



Twenty-five Days of Christmas

Daily Devotions Days 8-14



Jesus is the Best Christmas Gift

December 7

Hebrews 10:5–6 *That is why, when Christ came into the world, he said to God, “You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings. But you have given me a body to offer. You were not pleased with burnt offerings or other offerings for sin.*

This is a strange passage for the Christmas season, right? Maybe not. During the month of December every year the pressure gets turned up. Our lives become more hectic with a variety of activities intended to create a different attitude: the Christmas Spirit. The truth is older than our modern Christmas traditions that take place in the month of December. As the world points to December 25 God points toward the birth of His Son to become the offering for our sins. God truly desires that the world would stop sinning and trust Him. God put the solution into action in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. As we journey closer to Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus, let us put aside our desires and sins to trust Jesus.

December 8

Psalms 40:9–10 *I have told all your people about your justice. I have not been afraid to speak out, as you, O Lord, well know. I have not kept the good news of your justice hidden in my heart; I have talked about your faithfulness and saving power. I have told everyone in the great assembly of your unfailing love and faithfulness.*

While we journey toward Christmas may our demeanor, speech, and activities be filled with God's justice, faithfulness, saving power, and unfailing love. Jesus came as a baby bringing with Him all of God's qualities, characteristics, and nature. He looked at the world and saw people who needed to be loved. Look around you and you will see people who desperately need to experience God's unfailing love. There are members of our families who need to experience the unfailing love of God in Jesus Christ. Pray for their hearts to be softened to the Lord. Speak of the hope, peace, and joy God's love has brought to your life. Set up Christmas to be more than another family gathering and gift giving event. Make Christmas a season that changes lives.

December 9

John 6:48 *Jesus said, “I am the bread of life.”*

Christmas is coming. Holiday gatherings are on the calendar. Gatherings are sure to include great food. So, what's your favorite? There are wonderful recipes that we look forward to only during the Christmas season. Your mouth waters when you consider the upcoming festivities. Perhaps the most common treat, however, is that batch of Christmas cookies. It is probably impossible to find someone who doesn't like a good Christmas cookie. Food is such an important part of our lives: meals with dessert, of course, snacks, breakfast, lunch, and supper. Is your belly rumbling in anticipation?

But what about food for the soul? Does your heart rumble to hear the Word of God?

John 6:48 tells us “Jesus said, I am the bread of life.” There can be no greater food for the soul than for our Savior Jesus Christ. Enjoy lots of good food during the Christmas season; but take in much more of the Bread of Life. The cookies may nourish your body; but the Word of God nourishes your soul.

December 10

Isaiah 9:6a *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.*

This Christmas season make your gatherings more meaningful by playing this “game” with family or friends. Take turns completing this sentence: When Jesus was born in Bethlehem....

There are many, many ways to finish the thought. Set a time limit and see who, or which team, can come up with the most ways to complete the sentence. No repeats, of course. Or better yet, taking turns, see how long you can keep adding new endings for the sentence. Listen carefully so you can discuss any answers that may not be biblical.

Obviously, the focus on this activity is not the worldly Christmas; and it doesn't even have to be limited to the actual Christmas "story." In fact the challenging endings will be more insightful than the obvious ones. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, His mother wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger. Or, When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled. "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. Is 9:6a

Can you imagine your family or friends enjoying this "game?" Maybe not; but try encouraging them with a teachable moment. The excitement of Christmas morning with gifts to open and food to eat might not be the opportune time; but why not try it sometime throughout the holidays? You could be planting the seed that someday leads a friend or family member to salvation through Jesus Christ our Savior.

December 11

Luke 1:31–33 Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

One of my favorite Christmas gifts came from a work friend many, many years ago. She gave me a pin to wear on my collar. The pin had a picture of holly and berries, and it said, "Jesus Is The Reason For The Season." It was one of my favorites because people would comment on it, and that provided me the opportunity to talk about Jesus.

At work the emphasis was on the Christmas tree and other decorations, along with the staff gift exchange. There was always a Christmas party too. Jesus was not spoken of, nor His story talked about. There was one person who collected angel figurines; but they came in all shapes and sizes with no mention of the angels of the Bible. Happily, there were those who commented on my pin so I could remind them of what Christmas is all about.

With children I could use the pin as a Christmas message starter, in hopes of drawing their thoughts away from Santa and gifts for awhile anyway. Wearing the pin also helped me to focus my own thoughts when I was tempted to dwell on the stresses of preparing for Christmas.

This simple little pin gave me opportunities to talk about Jesus. What ways can you think of that might help you bring the name of Jesus into your holiday conversations? Remind yourself and share with others that Jesus Is The Reason For The Season.

December 12

Luke 1:37 "For with God nothing will be impossible."

During the Christmas season snail mail is more fun than any other time of year. Hidden among the millions of ads and on-going bills are Christmas cards. In the past there were so many that people often decorated their homes with displays of all the cards; but today the numbers of cards has diminished. Postage costs, the cost of cards themselves, too little time, and the technology of the day have all combined to cut back on these Christmas greetings. There are still a few though; and those few can bring a blessing into your day.

The best cards contain two things: a written personal note and Scripture. If you plan to send cards this year, choose carefully. Be sure your cards contain the Word of God, along with the holiday greeting. Add your personal note of encouragement, catch up information, and the joy of the season. God says His word will not return to Him void. No matter what the circumstance, there will be some benefit when family and friends read the Word included on your cards.

Luke 1:37 tells us “For with God nothing will be impossible.” Imagine your friend who reads this verse in the midst of a stressful day. This Word of encouragement may be exactly what was needed. Let this be a special Christmas blessing from you to your friend. And don’t neglect reading the Scriptures included on cards you receive. They may be just the blessing you need for your day.

December 13

Luke 2:7b There was no room for them in the inn.

You may have heard the story of Wally Purling, a nine-year-old boy who lived in a small town in the Mid-West many years ago. He was assigned the role of the innkeeper in the school’s annual Christmas pageant. When Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem and looked for a place to stay, they ended up at the inn and were greeted by the innkeeper. Wally spoke his lines with sternness: “There’s no room for you here.” As Joseph wearily turned away, Wally called to him: “Don’t go, Joseph. Bring Mary back.” With a huge smile on his face, Wally said: “You can have MY room.”

Clearly, Wally’s heart had been touched. Interestingly enough, the innkeeper is never mentioned in the Bible. The verse on which his part was based is found in Luke 2:7b “.... because there was no room for them in the inn.” Some of the people who heard Wally’s ad lib thought the pageant had been ruined; but those who were wiser found their hearts touched. This character who doesn’t even appear in Scripture, brought the message of humility and giving.

What about you? Are there moments during the season when your heart is touched by someone or something? Do you pull your thoughts away from the hustle and bustle and allow Jesus to speak to you? Determine right now that you will not miss any opportunity to hear your Savior speak. He loves you. He gave His life for you. Give Him a room in your heart.