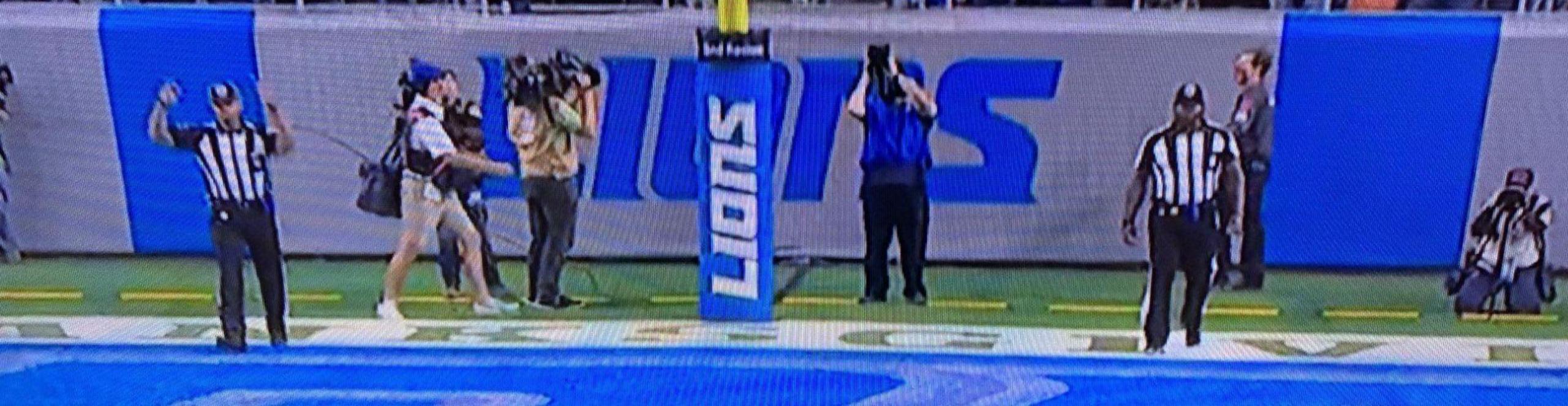


Giver.
Given.
Gift.

TO US A SON IS GIVEN - ISAIAH 9:6



JOHN
3:16



John 3:16-17

16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.



Isaiah 9:2

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.

Isaiah 9:3

You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

Isaiah 9:4-5

4 For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born,

to us a son is given;

and the government shall be upon his shoulder,

and his name shall be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

"Wait through the long, black night. Wait through the black that gets into your marrow. Wait through the dying, the cries you can't hear, the lurching gasp of the last death heaves. Sit through the night and the losses that scrape the sides of the soul, the burning tears that run, run through this night even now. Taste their saltiness and the darkness that seeps in cold at the corners and stains a thousand souls all alone. Wait in the cosmic dark, inhale the black of an endless universe, stare into it and feel the darkness get darker...No hint of help. No rumor of relief. No sign of saving. For us waiting through the night, waiting through the dark....

"And then...there it comes to the waiting, to the leaning, to the cold—a dawn! Light! Light!

Not mere candles wavering in the face of the black but a dawn—...A fire that the people walking in darkness did not set—but that they saw. A light that the people in the dark couldn't ignite, couldn't inflame, and couldn't fabricate—but could only find.

Christmas can only be found.

Christmas cannot be bought. Christmas cannot be created.

Christmas cannot be made by hand, lit up, set out, dreamed up. Christmas can only be found....In the mire and in the stench and in the unexpected—and only in the dawning of Christ.

"We are saved from our loneliness because God is love and he can't stand to leave us by ourselves, to ourselves.

— That is the message of Christmas. The message of Christmas is not that we can make peace. Or that we can make love, make light, make gifts, or make this world save itself.

The message of Christmas is that this world's a mess and we can never save ourselves from ourselves and we need a Messiah.

For unto us a Child is born."



-Ann Voskamp, *The Greatest Gift*, p. 136-139

Luke 1 – The Birth of Jesus Foretold

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" 29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

Luke 1 – The Birth of Jesus Foretold

30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

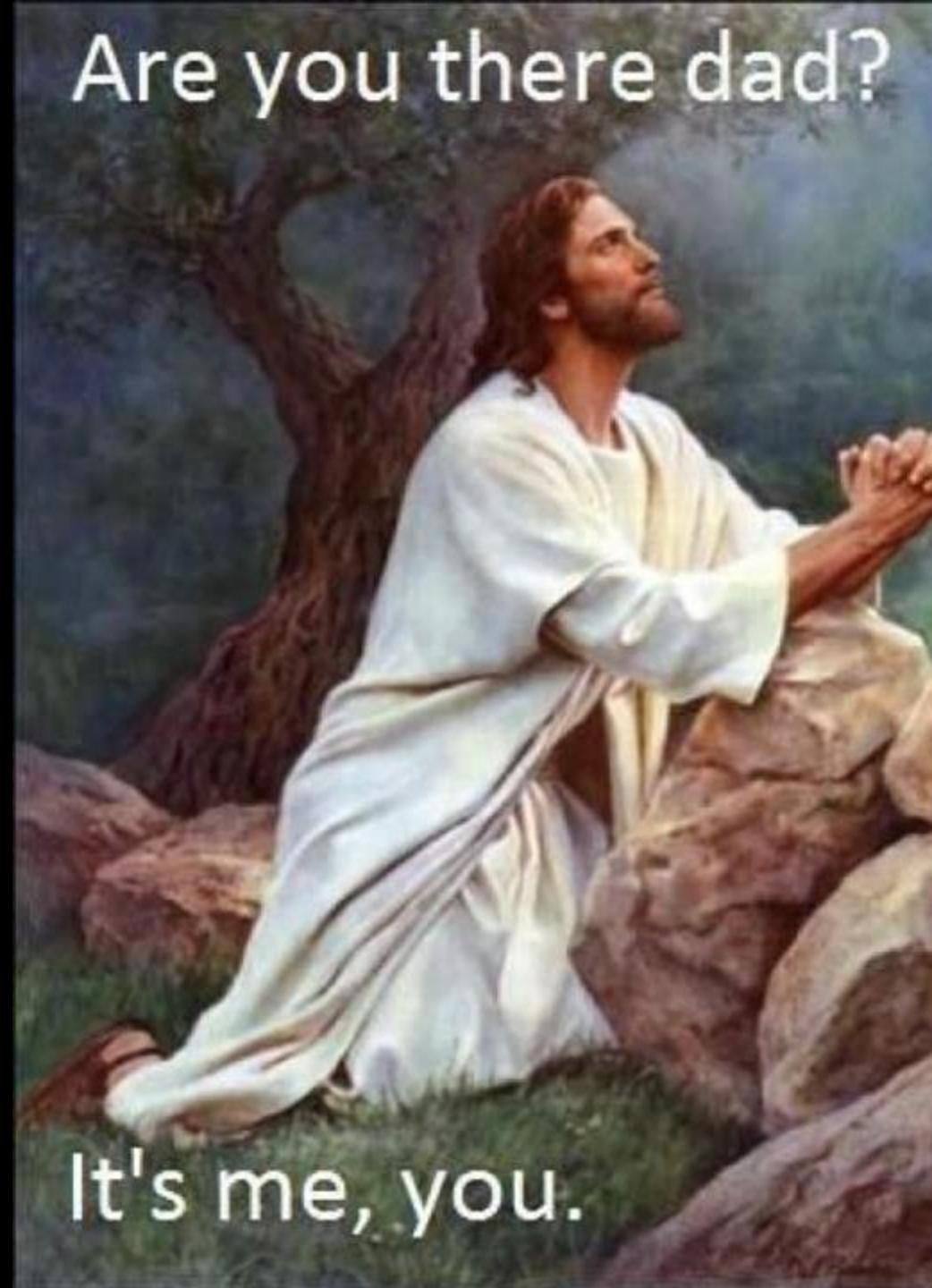
Luke 1 – The Birth of Jesus Foretold

34 And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

35 And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.



Are you there dad?



It's me, you.

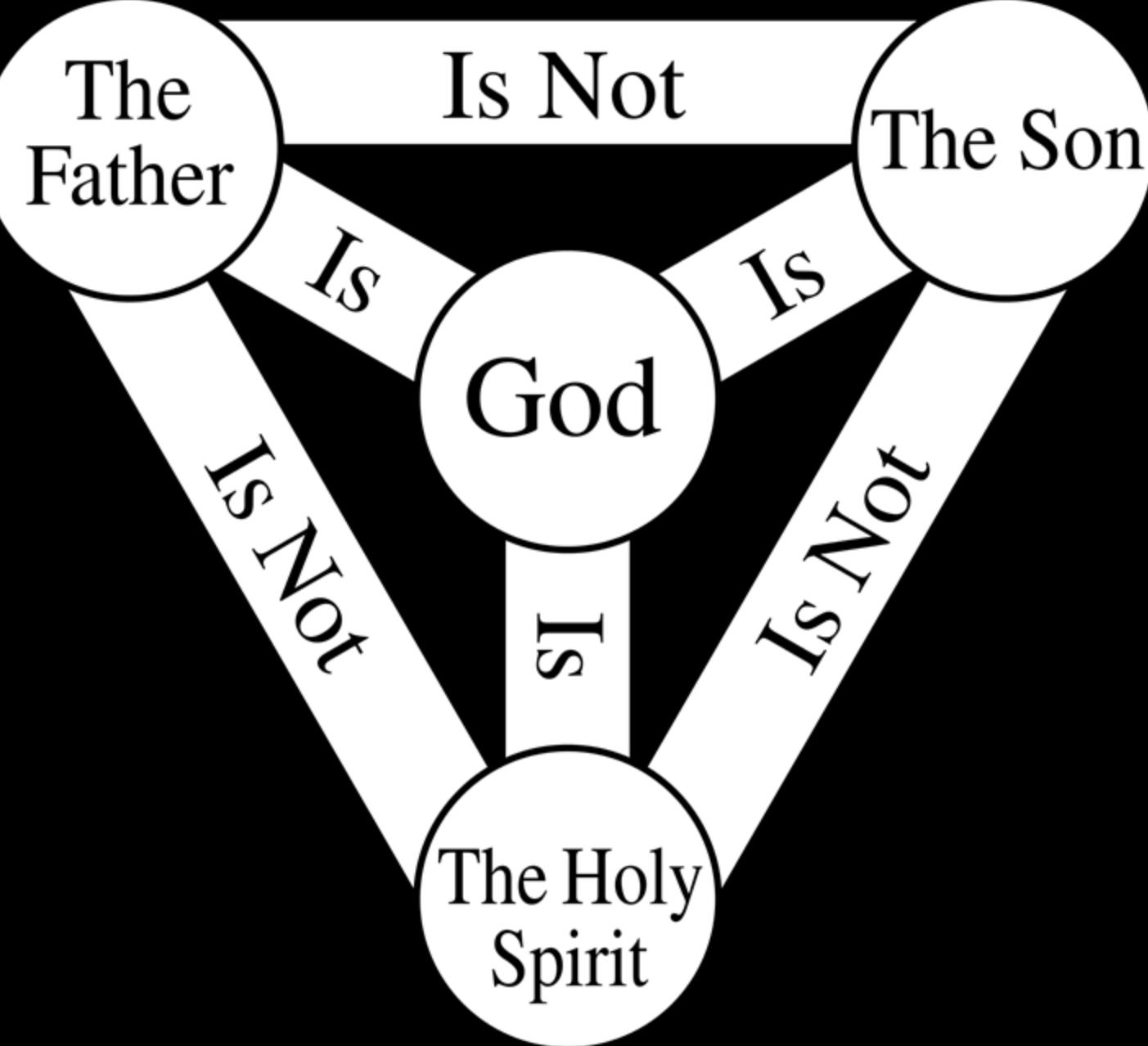
The Trinity of Wholesomeness



Rogers: Be Kind To Other People

Irwin: Be Kind To Animals

Ross: Be Kind To Yourself.



Luke 2:4-7

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, 5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. 6 And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.



Quiet he lies
whose vigor hurled
a universe. He sleeps
whose eyelids have not closed before.

-Luci Shaw, "Mary's Song"



Luke 2:8-14

8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. 10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Come and Stand Amazed

Come and stand amazed, you people

 See how God is reconciled!

See his plans of love accomplished

 See his gift, this newborn child

See the Mighty, weak and tender

 See the Word who now is mute

See the Sovereign without splendor

 See the Fullness destitute

“The Incarnation...is a divine invasion of the organic structure and stream of human heredity, wherein God the Son attacks sin in its concrete reality by penetrating the depths of our actual fallen human existence, cleansing our corruption at its root and eradicating our estrangement from God in his very person.”

-Orrey McFarland, “The God Who Gives First,” <https://mbird.com/bible/the-god-who-gives-first>



Ephesians 2:1-3

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Ephesians 2:4-7

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith.
And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9
not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

“

**“Christmas is telling you that you could
never get to heaven on your own.
God had to come to you.”**



-Tim Keller



NiNOS

(Nones in name only)



SBNRs

(Spiritual but not religious)



Dones



Zealous Atheists

Categories by Ryan Burge, "The Nones Project"



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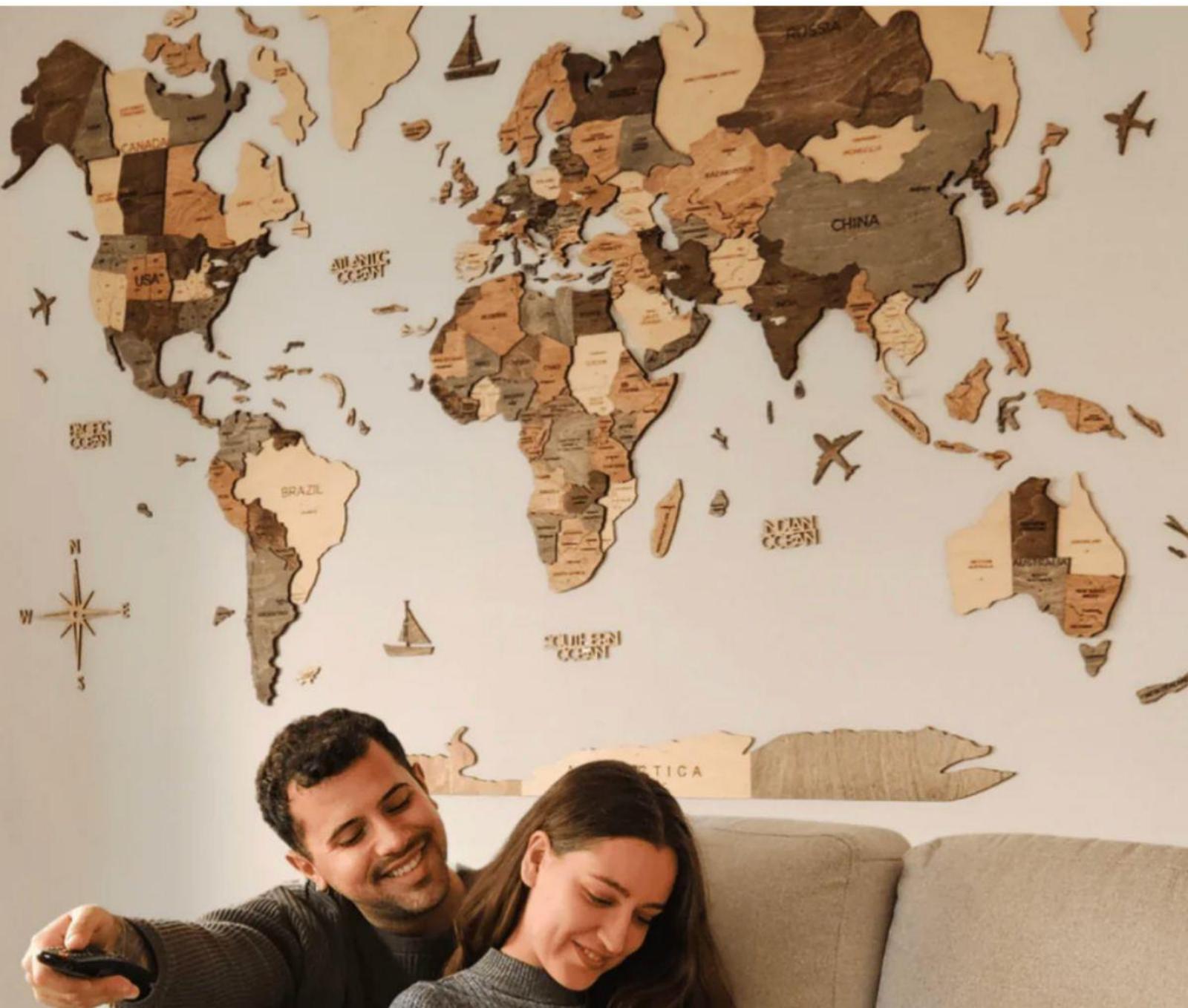
Categories by Ryan Burge, "The Nones Project"



John 10:11, 17-18

11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.



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M (24"x 39")

L (35"x 59")

SPEC

XL (

Style: **Blank (no names & border)**

Blank (no names & border)

Prime (

Language:

Older than eternity, now he
is new. Now native to earth as I am, nailed
to my poor planet, caught that I might be free,
blind in my womb to know my darkness ended,
brought to this birth
for me to be new-born,
and for him to see me mended
I must see him torn.

-Luci Shaw, "Mary's Song"

Gospel Response

Start:

Receive the Son into your life as he is, given for you.

Strengthen:

Come and Stand Amazed this Christmas season.