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12-25-2017

### December 25, 2017: The Christian Picks Him Up

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Title: The Christian Picks Him Up

Date: 2017-12-25T09:17:00.002-05:00

12/25/2017—On this Christmas morning 2017, a simple test to see if you are a Christian—I'm not. This morning, I tried to run on the Duquesne University hill, but it was too cold and too icy—22 degrees and windy. So, I got in my car to return home. On the way home, I passed a hooded figure trudging along on Ross Street with two suitcases. He might have been going to the train station, in which case I would have been happy to give him a lift. But it was more likely he was a homeless person with nowhere really to go on Christmas morning. Nothing nearby was open. Maybe mentally ill. Not only did I not pick him up, despite the cold, but when the traffic light turned red not far from him, I tried to position the car so he could not knock on my window. The Christian picks him up—and not just on Christmas morning. When Jesus was born, something new came into the world. Nothing like the story of the good Samaritan had ever been told in the Jewish tradition and certainly not in the pagan tradition. (I doubt any other tradition either, but what do I know of India or China or Africa?). That parable sets the standard for Christian unconditional, unself-regarding, love. Radical love. Of course not just in the personal sense, but not just check-writing either. You don't have to tell me that 99% of churchgoers don't pick him up either. I already know that. But it is really not the point. Good Without God? Don't make me laugh. Not too many of us are good. Not too many Christians around. Merry Christmas.