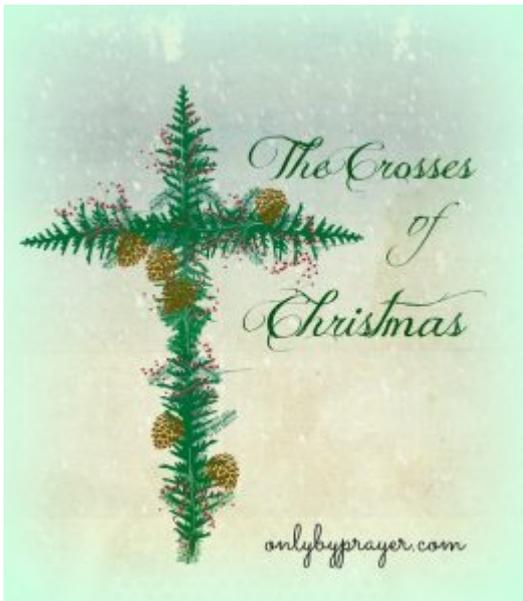


The Crosses of Christmas

At Christmas, our hearts turn to thoughts of Jesus.



We think of the newborn King swaddled in rough wool, laying in a manger. We ponder the cradle. But what about the cross? What does cross have to do with Christmas?

'Cross the continent,

Miles away, in the land of Persia, the Wise men readied supplies and treasures to cross over hazardous terrain to reach the feet of Jesus. Doubtlessly many troubles crossed their path as they journeyed to Bethlehem. Across political lines and racial boundaries they trekked. Sacrifice, labor and love marked their journey as a star led them to the Light of the World.

'Cross the town of Bethlehem,

the shepherds watched over their flocks in the fields and valleys. Not a star, but angels crossed paths with the herdsmen. The messengers of God heralded the Good News. Through the silent night, the shepherds crossed the town in

search of the tiny King.

'Cross the wilderness,

Joseph led Mary to Bethlehem. The young couple couldn't leave town quick enough. Many believed they had crossed a line. But Joseph and Mary knew. They KNEW the One who called them. And they followed.

'Cross the temple she saw them.

She saw *Him*. Even if her old eyes failed, the Spirit within her would have recognized HIM anywhere. Quickly, she crossed the courtyard of the temple. The aged and newborn. Cross generations of time, a widow meets her Savior.

The cradle. The cross. Christmas.

Because of the cradle, we have the cross.



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We can't have one without the other.

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:21

Action Points

1. Cross the continent and pray for another nation this Christmas. Choose a nation that is in the news or go to Voice of the Martyrs and find a nation in need of prayer. Like the Wisemen, how can you reach across the continent with the message Christmas?

2. Cross your town and share the love of Christ with those in need. Google search charitable organizations in your town such as Salvation Army, Samaritans or a local soup kitchen. Like the shepherds, how can you cross your town to share the love of Christ this holiday season?
3. Cross your church and look for the tired, the discouraged or the lonely. There are many walking wounded in our own congregations. Like Anna how can you reach across the pews of your church and share the love of our Savior this Christmas?

Merry Christmas.

Mary Kane

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