

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a land as dark as death, a light has dawned.” Isaiah 9:2

When I was a kid walking home from elementary school, after Christmas, in Michigan, I had two wishes. One was that Christmas lights would last 'till Easter; the second was for a covered, heated, moving walkway. It was dark and dreary in those winter days, and cold. Bitter cold.

My second wish has materialized in some airports with their moving walkways, and I think of my younger self and my wish whenever I see or use those step savers. I think of them as my younger self would: they are wonders of modern technology. They are, I imagine, there, because of my wish.

In some ways, the first wish has happened, too. Some folks leave their Christmas lights up all year, and light them for birthday parties or family reunions. And then there are other holidays which have acquired lights and celebratory decorations: New Year's Eve, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day. And I love it. There are lights and celebrations all the way to Easter. My wishes have come true.

So, Christmas and all the days of winter that follow it remind me of lights in the darkness, of warmth in the cold. What we celebrate at Christmas is Christ lighting this present darkness; He warms our bone-cold bodies with His loving Spirit. He is life, abundant and joyful, now and in the life to come.

This year, don't worry about making resolutions. Think instead about seeing Christ in the world as light in the darkness and warmth in the cold. As His followers, His disciples, we can be light and warmth to those still in bitter, cold, darkness. We can light their way with the Christ light within us; warm them with physical clothing, blankets, and our company. Christ is light in the darkness, warmth in the cold, all year long. And we are Christ in the world.

God, thanks for the Christ Child. Let us be Him to all we meet. For Your glory, and because of Your grace-filled love. Amen.