

True celebration

“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:11 (NKJV)

This was our 10th Christmas outside the United States. As always, we missed family, trips to the mall, cold weather and Christmas programs at church. We were excited, however, to have a group from Kentucky with us during a week in December. They helped us decorate the tree, and then we headed out to the small village of Tagabati (TAH-guh-BAH-tee).

There are only two believers in the village, so most people had never heard the gospel. The team shared the Christmas story as they stood under an awning next to the mosque. There were animals in the street, children running and yelling, various smells surrounding us and a group of Muslim men listening to the story of Christ’s birth.

As I listened, it was as if God said, *This is the true celebration of Christmas. Just as it was the first time in the lowly cow stall, in a dusty, dirty, smelly village, the story of your Savior is being proclaimed to the needy and the lost. Christmas is not the gifts, the snow, the music or the food. It is not the things that make you comfortable. Christmas is the telling of the good news. It is the chance for the sinner to rejoice.*

With tears, I could almost hear the angels singing, “Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to all men.”

Never forget what Christmas really is: the good news of salvation told to those who are afraid, hungry and in need of a Savior.

—BRAD, WEST AFRICA

Father God, NEVER LET ME FORGET THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS. LET THIS TIME OF YEAR BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS THAT JESUS CAME, DIED, WAS BURIED AND ROSE AGAIN FOR ALL PEOPLE GROUPS, INCLUDING THE SONGHAJ OF WEST AFRICA. *Amen.*