



Walmart in the United States stays open 24 hours of every day of every year ... except for Christmas day. It's an example of how, all over the world, Christmas is so much bigger than Easter. It's estimated, this year, Australians will spend \$11 billion on Christmas presents – and that's just the presents – not the food or travel. So, why is Christmas so much bigger than Easter? Surely part of the answer has to do with whether we prefer a beautiful little baby or the horrible murder of an itinerant preacher. Where's the contest? Babies are cute and cuddly! Fresh and innocent... full of promise and potential. While Easter is all about the awful thing that happened to that little baby when he grew up and became a man.

So, can't we just focus on the Christmas story? Can we not marvel and dwell on the miracle of childbirth and especially... especially the wonder of God coming amongst us in human form?

No. Jesus didn't come to be a perpetual baby. His mission was not to be the cutest or the most cuddly. When he grew up Jesus spoke most clearly about his mission to his disciples. This is what he told them. He "...came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

What happened at the cross was an intervention by God on behalf of the human race. The shedding of

Jesus's innocent blood was a payment or 'ransom' to satisfy God's requirement that blood be shed for sin. Jesus's death on the cross allows us to escape that payment. And it's the reason why people everywhere can have peace with God. Is it any wonder the cross is the universal Christian symbol.

Back when Jesus was born, an angel said to shepherds at night nearby,

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

When those shepherds went to gaze on the baby held in the arms of Mary, his mother, they knew he was their 'saviour'. What they couldn't have known is how his death on a cross would be the solution and how generations to come would find there, comfort and joy.

Bible Verse: *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11)*

Prayer: Dear God, I praise you for sending Jesus my saviour.