



The story of Christ's birth is a subversive story of an upside-down kingdom. It's a story of promise, hope, and a revolutionary love that is still changing the world to this day. So, what happened? What was once a time to celebrate the birth of a savior has somehow turned into a season of stress, traffic jams, and shopping lists. And when it's all over, many of us are left with presents to return, looming debt that will take months to pay off, and this empty feeling that we somehow missed its purpose.

Is this what we really want out of Christmas?

What if Christmas became a world-changing event again by turning our focus back to the birth of Christ? What could happen to your family if this focus was celebrated in loud, bold and totally unexpected ways? What if you could actually trade your season of stress for a season celebration and unbelievable memories with your friends and family? What if all of this could save a life at the same time? It can

Did you catch that statistic? Every year 450 billion dollars are spent on Christmas. 450 billion dollars! Sixteen billion dollars are spent on holiday

decorations alone. And every person, on average, spends \$850 on gifts. Of that...

- \$485 - Will be spent on family.
- \$120 - On yourself.
- \$90 - On friends.
- \$30 - On co-workers.
- \$60- On people like clergy, teachers, and baby sitters.
- \$30 - On greeting cards and postage.¹

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 (NIV)

² The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of the shadow of death ^[a]
a light has dawned.

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of
Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace
there will be no end.
He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

¹ American Research Group



Advent Conspiracy

Reclaiming Christmas

Don't you just love that feeling of joy that comes over you while scouring the mall for a Christmas gift for Mom? Or the serenity that fills your heart as you click endlessly through Amazon.com in a vain attempt to find a present for sister doesn't want and probably won't read? No? Didn't think so, neither do I!

For many, the first sight of garland and mistletoe in the stores elicits a feeling of dread that no amount of "Grandma got run over by a reindeer" or eggnog can relieve. When God sent the His son into the world that very first Christmas morning, I doubt very seriously he had today's version of "the holidays" in mind.

Our focus on **ADVENT CONSPIRACY** is all about moving away from the materialism that has eclipsed the light of Christmas and returning to what really matters ~ *Jesus and Kingdom of God*.

We reclaim Christmas when we ...

Worship Fully - We give thanks to God for the best gift ever given.

Spend Less - We shift the allocation of our resources away from the trivial and temporary and toward the significant and eternal.

Give More - We share our very lives with our family, friends and even those we may barely know.

Love All - We take the love that has been given so freely to us and give it to the world - no strings attached.

If all this sounds more appealing to you than fighting over toys at Target, books at Borders, or watches at Walmart, then join **THE CHRISTIAN CONSPIRACY**, and experience for yourself the "Peace on Earth" that comes only through knowing and serving the Savior who is Christ the Lord!



Rethink Church Reclaim Christmas

THE MATERIAL DARKNESS

▶ Materialism is another form of [Darkness](#)

"Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft under foot, without turnings, without milestones, without signposts."

[CS Lewis, [Screwtape Letters](#)]

"It is our preoccupation with possession, more than anything else that prevents us from living freely and nobly." - Bertrand Russell

▶ Seduced by [Stuff](#) ~ Addicted to [Affluence](#)

"Whatever a person trusts in place of God will one day turn to devour him." Oswald

▶ The Light reveals what the darkness wants to stay [Hidden](#)

"It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light." Jn 11:10

"I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." — C.S. Lewis

▶ We are the [Light Bearers](#)

"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." Mt 5:16

☐ **Accept YOUR Christmas Gift**

☐ **Go, Fill the Darkness**

