I Will Never Let Go
An Advent Reflection

> "The people who walked in darkness
> have seen a great light;
> Upon those who lived in a land of gloom
> a light has shone."
>
> Isaiah 9:2

It was early December, nineteen-ninety-something; and for some strange reason, I thought it would be a good idea to stop by one of the large discount warehouse stores near my apartment. The first signs that this was perhaps a bad idea were the lack of shopping carts at the entrance and the difficulty in finding a parking place. After showing my membership card and seeing the longest lines ever at the registers, I decided that this would only be a "looking" trip rather than a "buying" one. I had just started moving down one of the packed aisles of people and carts when I saw her. She could have been no more than three or four, and she was clearly not happy . . . her eyes filled with tears and her arms reaching up, clearly asking for her "Daddy!" through the tears. A young man, looking extremely distressed appeared and took the little one in his arms. As if magic, her tears stopped as she hung on to her Daddy, her Daddy who seemed to say, "I will never let go."

While I didn't stay very long in the aisles, the experience of that little one has stayed with me forever. As I drove home that day, my thoughts turned to the Advent Season . . . a season of waiting and expectation . . . a season of hope and renewal. We truly are that child, sometimes feeling lost and alone and afraid and forgotten. We are that child, reaching up to our "Daddy," knowing that in the midst of life . . . in the midst of a troubled world . . . our God will not abandon or forsake us . . . our God will never let go!

For you, my friends, I pray that this Season may be a blessed one . . . may Christmas and the New Year of 2025 hold countless blessings. In the midst of life, may you never forget to reach up. "Come, Lord Jesus. Come!"

Love and Prayers,
Mike J