshi", yo#1re oing

5hat. o 5o#2 o\$An 5hen yo# he2" 4ring other "eo" 2e together 5ho have 4een estrange 7ro! one another, yo# are a3ting 29e Christ\$The Bi42e 3a22s it @the! inistry o7 re3on3i2ation 3e. o 2oo9s o5n on yo# an says, @That1s! y gir2eor, @That1s! y 4oyE They are oing 5hat I1 o3eThe tr#e 3hi2 ren o7. o are "ea3e! a9ers, not tro#42e! a9ers\$

Noti3e \*es#s i nlt say, @ 2esse are the "ea3e 2overs,@ 4e3a#se everyone 2oves "ea3e\$Neither i he say, @ 2esse are the "ea3ea42e,@ 5ho are never ist#r4e 4y anything\$\*es#s sai , @ 2esse are the "ea3eC! a9ers @

, hat oes it! ean to 4e a "ea3e! a9er0 Its not avoi ing 3on7\( \alpha \) 3t\$ Its not r#nning 7ro! a "ro4\( \alpha \)! or "reten ing it oesn\( \alpha \) e8ist\$, hen so! eone says, @ on\( \alpha \) 5ant to ta\( \alpha \) a4o\( \alpha \) ti,\( \eal \) that\( \alpha \) 3o5ar i3e, not "ea3e! a9ing\$, hen yo\( \alpha \) ea\( \alpha \) gro5s \( \alpha \) arger or ee"er\( \alpha \) ea3e! a9ing is not a""ease! ent either\( \alpha \) 25ays giving in an

a22o5ing other "eo" 2e to get their 5 ay is "assivity, not "ea3e! a9ing \$\*es #s never sai yo#! #st 4e a oor! at or a 3ha! e2eon an 2ose yo#r i entity\$In 7a3t, \*es #s never a22o5e others to e7ine hi! \$

To 5or9 7or "ea3e! eans yo# a3tive2y see9 to en 3on723ts, yo# ta9e the initiative in "ro! oting re3on3i2ation 5hen re2ationshi"s 4rea9 o5n, an yo# o77er 7orgiveness to those 5ho have h#rt yo#\$ - o# "ass on to others the sa! e gra3e that . o has sho5n to yo#\$- o# 4ring "eo" 2e together instea o7 ivi ing the! \$@Those 5ho are "ea3e! a9ers 5i22" 2ant see s o7 "ea3e an rea" a harvest o7 righteo#sness

Many "eo" 2e are re2#3tant to re3on3i2e straine re2ationshi"s 4e3a#se they on 1t #n erstan the i77eren3e 4et5een 7orgiveness an tr#st or the i77eren3e 4et5een re3on3i2ation an reso2#tion\$ They are a7rai that i7 they re3on3i2e, they 122 have to ret#rn to a h#rt7#2 or ys7#n3tiona2 re2ationshi"

5itho#t any 3hange ta9ing "2a3e\$Thats a ! is#n erstan ing o7 re3on3i2ation\$

First o7 a22, re3on3i2ation is not the sa! e as reso2#tion\$Re3on3i2ation en s hosti2ity\$It oesn1t! ean yo#1ve reso2ve a22the "ro42e! s in the re2ationshi"\$- o# 4#ry the hat3het 4#t not the iss#es\$- o# 3ontin#e to ta29 a4o#t the iss#es an 5or9 on the!, 4#t no5 yo# o it 5ith res"e3t an 2ove instea o7 sar3as! an anger\$- o# 3an isagree agreea42y\$Re3on3i2ation 7o3#ses on the re2ationshi", 5hi2e reso2#tion 7o3#ses on the "ro42e! \$A25ays 7o3#s on re3on3i2ation 7irst\$, hen yo# o that, the "ro42e! shrin9s in si6e an so! eti! es 4e3o! es insigni7i3ant or so2ves itse27\$

Se3on, there is a 4ig i77eren3e 4et5een 7orgiveness an tr#st\$Forgiveness is to 4e instant an 7ree\$, e o77er it to others in the sa! e 5ay that . o 7orgave #s\$, e 7orgive so 5e 3an get on 5ith o#r 2ves instea o7 getting st#39 in the "ast #e to resent! ent

an 4itterness\$, e a2so re! e! 4er that \*es#s sai , @7 yo# re7#se to 7orgive others, yo#r Father 5i22not 7orgive yo#r sins\$\mathbb{P}\$ B#t restoring tr#st is a i77erent! atter\$Forgiveness ta9es 3are o7 the "ast\$Tr#st is a22 a4o#t the 7#t#re, an it! #st 4e earne over ti! e\$ Tr#st 3an 4e 2ost in a se3on , 4#t it ta9es a 2ong ti! e to re4#i2 it\$17 yo#1ve 4een in a "hysi3a22y a4#sive re2ationshi", . o e8"e3ts yo# to 7orgive that "erson so 4itterness 5on1t "oison yo#r 217e\$B#t . o oes not e8"e3t yo# to 3ontin#e 4eing a4#se \$

Here are so! e si! "2e ste"s 7or 4eing a "ea3e! a9er&

- ♦ P2an a "ea3e 3on7eren3e, ta9ing the initiative\$
- ♦ E! "athi6e 5ith others17ee2ings, 2istening to sho5 yo# 3are\$
- ♦ Atta39 the "ro42e!, not the "erson, s"ea9ing the tr#th in 2ove\$

Coo"erate 5herever "ossi42e, 2009ing 7or30! ! on gro#n \$

### ♦ E! "hasi6e re3on3i2ation, not reso2#tion\$

Are yo# a2205ing "eo" 2e 5ho have h#rt yo# in the "ast to 3ontin#e to h#rt yo# no50 Every ti! e yo# rehearse an re" 2ay in yo#r! in 5hat ha" "ene, yo# a2205 the! to h#rt yo# again\$That 1s #! 4\$The Bi42e says, @ o# are on2y h#rting yo#rse275ith yo#r anger@ Resent! ent is se27C estr#3tive 4e3a#se it a25ays h#rts yo#! ost, an it "ro2ongs yo#r "ain\$, hi2e the "eo" 2e 5ho h#rt yo# go on 5ith their 2ives, resent! ent 3a#ses yo# to get st#39 in the "ast\$ - o# nee to 2et it go\$

Christ! as, the season o7@'ea3e on earth, goo 5i22 to5ar ! en,@is the "er7e3t ti! e to o77er the gi7t o7 gra3e to others, 5hi2e 3e2e4rating the gra3e . o has sho5n yo#\$, ho o yo# nee to! a9e "ea3e 5ith

this Christ! as0 - o#! ay 4e thin9ing, P3o#2 never 7orgive that "erson\$The! e! ories are too "ain7#2 an the h#rt too ee"\$I 3an1t; #st 2et it go\$That1s 5hy yo# nee \*es#s as yo#r savior\$On2y 5hen yo# 7ee2 7#22y 7orgiven yo#rse27 5i22 yo# 4e a42e to 7orgive those 5ho1ve h#rt yo#! ost\$On2y as yo# are 7i22e 5ith the 2ove o7\*es#s 5i22 yo# 4e a42e to 2et yo#r h#rts go an get on 5ith yo#r 2i7e\$

# UN, RAPPIN. - OUR CHRISTMAS . IFT

I7 yo# sa3ri7i3e a22 yo# ha to 4#y! e a "ri3e2ess an "ersona2i6e Christ! as gi7t an I never too9 the ti! e to #n5ra" an o"en it, ho5 5o#2 yo# 7ee20 - o#1 4e isa""ointe, h#rt, an angry at! y 3a22o#s re;e3tion o7 yo#r genero#s 2ove\$An 7or! e, the gi7t 5o#2 4e 5orth2ess i7 I 2e7t it 5ra""e an sitting in the 3orner\$There 5o#2 4e 6ero 4ene7it to! e\$

It is asto#n ing that so! any "eo" have 3e2e4rate Christ! as every year o7 their 21 ves 5 itho#t ever having o ene their greatest an! ost e8" ensive Christ! as gi7t\$\*es#s Christ is. o 1s Christ! as gi7t to yo#\$, ra" e #" in \*es#s are a22 the 4ene7its an 42essings! entione in this 4oo9: an so! #3h! oreEIn \*es#s, yo#r "ast is 7orgiven, yo# get a "#r" ose 7or 21 ving, an yo# get a ho! e in heaven\$, hy 3e2e4rate Christ! as i7 yo#1re not going to o en the 4est gi7t o7 a220

The na! e \*es#s a3t#a22y! eans @ o saves\$PRight no5, \*es#s says this to yo#&@ 3an re"2a3e the 7r#stration in yo#r heart 5ith "ea3e\$I 3an re"2a3e yo#r g#i2t an sha! e 5ith 7orgiveness\$I 3an re"2a3e yo#r 5orry an an8iety 5ith 3on7i en3e\$I 3an re"2a3e yo#r e"ression 5ith rea2ho"e\$I 3an 7i22 yo#r e! "tiness 5ith! eaning an "#r"ose\$I7yo#122 tr#st! e 3o! "2ete2y, I 3an re"2a3e yo#r 3on7#sion 5ith 32arity\$B#t I1! not going to 4rea9 o5n the oor o7yo#r heart\$- o#Ive got to invite! e in\$PArenIt yo# rea y to o that0

It oesnIt! atter 5hether yo# are Catho2/3, Protestant, \*e5ish, M#s2/!, B# hist, Hin #, Mor! on, or have no re2/gio#s 4a39gro#n at a225. o i nIt sen \*es#s to 4ring #s re2/gionEHe 3a! e to! a9e a re2ationshi" 5ith . o "ossi42e\$>No5 5e re;oi3e in o#r 5on er7#2ne5 re2ationshi" 5ith . o : a224e3a#se o7 5hat o#r Lor \*es#s Christ has one 7or #s in ying 7or o#r sinsC! a9ing #s 7rien s o7

Many years ago, I "raye a si! "2e "rayer o7 3o!! it! ent that 3hange! y 217e\$l1ve 5 ritten it o#t 4e2o5, an I ho"e yo#122! a9e it yo#r "rayer to. o too\$B#t 71 rst I 5 ant to "ray 7 or yo#\$

#### M- PRA-ER FOR - OU

Father, as I write these words, I am praying for everyone who will read them. I don't know the circumstances they are facing right now, but you do know. You know every detail of their lives up to this very moment, and you love them deeply. Thank you for creating them, for loving them, and for sending Jesus to be their savior. You planned this moment before they were born, so I know that you will hear the prayer they are about to pray. Thank you, Lord.

No5 I invite yo# to e8"erien3e the "#r"oses o7 Christ! as 4y rea ing the 7o22o5ing "rayer as yo#r o5n\$The Bi42e says, 4t! a9es no i77eren3e 5ho yo# are or 5here yo#1re 7ro!: i7 yo# 5ant. o an are rea y to o as he says, the oor is o"en\$@ I7 yo# are 4y yo#rse27, I strong2y en3o#rage yo# to rea it t5i3e: 7irst si2ent2y, then a2o# \$

#### - OUR CHRISTMAS PRA- ER

Dear God, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, so I could get to know you. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for being with me all my life even when I didn't know it. I realize I need a savior to set me free from sin, from myself, and from all the habits, hurts, and hang-ups that mess up my life. I ask you to forgive me for my sins. I want to repent and live the way you created me to live. Be the Lord of my life, and save me by your grace. Save me from my sins, and save me for your purpose. I want to learn to love you, trust you, and become what you made me to be. Thank you for creating me and choosing me to be part of your family. Right now, by faith, I accept the Christmas gift of your Son. Fill me with your peace and assurance so I can be a peacemaker, and help me share this message of peace with others. In your name I pray, amen.

, hen yo# rea that, i yo# sin3ere2y! ean it as a "rayer to. o 0 17 yo# i ,3ongrat#2ationsE, e23o! e to the 7a! i2y o7. o EThe Bi42e says there is; oy in heaven anyti! e anyone 3o!! its his or her 217e to \*es#s\$17 yo#; #st no5 a33e"te the gi7t o7. o 1s gra3e 4y 7aith, the ange2s are having a "arty in heaven 7or yo#, right no5E

### , HAT SHOUL/I/O NO, 0

The 7irst thing yo# sho#2 o is te22others a4o#t yo#r e3ision to give yo#r 2i7e to ChristE17 they as9, @ hat oes that ! ean0@han the! this 4oo9E - o#! ight 3onsi er ho2 ing a 4irth ay "arty 7or \*es#s to share yo#r ne5s there\$17 yo#1ve 3o!! itte yo#r 2i7e to \*es#s Christ as a res#2t o7 rea ing this 4oo9, "2ease 2et! e 9no5\$1122 he2" yo# 7in a goo 3h#r3h ho! e i7 yo# on1t have one, 1122 sen yo# so! e! ateria2s that 5i22 he2" yo# start gro5ing s"irit#a22y, an 1122 give yo# a 7ree s#4s3ri"tion to! y ai2y ins"irationa2 eC! ai2\$EC! ai2yo#r story to! e at&

### ri39Qthe"ea3e"2an\$o!

A se3on ste" is to 4egin atten ing a Bi42eCtea3hing 3h#r3h\$17yo# on1t have a Bi42e, they 3an te22yo# 5here to get one\$They 3an a2so he2" yo# 4e 4a"ti6e as yo#r "#4213 e8" ression o77aith\$17yo# eC! ai2! e,

1122 o ! y 4est to re3o! ! en a goo 3h#r3h in yo#r area\$

A thir ste" is to share the ! essage o7 "ea3e 5ith others\$Pass this 4009 on to a 7rien \$- o#! ight give 3o"ies o7 it as Christ! as gi7ts\$The greatest gi7t yo# 3an give to anyone is to intro #3e the! to the . oo Ne5sE

Fina22y, 2009 7or "ra3ti3a2 5 ays that yo# 3an "ro! ote @'ea3e on earth an goo 5i22 to 5 ar ! en \$\textit{n}\$ 1 20ve to sen yo# in 7 or! ation on the P\$\textit{S}\textit{N}\textit{S}\textit{P}\textit{2} n that 5elve 4 een eve 20" ing\$ 1 the a "ersona2, 203a2, an g204a2 strategy thro #gh 5 hi3h or inary "eo" 2e are! a9 ing a i7 feren 3e together 5 herever they are \$P\$\textit{S}\textit{S}\textit{S}\textit{s}\textit{an s 7 or Pro! ote re3 on 3i2 ation, E=#i" servant 2ea ers, Assist the "oor, Care 7 or the si39, an E #3 ate the ne8t generation \$\textit{S}\textit{o}\textit{o}\textit{T}\textit{e}\textit{an s 27 e as a P\$\textit{S}\textit{A}\textit{K}\textit{P}\textit{arren3e 5 ith yo#r 21 e as a P\$\textit{S}\textit{A}\textit{K}\textit{P}\textit{P}\textit{T}\textit{T}\textit{P}\textit{T}\textit{P}\textit{T}\textit{P}\textit{T}\textit{P}\textit{T}\textit{P}\textit{T}\text

E! ai2ri39 Qthe"ea3e"2an\$o! 7or in7or! ation an visit

555\$he"ea3e"2an\$o!

For other P#r"ose / riven reso#r3es visit 555\$a 2e4a39reso#r3es\$o! \$

Merry Christmas!

## HOL/ A BIRTH/A- PART- FOR \*ESUS THIS CHRISTMAS

#### A. EN/A

- ❖ Sing so! e Christ! as 3aro‰\$
- ❖ Rea the Christ! as story 7ro! the Bi42e, L#9e A& C AF? Matthe 5 A& C' A\$
- ❖ Ea3h "erson shares ans5ers to t5o =#estions&
- '\$, hat a! I than 97#2 to . o 7 or this year 0
- A\$, hat a! I going to give \*es#s 7or his 4irth ay0
- C2ose 4y "raying 7or one another\$

### Why is Christmas such a big deal?

If you stop to think about it, it is astounding that the simple, unassuming birth of a peasant baby boy more than two thousand years ago in the Middle East can today cause traffic jams every December in places like New York City, Tokyo, and Rio de Janeiro.

The night Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, a small group of poor shepherds were quietly tending their flocks of sheep in a nearby field, looking up at the stars. Nothing seemed any different from a thousand other nights. But what was about to happen would transform not only their lives but billions of other lives as well. The world would never be the same again.

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Regardless of your religious background, you need to know how the three purposes of Christmas solve your three greatest needs.

Understanding and receiving God's Christmas gifts to you will transform your life . . . forever!

RELIGION/Christian Life/Inspirational



