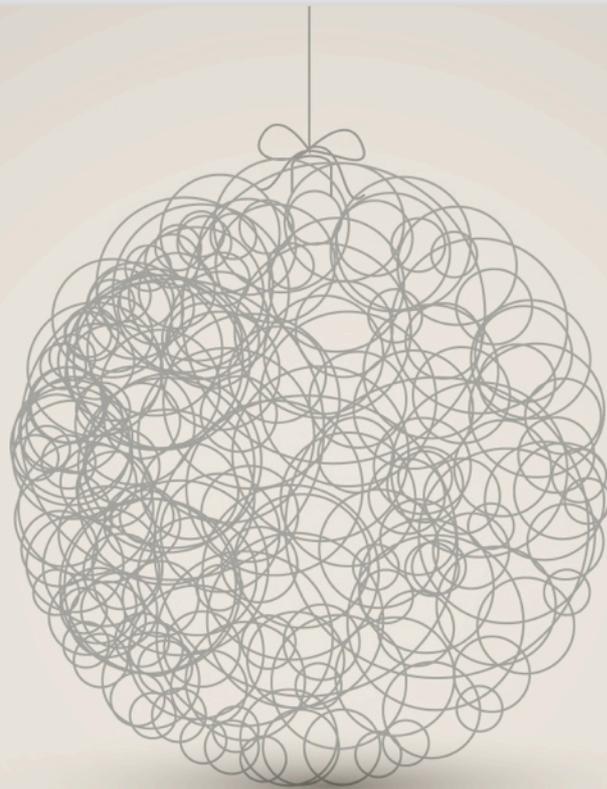


AC TALK

WHERE THE
APOSTOLIC COUNCIL
SHARE THEIR HEARTS

DEC
2014



cotn
CHURCH OF THE NATIONS



FROM
JOHN'S
HEART TO
YOURS

Christmas

without Christ?

“NEARLY TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO HE CAME TO THIS WORLD, AND HIS SPIRIT HAS MADE AN IMPACT DEEPER THAN THAT OF ANY OTHER PERSONALITY THAT HAS EVER TOUCHED THIS WORLD. HIS SPIRIT PERVADES ALL THE REALMS OF LIFE. HIS SPIRIT PERVADES LITERATURE AND GOVERNMENT AND LAW AND RELIGION AND ART AND MUSIC. ALL THE SPHERES AND REALMS OF LIFE HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY. WHAT IF HE HAD NOT COME? WHERE WOULD THE WORLD BE, AT THIS MOMENT, IF CHRIST HAD NOT COME?”

GEORGE W. TRUETT

Where indeed, would the world be, if Christ had not come?

Each year we remind ourselves of His coming and celebrate Christmas with millions of people across the world. Many do not even follow Him, nor recognize Him as Lord.

Little do they know what an impact He has made and continues to make on their world and how very different life would be without His coming! Very few unbelievers understand what a dread filled world we would be living in had Jesus not come.

How can they understand the true significance of Christmas and why we, His followers, delight so much in remembering His coming. They have no idea where even their lives would be without Him.

His disciples became salt and light to a world gone mad and the preserving influence of salt is incalculable. What would have turned completely rotten and been cast out, remains because of that salt.

What that light has brought to the darkness of this world is inestimable and the darkness would most certainly have destroyed what remained of this dark world except for Christ.

When one looks at the regions of the world where there is little or no salt and light the most heinous of atrocities are being committed in our time in the name of a foreign god. Over 130 innocent schoolchildren have just been shot in Pakistan and elsewhere in a Christ less society others are being beheaded in the name of a cause.

Without Christ, man's inhumanity to man seems to know no bounds, but when His Kingdom comes order and justice prevail.

From the jungles of Africa to the Far East and beyond the influence of Christians continues to impact life for the good.

In the early 1900's, it was followers of Jesus who exposed atrocities in the Congo and travelled through the USA and the UK disseminating photos. Colonialists were forcing the local people to extract rubber from the jungles. Those who resisted were castrated, burned or had limbs cut off.

It was followers of Jesus in India who brought to an end the inhumane practice of *sati* (the forcible burning of widows on their husbands' funeral pyres.)

It was a follower of Jesus, Eliza Bridgman who in 1864 sailed to China and opened a school for girls in Beijing who otherwise would have suffered prostitution, forced labour, or starvation. It became one of the first universities in China and today Peking University is China's most prestigious.

Countless thousands of Schools, Universities, Colleges, Hospitals Orphanages and centres of caring exist today because of His followers.

It is now a historical fact that democracy and fair play follow in the wake of missionaries who introduced people to Jesus.

Where Christ was preached the world changed.

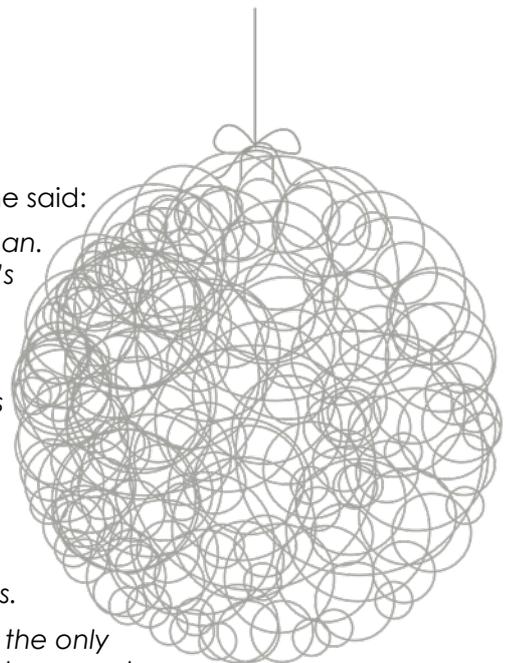
When Christ comes, His Kingdom comes and life is always better.

Where would the world be, if Jesus had not come?

James Allen Francis in 1926 preached a sermon about Jesus, in which he said:

"He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village, where He worked in a carpenter's shop until he was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerate preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a home. He didn't go to college. He never visited a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. He was only thirty-three when the tide of public opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves.

While He was dying, His executioners gambled for His garments, the only property He had on earth. When he was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one solitary life."



In the nineteenth century Charles Bradlaugh, a prominent atheist, challenged a Christian man to debate the validity of the claims of Christianity. The Christian, Hugh Price Hughes, was an active soul-winner among the poor in the slums of London. Hughes told Bradlaugh he would agree to the debate on one condition. Hughes said, "I propose to you that we each bring some concrete evidences of the validity of our beliefs in the form of men and women who have been redeemed from the lives of sin and shame by the influence of our teaching. I will bring 100 such men and women, and I challenge you to do the same." Hughes then said that if Bradlaugh couldn't bring 100, then he could bring 50, then he could bring 20. He finally whittled the number down to one. All Bradlaugh had to do was to find one person whose life was improved by atheism and Hughes—who would bring 100 people improved by Christ— would agree to debate him. Bradlaugh withdrew from the debate!

The evidence of Christmas is all around us!

The world may deny Christ. They may campaign against the Christmas holiday. They may scoff at our faith and reject His birth, but their world would be very much worse without Him.

For us as believers, may Christmas be a reminder of that fact and may we continue to "make disciples of all nations" until He comes again.

If Christmas is a celebration this side of the final coming of the Kingdom, imagine what a celebration it will be when His Kingdom knows no end and *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."* Revelation 11:15 (ESV)

From the Apostolic Council of COTN, please receive our wishes for a very blessed Christmas and a New Year of fruitful Kingdom life, through which Jesus may be glorified.

We are all so grateful for this wonderful family called Church of the Nations with whom we celebrate the coming of our Saviour.

God be with you.

John



JOHN AND JANE SCHOLTZ

COTN EVENTS 2015	DATE
COTN LEADERSHIFT SA, Jeffreys Bay	15-18 APRIL 2015
COTN DAY OF PRAYER	13 SEPTEMBER 2015
COTN LEADERSHIFT EUROPE, The Netherlands	24-27 SEPTEMBER 2015

For any comments, suggestions and news,
please do not hesitate to contact

the COTN Virtual Resource Centre at communication@cotn.org

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