



25 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS



A DAILY DEVOTIONAL

 **TIMBERLAKE**CHURCH





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December 1 | Faithful Generations

Scripture | Matthew 1:17 *Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.*

Daily Reading | When an author sits down to begin writing a book, they always want to begin with content that is intriguing, attention getting, or perhaps shocking. Think about your favorite book. Something in that book grabbed your attention, and you were compelled to finish it. Maybe it was a mystery novel, or a business leadership book. Kids will sometimes read books where you get to choose your own journey. You read one set of pages, and then at the end of that set of pages, you get to choose whether to jump to page 23 or page 45. The goal of those type of books is to keep the child engaged, and let their mind soar through the possibilities ahead of them. The Bible can be just like that! In the New Testament section of the Bible, the very first book is titled the Gospel of Matthew. The writer Matthew begins his gospel account with content that is very intriguing, and it would have grabbed the attention of the people he was writing to. Matthew's beginning content would have had the original reader's minds soaring through the possibilities ahead! In the first chapter of Matthew, you will see a long list of names. It is a genealogy; a family history of sorts for Jesus, and it goes all the way back to a man named Abraham.

Abraham was set aside by God to begin a community of people and a new way for humanity. He was set aside by God because he submitted his whole life to Him. It was an opportunity for his kids, and their kids, and their kids, until eventually, Jesus was born. Abraham's faithfulness to God brought about a generational faithfulness that would eventually save the world and bring Jesus to this earth.

God can use your faithfulness to save the world, too. Have you ever considered what God could be waiting to do with your own faithfulness? What new things have not yet come because you have not fully submitted your whole life before God like Abraham did? Decide today what a step towards God looks like for you. Taking even a small step in faithfulness is still faithfulness. This whole world could be changed if we all were faithful to take the small steps. My prayer for you this Christmas season is that you would be given more opportunities to respond faithfully to God!

Prayer | Lord, I submit to you today. Do a new thing in me. Stir within me a longing to remain faithful to you, and call me into a new life. Thank you for another day to respond faithfully to you! Amen.





December 2 | They Had A Plan

Scripture | Matthew 1:18 *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.*

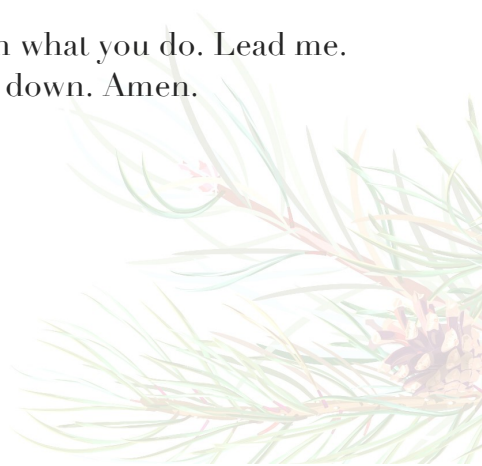
Daily Reading | You have likely already started making plans for the holidays with family. Holiday plans will often involve decisions about where and when to get together. Meals at the holidays are usually planned out too. Someone will bring rolls, someone will bring the ham, and Uncle Frank will bring the spiked egg nog. Most years you know the plan, and you know Uncle Frank will bring spiked egg nog, so you prepare accordingly.

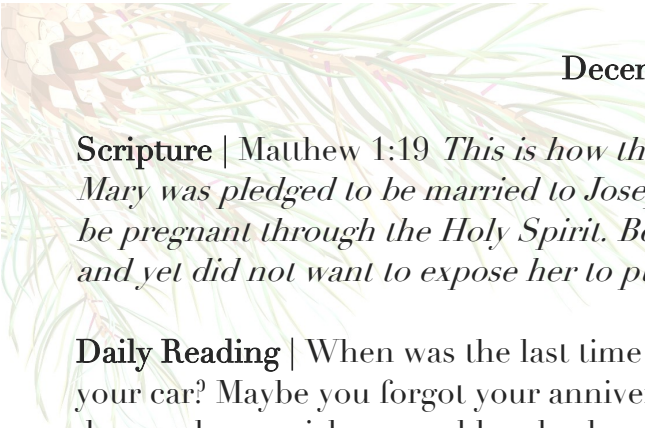
One of the many things to appreciate about the Gospel of Matthew is how straight-to-the-point Matthew will be. He makes it plain and simple: *This is what happened when Jesus was born.* At the beginning of Matthew's gospel a small part of his account is about Mary and Joseph. It is about their plans to be married. How they were married, when they were married, what she wore, or what hashtag they used on their wedding day, is all unknown to us present day readers. However, we do know they had a plan. Like you planning for the holidays, they made a plan for their engagement and for their future together. They planned accordingly for what to expect, but what they did not expect was for Mary to become pregnant with the Savior of the World! They had a plan, but then God changed their plans.

How many of us make plans? We all do. How many of us prepare for those plans to be changed by God? Not many. Have you ever considered that in this story, we have two faithful individuals who are doing all they can to honor God, and yet, even in their faithfulness the plan changed? God does that. Why? Not even the wisest scholar, nor the most faithful pastor could tell you why. The answer we should be after is not the 'why', but instead the 'how.' How should we to respond when God does change our plans? God's plan is to change your plan. God clearly had something better in mind for Mary and Joseph, because He used them to bring Jesus into this world!

God will lead us in all kinds of directions. How are you anticipating the unanticipated turn of events in your life? God may change your plans today; will you be faithful to Him? My prayer for you this Christmas season is for God to change your plans!

Prayer | Lord, change my plans today. Give me a faith to trust in what you do. Lead me. Give me enough faith today to accept the path you will take me down. Amen.





December 3 | Obedience

Scripture | Matthew 1:19 *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

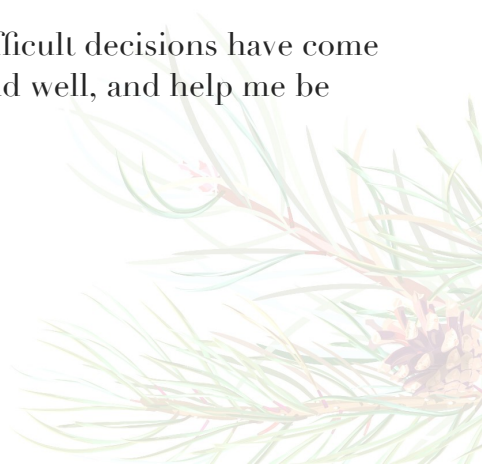
Daily Reading | When was the last time you made a really dumb decision? Did you wreck your car? Maybe you forgot your anniversary? We all make dumb decisions, and when we do, we always wish we could go back and make a different decision. Reading about Joseph, you might think this guy is about to make a really dumb decision. Who divorces the girl who is going to give birth to Jesus?

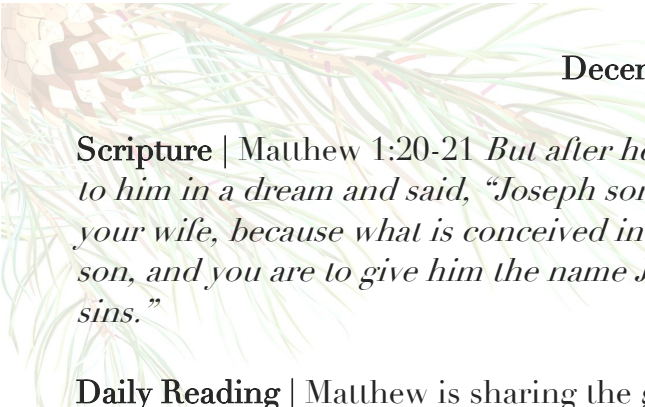
When you look at what was happening though, what choice did Joseph have but to divorce Mary (remove himself from the engagement – which was a little bit more serious in Joseph’s day) who, from his point of view, has become pregnant with another man? There is a lot of thoughtfulness and grace behind his decision. His decision did not set aside obedience to the law or to God, but in fact, embraced the law! Sometimes our obedience can receive judgement from those who do not understand. Joseph’s context and circumstance certainly put him in an awkward place, and he was going to be judged for his decision.

Ever been in a situation like Joseph where doing the right thing is terribly difficult? Where no one will ever quite understand why you made the choice that you did? Where you know other people will think that you made a big mistake? Joseph, in retrospect, did not understand what was happening, but his goal was to be obedient to the law, and be respectful to Mary.

Obedience is for the person with the larger perspective; those open to what is to come and for those who see all moments, challenges, people, and circumstances as teachable moments. Do you have that larger perspective? How teachable are you? Obedience is difficult, but you can do it! Perspective and opportunities to learn will come in difficult moments. In those moments, pause and ask Jesus for how to respond. My prayer for you this Christmas season is for you to trust Jesus with every moment, challenge, and difficult decision that will come your way!

Prayer | Lord, I ask that you help me trust you. Like Joseph, difficult decisions have come my way and will continue to. Give me the perspective to respond well, and help me be teachable when challenges come. Amen.





December 4 | His People

Scripture | Matthew 1:20-21 *But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”*


Daily Reading | Matthew is sharing the good news of Jesus! This child to be born is going to be the Savior of the World. Matthew tells us that Joseph receives this news in a dream after he has considered quietly divorcing her. This is their gender reveal party, and the balloon has popped spilling blue confetti and salvation for all! It does not get better than that!

The most remarkable thing about this whole verse is the small, two word reminder that Matthew is keen on including: “His people.” These people who are to be saved are “His people.” They are God’s people! The promise made to save them had not been lost, and what the prophets had said about the Messiah was true. For God’s people there was a developing anticipation of a Messiah who would come and make a way for them to once again be in relationship with their God. Jesus made that prediction true.

Notice though, what Matthew includes in his wording. He includes sin – which has always been the source of division between God and Israel, and God and humanity. This division would be solved by Jesus. Perhaps the most captivating element Matthew includes in his wording is that you are one of the people Jesus came to save. When Matthew says, “His people,” he means to include you!

In the midst of how the story unfolds, we sometimes can miss why we have the story. The Christmas story is filled with wonders and surprises about Mary and Joseph’s experience. The story is not about Mary and Joseph though; it is actually about you and Jesus. It is about how Jesus came to save you from your sin. When the balloon popped, and spilt blue confetti, it was to celebrate your salvation. My prayer for you this Christmas season would be that you would be filled with celebration as you remember that Jesus came to save you from your sins!

Prayer | Lord, thank you for saving the world, and thank you for saving me! Sometimes I forget that the story is about you saving me. I am captivated and moved by what you have done for me. I celebrate, like Joseph and Mary did, that you came into this world. Thank you for my salvation. Amen.





December 5 | Oh Come Oh Come

Scripture | Matthew 1:22-23 *All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means ‘God with us’).*

Daily Reading | How many songs do you know all the words to? I bet you would be surprised. Music is a big part of our culture. Over 25 billion songs are downloaded each year! That is about 7 million songs downloaded per day. That is a lot of lyrics, and a lot of singing in the car! Every year most churches sing the classic Christmas song *Oh, Come Oh, Come, Emmanuel*. Even though you probably will only sing it twice this year, you likely continue to remember the lyrics year after year. Why is this? Because, for you, the song itself goes beyond words on a screen; it is a response from your heart.

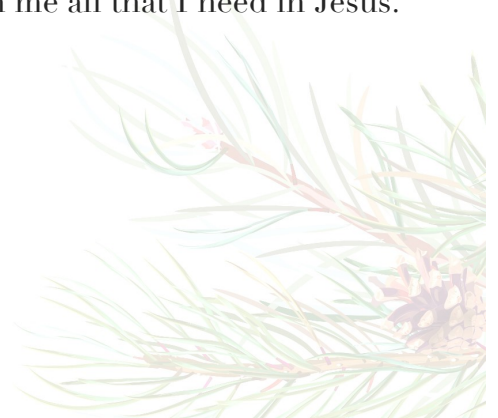
The people of Israel expected Jesus, and when He came, there was an astounding, loud, and joy-filled response from their hearts. Matthew wants us to know this. Matthew wants us to see that the anticipation was agonizing for God’s people, and when it came, he wanted us to understand and then celebrate that the long wait was over!

When Jesus came He restored the relationship between God’s people and God Himself. Jesus came to make a way for you to have a real relationship with God.

Perhaps you are anticipating Jesus to come into your life and do something about a family situation, a financial situation, a job situation, or provide healing in your life somehow. Are you waiting to see how He will answer you today? Are you waiting to see how He will show up?

Waiting on God is part of trusting in God. People have been waiting on Him since the beginning of creation. When God answers though, we remember. We recall how, and also what it felt like to understand and celebrate God’s answer! My prayer for you this Christmas season is that you would continue to wait, and like God’s people, anticipate God to answer, because He will!

Prayer | Lord, in my waiting, hear my prayer. I will wait on you for all my days. Help me remember your faithfulness. In my thankfulness for Jesus today, I wait patiently knowing that you have already provided, already answered, and already given me all that I need in Jesus. Amen.





December 6 | When Angels Speak

Scripture | Matthew 1:24-25 *When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.*

Daily Reading | Between 1642-1643, 40 years after the release of the King James Bible, Philippe de Champaigne was employed by the French King, Louis XIII to paint a portrait of Joseph's dream where Joseph learns why and how Mary is pregnant.

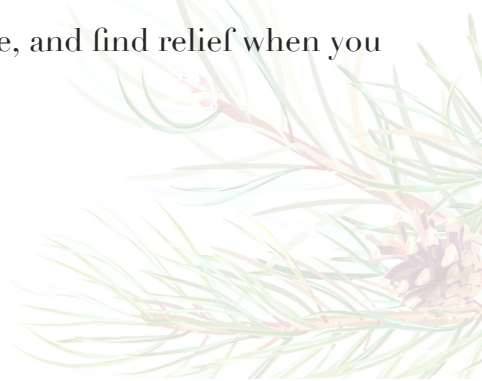
A quick recap of Mary and Joseph's story: Mary becomes pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph finds out she is pregnant and either did not accept Mary's explanation, or did not know why she was pregnant at all. Either way, he decided that getting married to Mary is no longer going to work. Then, one night when Joseph was sleeping, an angel of the Lord spoke to Joseph in his dream and told him the truth about why Mary was pregnant. Finally, as the verse says above, he took her to be his wife and be a father to Jesus.

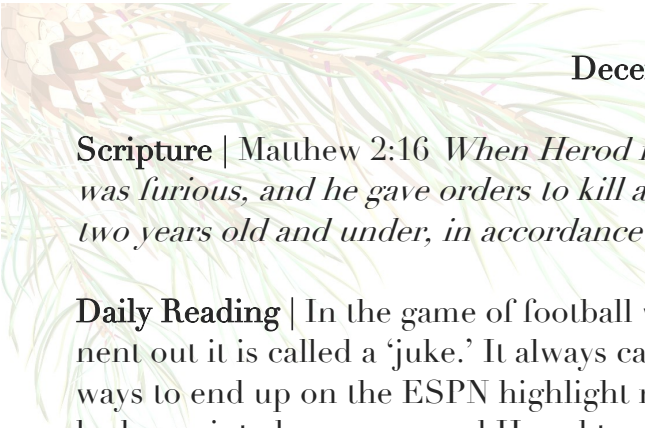
Back to the Phillippe de Champaigne's painting. The portrait is titled, "The Dream of Saint Joseph" and it is located now at the National Gallery in London. The portrait itself is a fascinating portrayal of an angel of the Lord speaking into Joseph's dream that he should take Mary home to be his wife because she is pregnant by the Holy Spirit, and is bearing a son who will save the world from sin. In addition, Mary sits to the side watching the angel in the portrait. Her hands are over her heart, and her face is filled with relief and gratitude as she watches the angel of the Lord tell her soon to be husband the truth about her pregnancy.

In the painting, you can read between the lines and gather that Mary and Joseph are at odds over what has happened. Whatever may have occurred before the scene depicted in the painting, it is for certain that the Lord is now sending relief to both of them. Joseph finally knows the truth, and Mary finally has her fiancé back. If we focus on Mary in the portrait, what we see is a sigh of relief. You can feel it when you gaze upon her body language.

Whatever you are facing today, know that God wants to send relief. Relief can be found when we trust in God to speak. The psalmist says, *How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!* Listen for God to speak to you today, and let His words be a comfort to you. My prayer for you this Christmas season is to remember to listen for God!

Prayer | Lord, I want you to speak today. Let me hear your voice, and find relief when you speak. Help me listen. Amen.





December 7 | Ambition

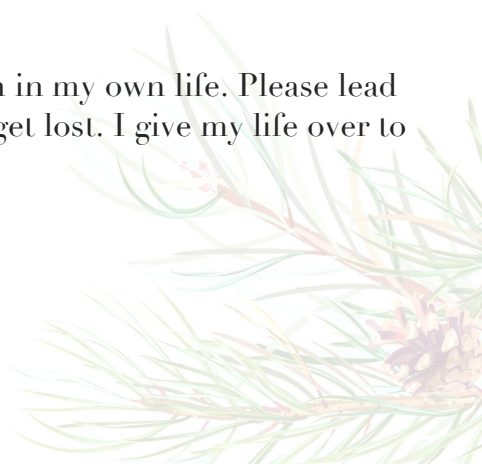
Scripture | Matthew 2:16 *When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.*

Daily Reading | In the game of football when a running back side steps and fakes his opponent out it is called a 'juke.' It always catches fans by surprise, and it is one of the fastest ways to end up on the ESPN highlight reel. When Jesus was born, the Roman government had appointed a man named Herod to rule over the Hebrew people. Herod was a very nervous king, always afraid of losing his authority and his throne. Being the uptight king that he was, when Herod learned that Jesus, the new king, was to be born he wanted to be there at the birth to kill Jesus. Needless to say, Herod was crazy! The Magi were not going to let that happen, so they juke Herod! Later when Herod learned about this misdirection he ordered a massive execution. This execution was supposed to include Jesus, but the Lord told Mary and Joseph to escape to Egypt with the child until the right time.

Herod was guilty of a lot of things, and it mostly had to do with misplaced ambition. Herod wanted to stay king. He wanted his palace, his comfort food, his power, his influence, his royal slippers, and his connections to Rome and all things Roman. All things we want in our own context. We all want a home, the opportunity to eat the foods we enjoy, we want power, we want influence, and we want to be on the inside at work and in the community. Most of us though want those things in a healthy way, and approach our ambitions appropriately. Some of us though do not approach our ambitions in a healthy way. We miss family outings and time with the kids. We miss out on opportunities to encourage and pour into our spouse. We miss manage our health, our diet, our time, and eventually our priorities. Your misplaced ambition will eventually make you as nervous and uptight as Herod if you do not address it.

It is not too late to change! It is never too late to juke your own selfish ambitions, and give yourself over to what is actually important. What do you need to quit today? What do you need to move on from? What new and beneficial practices do you need to begin today? Give your ambitions over to Jesus today, and see what better way He has for you. My prayer for you Christmas season is for you to finally decide to turn things around and lay it all before Jesus!

Prayer | Lord, I have ambitions and things I want to accomplish in my own life. Please lead me to have healthy ambitions. Lead me into your arms when I get lost. I give my life over to you, and ask you to show me a better way. Amen.





December 8 | They Came To Worship

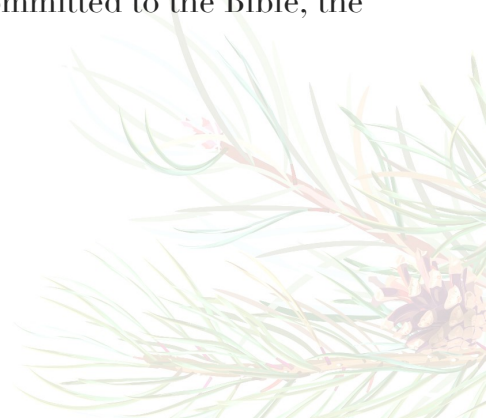
Scripture | Matthew 2:11 *On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.*

Daily Reading | If you could live your childhood one-hundred times over, would you? It is a curious thought. Children usually get to experience the best part of Christmas. Many families completely focus Christmas around their children. Gifts, goodies, cookies, pictures in cute Christmas Eve outfits, gingerbread house making, and family traditions, are all things often centered on the children. Children know how to enjoy Christmas too. They laugh! They anticipate! They stay up late thinking about their gifts! They eat everything made with sugar in sight! They beg their parents for the ultimate gift! Imagine the Magi acting like children before the manger scene? They are laughing because the joy is too much! They have anticipated this moment for a long time! They have lost many nights sleep in their travel to see Jesus! And, they ultimately had to beg somebody (King Herod) to go see Jesus! The full on participation of the Magi led to this worship scene in Matthew.

In the verse the Magi acknowledge and recognize that Jesus is one with the God of Israel. God Himself is now present with His people. The Bible says that they saw the child and worshiped Him. You too can worship Jesus today. You can lift your hands in worship, you can fall to your knees, and you can live your life for Him today. You can be confident His presence is near to you when you do.

Worship does not just happen; you lead yourself to that place. Like the Magi, you do what it takes to bring yourself before Jesus. For many, making time for church is a big deal. For some, getting to church is the easy part, the difficult part is engaging. Where are you? Perhaps you are somewhere in the middle. In the Book of Revelation it says that God will spit us out for our lukewarm actions. Christmas is not Christmas unless you have come to worship the one true King! If you do not know where to begin, begin with asking God to give you the Holy Spirit. Accept Jesus as King, and give yourself over to His Bible, His church, and His ways. My prayer for you this Christmas season is for this to finally be the season you bow down and worship Jesus!

Prayer | Lord, I lay my life down at your feet. I ask for your Holy Spirit, and for a spirit of worship. Help me prioritize my life, and let my worship to you come first. I no longer want to be a lukewarm follower of you, but rather, a follower fully committed to the Bible, the church, and to your ways. Amen.





December 9 | Rescue

Scripture | Hosea 11:1 *When Israel was a child I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.* | Exodus 4:22-23 *Israel is my first born son.* | Matthew 2:13 *An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "Take the child and his mother to Egypt."* | Matthew 2:19, *An angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel."*

Daily Reading | In the retail industry customer service is a high priority. How you receive a product is almost more important than the product itself. Think about that last time you bought a pair of shoes? I bet they were displayed in a cool way at a cool store, and came in a cool box. You will not ever receive your Nike shoes or new outfit from Nordstrom in a plain paper bag, because if you did, you would never buy from them.

In the Exodus account there is a man named Moses who rescues God's children from slavery out of the hands of Pharaoh. Hosea, a prophet who lived a thousand years later when Israel was found in exile again, knew this story, and as a prophet, Hosea sees what lays ahead for God's people again. A rescue was coming! Matthew saw this too, and wrote his gospel with this understanding of rescue at the tip of his pen. Knowing what Hosea had prophesied, and knowing the story of the Exodus, Matthew packages his story in a memorable way so that you will see exactly who Jesus is! More than that though, he reminds his readers of God's faithfulness to rescue His people, which is the whole product! In the end, the Matthew's packaged product is about being brought back to where humanity belongs: with God. In fact, Jesus is given the name Emmanuel in Matthew's gospel account. It is his favorite name for Jesus, and it means, "God with us."

Deliverance is the business of God. He will rescue you. He will be faithful to do so. Since the beginning of humanity, God has always been faithful to rescue His people from all that the world has pressed on them. What is pressing on you today? What do you need rescuing from? My prayer for you this Christmas season is that you would remember that because of Jesus, God is now with you!

Prayer | Lord, deliver me from my sin. I want you to be with me! Rescue me; I want to be where you are. Amen.





December 10 | Never Ending

Scripture | Luke 1:29 *He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's decedents forever; his kingdom will never end.*

Daily Reading | Remember the sun? As you were chewing your Vitamin D supplements this morning perhaps you begged Jesus to bring back summer. The good news is the sun and summertime will eventually come back! One day though, the continuous cycle of the sun rising, the moon glowing, the stars shining, clouds, rain, heat, cold, fog, humidity, and wind, will be no more. The people of Israel, during the time in which the Bible was written, were used to things ending. They saw the reign of their enemies end, they saw their own kingdom end, they saw their own tribes and their own families end, and they believed their covenant with God had come to an end. Their kings had failed them and their forefathers no longer had names that mattered.

Until Jesus.

Have you ever stopped to consider what lasting impact God could do through you because you now know Jesus? Reflect on what is scheduled on your calendar today, and whom you may come in contact with. God may use you today to change a generation, to change a family, or to even save a life. It is unlikely an angel will visit you today with good news, but it is very likely today that you could be a deliverer of good news yourself. Take a moment to consider who God is asking you to share Jesus with today, and respond to that calling. My prayer for you this Christmas season is that you would respond to the call to share Jesus!

Prayer | Lord, lead me to respond to your calling today and share the good news of Jesus to someone. Give me the courage to be obedient. Give me the wisdom to know what to say. Give me the patience if the conversation does not go well, and give me a joyful heart if the conversation leads to you. Amen.





December 11 | Make Room

Scripture | Luke 2:6-7 *While they were there [Bethlehem], the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

Daily Reading | Have you ever stayed in an Airbnb and then realized someone was brave enough to let you in their home? If you were the innkeeper in Luke's account, would you honestly let Mary and Joseph in? The account we have from Luke was two-thousand years ago, but you still have opportunities each day to let Jesus in. Jesus is always asking for room in your heart in the same way that Mary and Joseph were looking for a place to bring Jesus into the world.

More important than the physical space Mary and Joseph stayed in though, is the spiritual space you have to make room for Jesus. It is important to ask yourself, do you have room in your heart for Jesus? Many of us want to, but we do not know how or we have trouble taking the time to let Jesus in. We have enough on our plate. There are too many commitments, too many things on the to-do list, too many meetings, too many work trips, too many soccer games, and too many sleepless nights with sick kids. If we are honest, we are the innkeeper in Luke's story – which is exactly Luke's point! Your life can become too full for the Savior of the World.

God made you to have room for Jesus! Be encouraged today, because you have taken time in your busy life to read this small devotional. The days we make room for Jesus, are also the days we surprisingly discover that we are capable of creating room for others to know Jesus too! Jesus would later ask his disciples: *Did you give me food when I was hungry? Did you give me something to drink when I was thirsty? Did you give me clothes when I was naked? Did you come see me when I was sick or in prison?* A full life is a life open to seeing Jesus taken to every space in every corner of the world. My prayer for you this Christmas is for you to make room for Jesus and share Him with the world!

Prayer | Lord, make a way in my heart. Give me room to let you in each day. I know you are asking for room in my heart, and today I fully give it to you. Amen.





Day 12 | He is the Messiah, The Lord

Scripture | Luke 2:10-12 *But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”*

Daily Reading | Can you fit the ocean in a cup? Can you measure a bride’s joy on her wedding day? Can you fathom the expanding universe? The awesome love of God was given to us through Jesus; and that love cannot be contained, nor can it be measured, and it cannot be fathomed. When Jesus came into this world, He stirred up such great joy that it would be nonsense to even try and attempt to understand what it must have been like for the shepherds in the verses above to hear this good news.

For the people of God, the idea of a Messiah was a fairly new idea. A few hundred years before, there was no idea among them for a Messiah. Why is that? They saw their kingdom, their land, and their relationship with God as solid. They had everything they needed. Along the way, they decided they did not need God; then the exile happened. Israel and Judah were conquered, and all God’s people were dragged away from their homes. They became refugees and prisoners. They asked: Where is God? Why did He do this to us? They pondered what happened, because they were once a strong and powerful kingdom, but now they were slaves.

Eventually, they sought hope and the prophets gave it to them, because God had given it to the prophets. One day, there would be a king again. On that day, from the town of David, a Savior would come. When Jesus arrived, humbly as a child, the wait was over. The Messiah came. The Lord came down to be with His people, and He came as a child.

Whatever you are waiting on, keep waiting, because God will answer. Whatever you have asked of God, continue asking Him, because God will answer. Hold on strong today. My prayer for you this Christmas season is for you to hold on to God!

Prayer | Lord, I will ask again, hear my prayer! I know you are faithful to answer. In my waiting I will not lose hope. I will look to you. My soul is anchored in you Lord, and I will hold strong today. Amen.





December 13 | Heavenly Peace

Scripture | Luke 2:8-11 *Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,*

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.”


When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

Daily Reading | In our entertainment culture and music industry today, the description of an “instant classic” has been reserved for something that is so excellent in its artistry, as well as in its quality, that it begins to be considered as a piece that will endure for a lifetime. The phrase may be tossed around a little too much in today’s culture, but what an “instant classic” represents, is a culture in touch of what true quality is. Whether it be a baseball game, a musical piece, or a speech, we know when we recognize true quality.

In 1818, in the Austrian mountains in the town of Ogledorf, a collaborated worship song was presented before a small church and was well received. It did not top the billboard charts or become an instant YouTube sensation, but it did bring about an unforgettable message for the world. The message was peace; peace because Jesus had been born. At this time, Austria and the surrounding region was going through a political identity crisis. The peace this song would provide would be peace for a country that had been divided, peace for families pulled away from each other, peace for towns that had faced economic downturn, and peace for a future with no more wars. The instant classic was titled, *Silent Night*. It was a song intended to comfort the parishioners who had lost their work industry due to recent wars. It was Christmas Eve when the song was first presented to a small church by the writer Joseph Mohr, and the composer Franz Xaver Gruber. Their small congregation loved the song, and it helped bring hope and peace on a very frigid Christmas Eve.

Christmas can create moments where the weariness of the previous season can come to a graceful end. It is hard to deny that the songs we love and consider classics bring good and warm memories, but they can also bring healing, perspective, and most of all, they can bring peace. My prayer for you this Christmas season is that when you sing Christmas songs that they would not just bring you warm memories, but also true healing and peace on earth!

Prayer | Lord, there is a lot I want this Christmas, but most of all I want to receive peace. Help me set aside my sinful struggles, my work, and my burdens. Give me rest this Christmas season. Amen.





December 14 | The Lord Is One

Scripture | Deuteronomy 6:4 *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*

Daily Reading | Prayer is an essential part of a healthy and life giving relationship with Jesus. In the Bible, there are many prayers written down by God's people. The ancient Hebrews had a special prayer that they used on many occasions, and it said: *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.* When the ancient Hebrews began using this prayer they had just been rescued out of Egypt with the help of Moses. After Egypt, they went into the wilderness where they had to wait to go into the Promise Land. Waiting was one of the things that the Hebrew people always had to do. When they wait they would pray: *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.*

Unfortunately, there were times when God's people became impatient and decided to take things in their own hands. Ever been to the grocery store and used the self-checkout line? Most people will take their time checking out even if they see there is very long line. Sometimes the people waiting will jump over to another checkout line, and inevitably find themselves waiting longer than if they had just stayed in their original line.

The prayer the ancient Hebrews would have prayed would actually have reminded them to patient. Sometimes we can be just impatient. We will look elsewhere for what we want, what will satisfy us, and we live outside of God's instruction. We forget that the Lord is One, and that He is the God we have chosen. The Lord is One because He holds it all. He holds the universe, and He holds your heart. He takes care of the nations, while helping you take care of your own children. He saves all of humanity, and He saves you from the sins that will come today. The Lord our God, the Lord is One this is a statement about how God will take care of you.

Pray this contemporary translation of the ancient Hebrew today: *The Lord is my God, and He is the one I will look to!* My prayer for you this Christmas season is that you would continue to pray that prayer!

Prayer | The Lord is my God, and He is the one I will look to!





December 15 | Come

Scripture | Luke 2:19-20 *But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

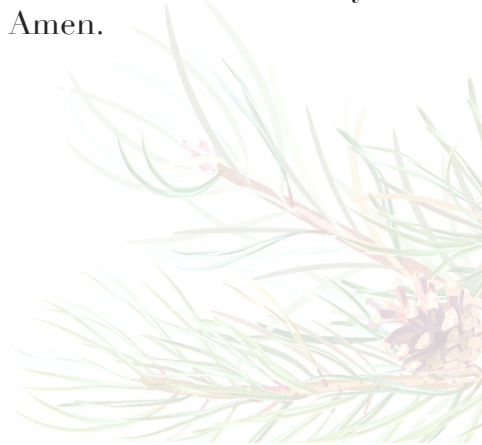
Daily Reading | How many of us turn on the Christmas music right after Thanksgiving, or start requesting peppermint mocha beverages from our favorite coffee shops by mid-October? Was your tree up by the first week in November? Christmas is a season we get to celebrate only once a year, and no matter how early you put up the Christmas tree or how late you take it down, Christmas only lasts so long.

As soon as Christmas comes though, it ends. Trees are thrown out, decorations are packed, broken and unneeded gifts are returned, and we hurry to ring in the New Year. We sing and celebrate the coming of Jesus each and every Christmas, but do we ask Him to stay? Have you grown any closer to Jesus since the day you asked Him to come into your life? Is your relationship with Jesus the same as it was when you first accepted Him? Do not let this new Christmas season be another Christmas season you participate in without any need for the true meaning of Christmas in your life — Jesus.

Luke's account of Jesus' birth can help us see that Christmas is a time in which we can be challenged to see Jesus' entering of the world as the opportunity to acknowledge His saving power and to praise Him. Christmas is one of the best times to make things right with Jesus. If you believe that now is the time to do that, do not hesitate. Come to Jesus this Christmas season with open arms! Will this be the Christmas where you finally get your priorities right, and put Jesus before the decorations and gifts? Christmas is the time to come to Jesus, because it is the season we celebrate that He came to us. It is the time to come before the manger, bow down, and acknowledge that the Messiah has come. Is it time for you to come and see this truth and respond?

My prayer for you this Christmas season is that this would finally be the season you come and respond to the birth of Jesus with a desire to make things right with God!

Prayer | Lord, I come to you this Christmas season with open arms. I want a relationship with you. I want a better relationship with you. Come into my life and draw me close to you. I praise you today for all you have done through Jesus' coming. Amen.





December 16 | Beginning

Scripture | John 1:1-2 *In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*

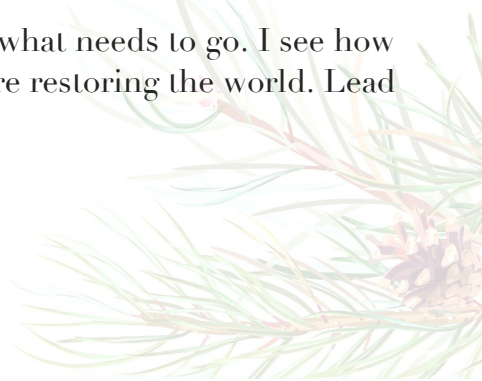
Daily Reading | It would be a lot easier if Jesus had a Facebook profile today, then we could see what He looked like and what He was into. His profile would probably read: “I like creating everything. My hobby is caring for the poor and needy. I like long walks on the Sea of Galilee.” You probably would even see on His timeline: “Jesus joined Facebook at the beginning!” At the beginning of creation, God made all things. He created this world from nothing, and He made man and woman in His image. God’s image is something we do not have though, except in Jesus. Jesus bore the image of God. That image was much more than physical image though, it was a limitless love and a great power that has not been contained, and never will be. God called the universe and the earth into being with love, and when it fell into sin, God saved it with that same love through Jesus. Every particle that was created, every star, every galaxy, every drop of water, every breath of air; Jesus came to reconcile back to God. This was why Jesus came.

In the Book of Acts we see Jesus’ disciple Peter leading, teaching, and healing people after Jesus had been crucified and then resurrected. There are several people there to witness what Peter is doing. He tells them, that in their ignorance, they crucified Jesus and did not understand who He was. He was their Messiah. The one they had always looked for to come and reconcile their world back to the way it was in the beginning with God. Peter speaks to how the days in which Jesus had come were foretold, and yet, they did not know Jesus was the one.

When Jesus came He was called Emmanuel, which means ‘God with us’. Jesus came as the image of God, and God came back to reconcile all things back to Himself through love. That reconciliation is a new beginning.

The thing about Jesus is that He is the beginning and the end. In the same chapter in the Book of Acts where Peter is teaching, he describes how Jesus has gone and will come back soon to restore all things. A greater restoration is coming according to Peter, and the most incredible part of that restoration is that you get to be part of that restoration by allowing Jesus to begin a new life in you! My prayer for you this Christmas season is that this would be the year of new beginnings in your life!

Prayer | Lord, begin in me what needs to come, and end in me what needs to go. I see how you are present in my life, and I want to be a part of how you are restoring the world. Lead me to bare your image in this Christmas season. Amen.





December 17 | Love

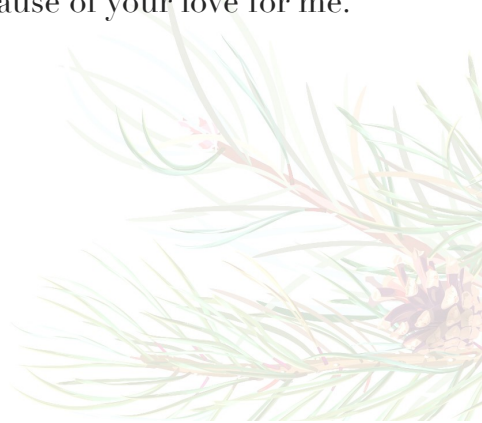
Scripture | John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever would believe Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Daily Reading | We live in an era and culture where it is important for us to know the why behind something. For example, when a terrorist attack happens somewhere in the world, we always see our news outlets and governments investigating and speculating on why the attacker carried out the attack. Days of news coverage are spent on the subject of ‘why’. We like to believe as human beings that if we know the why, then perhaps we can make progress in our hearts and minds about how to improve or move past the situation. It is a logical form of questioning that comes from a deep ache in our hearts for wanting to understand our world. That same kind of questioning and deep ache can often lead us to want to search for why God does what He does. During the Christmas season, you may be led to ask why God would send His one and only Son. Why would Jesus come for this broken world? Why would Jesus come for you?

John, who wrote the Gospel of John, tells us that because God loved us, He gave us Jesus. You probably know this verse well, or have at least seen it written on various football players’ cleats and gloves, on the bottom of an In-And-Out Burger cup, or on a Forever 21 shopping bag. In 2009, the verse was Googled over 90 million times by viewers of the college football national championship game. If you have grown up in church, you likely have the verse memorized. It is the most popular Bible verse in modern time! Is it possible that this verse is so well known to us because of how much our culture wants to know the ‘why’ behind most anything? John 3:16 is the verse that explains the ‘why’ behind Jesus.

Love, the central theme of John 3:16, is what makes it possible for God to give us access to His kingdom with open arms. Love is also what it makes it possible for you to be the out-reaching arm of Jesus to the world. This larger understanding of love is a mystery to many, but when you come into relationship with Jesus, you catch a glimpse of this kind of love. My prayer for you this Christmas season is that you would remember why Jesus came because He loves you.

Prayer | Lord, sometimes I have trouble accepting the fact that you do love me. The Bible tells me because you love me, eternal life is possible. I want to be a part of your kingdom forever. Thank you for sending your son to die for my sins, because of your love for me. Amen.





December 18 | Return of the King

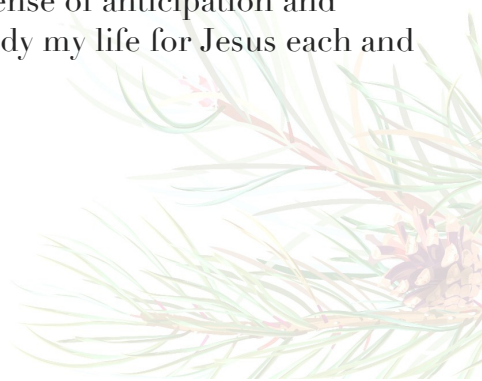
Scripture | Luke 1:32-33, *He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.*

Daily Reading | News can spread quickly in our world today thanks to the internet, cell phones, social media, and news outlets. When the news was shared that the Messiah had arrived, four different groups were told about His coming. The first was Mary and Joseph, the second was Elizabeth and Zachariah, the third were the Magi, and the fourth were the Shepherds. Even before the ministry of Jesus had started, the good news moved quickly.

Over a thousand years before Jesus was born, Israel had a king named David. David was not perfect, but in the eyes of those who adored and looked up to David, he was a faithful king. David's faithfulness earned him a great reputation in the history of God's people. Years after David was no longer king, Israel would be conquered and sent into exile. The people of God would long for the days when they had David, and the prophets would give counsel and declare that one day they would have a king again. When Jesus came, many knew that Jesus was that king, including all four groups listed above. How did they know Jesus was the promised king? Because God's people were ready!

The majority of our world today, though, is not ready. Not many Christians are ready either. How many of us long to be rescued like the people of God did? How many of us do not want our current comforts to have an end? Sometimes we can get caught up in our houses, jobs, cars, clothes, vacations, and even in our children's lives and futures, and we can forget that the future is not more of that, but instead the future is Jesus on the throne reigning over the new heaven and the new earth. In the Gospel of Matthew, it says that when Jesus returns, some of the people on earth will mourn His coming. It is very clear that Mary and Joseph, Elizabeth and Zachariah, the Magi, and the Shepherds had not lived their lives in preparation to mourn the coming of their king, and neither should you! Whatever is in the way of you living with a sense of anticipation and readiness for the return of Jesus, will you consider giving it up today? Will you set aside your whole life for a life that puts Jesus at the center? My prayer for you this Christmas season is that this would be a time set aside for you to give up this world and anticipate the kingdom of God to come!

Prayer | Lord, you are seated on the throne. Too many times I have put things before my desire for you to be the center of my life. I want to live with a sense of anticipation and readiness for your return. Give me perspective and help me ready my life for Jesus each and every day. Amen.





December 19 | Mary Visits Elizabeth

Scripture | Luke 1:39-45 *At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"*

Daily Reading | In the Gospel of Luke we are introduced to Elizabeth and Zachariah. They are not your typical characters. Unlike Pam and Jim from *The Office*, or Monica and Chandler from *Friends*, or Diane and Sam from *Cheers*, these two are only minor characters in a Shakespearian drama that is about to unfold in Luke's gospel. Elizabeth and Zachariah were the parents of John the Baptist, and their story is actually a reminder to the original readers of Hannah and Elkanah found in 1 Samuel 1. Hannah and Elkanah's story is a similar message of judgement and salvation for Israel when they give birth to Samuel. Samuel would go on to prepare the way for David to be king. He would anoint and choose David, and arrange a way for David by judging and denouncing Saul. In Luke's gospel, John the Baptist casts judgment upon the existing religious system and declares salvation for all who want to leave the existing oppression and discover a message of grace through Jesus.

God has done a lot through human history to bring His people closer to Him, and save them from sin. In the two stories above, God uses minor characters to prepare the way for big things to take place. There are days you have probably felt like a bystander or a minor character in God's great plan. You should pause for a moment and realize that we are still talking about these "minor" characters from the Bible to this day! These "minor" characters did extraordinary things! You, too, are meant to do extraordinary things for God's kingdom, His church, and for the world. What are those things? Have you asked God to do something extraordinary through your life? What about through your family or through your job? My prayer for you this Christmas season is for you to be given extraordinary opportunities to do big things for the kingdom of God!

Prayer | Lord, help me prepare the way for you to move in the world. I want to be used by you in my everyday life to advance your kingdom in an extraordinary way. I ask for your blessing. Amen.





December 20 | Story of Us

Scripture | Isaiah 9:6 *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

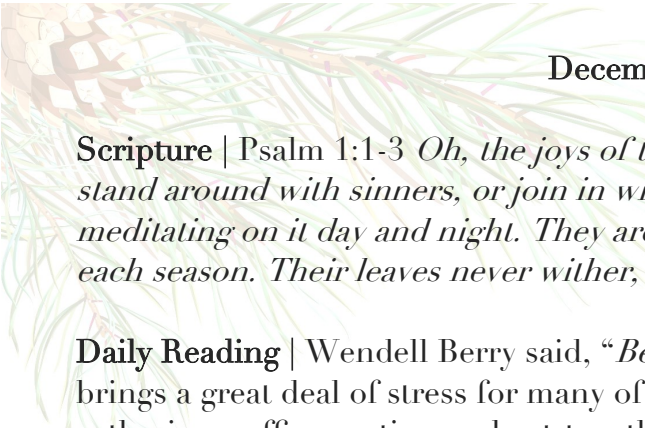
Daily Reading | In 2010 the Encyclopedia Britannica stopped printing their iconic multi-volume book sets and switched to a completely digital option for consumers. It was the end of a 244-year era when Encyclopedia Britannica announced their decision. You likely know how to use an encyclopedia when you pick one up, and when you pick up it is to discover information about a specific topic, animal, country, or thing. Using a Bible is very different than using an encyclopedia. When you pick up a Bible, you should not read it the way you read an encyclopedia. It is not a weapon for a wordy defense, a research book, or a fairytale. The Bible is the true story about God and His people. In Bible we are told the true story about how God sends His only Son to the earth to make it possible to overcome sin. The Christmas story is the story about Jesus coming to earth.

The Bible continuously points back to itself, referencing previous parts of the story that have become relevant again in the part of the story you may be reading. It is a unique, insightful and personal story. In the book of Isaiah, you hear the author use the word, *us*. The author is referring the people of God. The story that is the Bible is the story of the people of God. God's people waited a very long time for Jesus to come, and when Jesus did come, the story became bigger than them.

The story was changed to make all of creation part of the whole story. In Luke 2:10 it says, *The angel said to them, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people; for there is born to you this day a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."* This verse declares that the story itself was inviting all of creation to be God's people. Since the story includes all creation, it then makes possible for all who believe the story to make it their own story. It is no benefit to you to just hear the story, you are called to believe the story and take it with you. The Bible is the story of us! My prayer for you this Christmas season is for you to see that you are now part of the story of God!

Prayer | Lord, I believe in your story. Now make me part of it. Hear my declaration that I believe in you. Amen.





December 21 | Obligations

Scripture | Psalm 1:1-3 *Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.*

Daily Reading | Wendell Berry said, “*Be joyful, because it is humanly possible.*” Christmas brings a great deal of stress for many of us. We feel the weight of needing to plan family gatherings, office parties, and get-togethers with friends. We feel the weight of affording gifts, preparing a nice Christmas Eve dinner, and pleasing everyone with what we give them. We feel the weight of all that is packed into a small amount of days – which only comes around once a year. Christmas can often feel more like an obligation than a holiday, and it is because of the extra weight it brings upon our lives. Many people get to the end of the Christmas season with less joy than when the season had begun. Does that describe you today? Has Christmas now become an obligation rather than a season of opportunity to find and be joyful?

In the Psalm above, the writer encourages the reader to not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. Good advice. However, you likely do not intentionally follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in on the occasional mocking. Instead, you have likely just found yourself exhausted or at the end of your patience with all that accompanies the Christmas season. Is that wickedness? Is that sinful? No, it is not, but it does point to a greater issue which is the absence of taking the advice of the good, sharing community with those who know Jesus, and joining in with the joyful. Joy is possible! You were made to be filled with joy this Christmas season!

Psalm 119:1-3 says, *Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the LMPB. Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts. They do not compromise with evil, and they walk only in his paths.*

Joy today is possible, because Jesus has made today possible. You have the possibility to choose joy today! Follow God today, trust in His commands, and do not give in to exhaustion, greed, or obligations. My prayer for you this Christmas would be that the Holy Spirit would give you the joy of the Lord, and may that be your strength this Christmas season!

Prayer | Lord, today I choose joy. Let your Holy Spirit fill me up and carry me through this Christmas season with a strength, energy, and gladness that comes only from you. Amen.





Day 22 | His Name Is John

Scripture | Luke 1:18-20 *Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years." The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."*

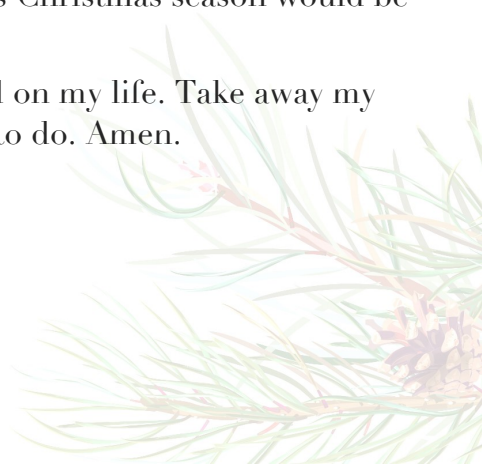
Daily Reading | Hopefully you do not watch the show *Keeping Up with the Kardashians*. If you do, go ahead and ask God to change your heart to be open to the vast majority of better entertainment options. On the show Kim Kardashian is one of the main personalities, and she is the wife of well know R&B artist Kanye West. They have two children: Saint West and North West. Seriously. Those are their names. The Kardashian family is a unique breed, and your reaction to what their names are is predictable. We are all asking, 'why would they name their kids that? That makes no sense?' Say a prayer for the Kardashians today.

In the Gospel of Luke we are told about Elizabeth and Zachariah. Zachariah was a priest, and priests were the stewards for worship at the Temple. While in the Temple, Zachariah sees the Angel Gabriel who tells him his wife is going to give birth to a son and to call him John. Zachariah then questions the Angel Gabriele, because he and his wife are very old and it seemed unrealistic that they could have a child. The Angel Gabriel then makes Zachariah unable to speak because of his lack of faith. It is a crazy story!

Fast forward about nine months later, the child is born and Elizabeth decides to name the child John. Then scripture says, *They [relatives and friends] said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who has that name." Then they made signs to his father [Zachariah], to find out what he would like to name the child. He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, "His name is John." Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God.*

They were shocked by the name! It did not make any sense to them, but it was what God asked Elizabeth and Zachariah to do. God knows exactly what He is doing in our lives. Sometimes we might not understand where God is taking us, or why God has us where we are. Those are the moments where our faith is tested, and we have to trust God even more with our circumstances and with our life. My prayer for you this Christmas season would be for you to trust God's direction for your life!

Prayer | Lord, I trust you today with the calling you have placed on my life. Take away my doubts, and give me confidence to do what you have asked me to do. Amen.





Day 23 | Manger to the Cross

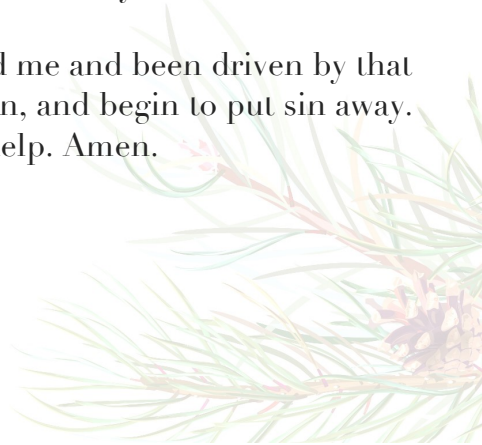
Scripture | John 1:29 *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”*

Daily Reading | T.S. Elliot once said, “*We had the experience, but we missed the meaning.*” In the Gospel of John, our writer John has already experienced everything that we know now about Jesus because he was there as one of Jesus’ disciples. John’s goal was to show you that early in Jesus’ life and ministry that He made it very clear whom He was and what He came to do. In the scene from today’s verse, John the Baptist (different than our writer John) is baptizing people and sharing with the religious authorities that he himself is not the Messiah. The religious authorities were concerned about the Messiah rumors and predictions, so they went to check on this ‘John the Baptist’ character. We will come back to this. When Jesus does shows up though, John the Baptist gets to look directly at the religious authorities, and all the people he has been preaching to about the Messiah coming, and say, *This is the guy I was telling you about!* It was a great ‘I told you so’ moment for John the Baptist!

What our gospel writer shares with us is fascinating. He tells us that Jesus is the *Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!* John completely skips over Jesus’ birth story, and breaks the news to us that Jesus is the going to save the world from sin. It was a very bold and dangerous statement for John the Baptist to make, especially in front of the religious authorities. This was concerning news to the religious authorities, because only they could help people remove their sin. Earlier we stated that the religious authorities were concerned about the Messiah rumors and predictions. These worries would turn into full on confrontations, and eventually led Jesus to His death on a cross. It was all headed that way from the beginning, and our gospel writer wants us to see that.

At the beginning of Jesus’ story, it is important not to miss what will eventually come of Jesus. Not missing this piece will heighten your appreciation for Jesus’ birth story. Practically it is important to never forget that God’s plan for Jesus was the cross. God’s plan has always been to save you from your sin, and He has done that through both Jesus’ birth and Jesus’ death. Have you ever viewed God as that thoughtful or that intentional? God has been strategic in how He has always wanted to save you from your sin; will you choose today to receive that? My prayer for you this Christmas is for you to be saved from your sin!

Prayer | Lord, it is clear that since the beginning you have loved me and been driven by that love to save me from my sins. Help me today accept my salvation, and begin to put sin away. I want to live a more faithful life, and I ask you today for your help. Amen.





Day 24 | Donkeys & Musicals

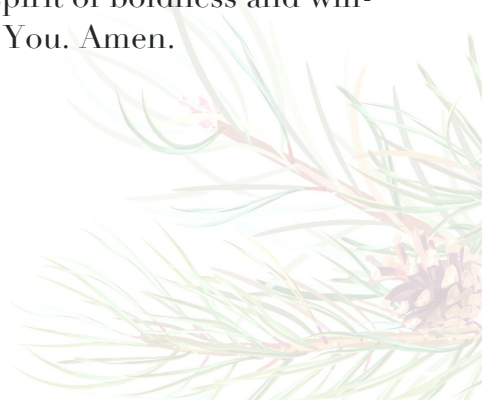
Scripture | Luke 2:1-5 *In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.*

Daily Reading | Did you hear anything about a donkey in the scripture above? You did not, because despite how we think the story goes, we have no record or evidence that Mary and Joseph road a donkey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. There is also no record of a stable, or an innkeeper, or other animals. Over time, traditions, songs, and stories find ways of imagining what it must have been like the night Jesus was born. It does not mean we get the story totally wrong or that we are intentionally misleading someone when we suggest that Mary and Joseph road on a donkey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, but it can reveal how little we search for the actual truth.

A few years ago, the movie *Les Miserables* starring Hugh Jackman and Russell Crowe, came out on Christmas Day. The movie was the first live shot musical where the characters actually sang while the camera was rolling. When the movie came out, many people believed that the story was based off the French Revolution that began in 1789 with the storming of Bastille. In truth, the movie was actually based off an event that occurred in 1832, where a conflict between the poor and the government broke out, and led to a nearly 10,000-person mob according to accounts. Sometimes we can get it wrong, and we confuse others of what the truth actually is.

There are many people in this world who do not know what Christmas is about. They do not understand what Christmas Eve represents, or why millions of people gather in churches on this day. They actually may think they know, and perhaps they do not know the whole truth. As Christians, we are called by God to preach the good news and spread the word about Jesus, and that means we have to know the truth in order to share it. My prayer for you this Christmas would be to see you become a more informed follower of Jesus, so that you too can share His story!

Prayer | Lord, give me wisdom and knowledge today. Let me read your Bible and know the truth. I pray, that this Christmas Eve, you will put inside me a spirit of boldness and willingness to follow You and bring others into a relationship with You. Amen.





Day 25 | The Incarnation

Scripture | John 1:14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

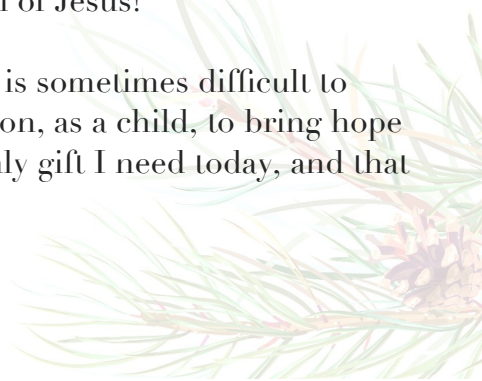
Daily Reading | Today, the greatest gift the world has ever received was given. Christmas is today, and today billions of people are recalling the birth of Jesus and celebrating His coming as a child! Take that in for a moment.

This may have been a long month, and maybe even a long year for you. Perhaps you have faced some difficult job stuff, maybe this past year your marriage has suffered, you have had problems with your kids, issues financially, or maybe this year has just brought about a lot of unexpected change. Today will be filled with the good feelings, and the bad feelings, of this past year. Today will hopefully be joyful, but it may also be a little sad. This could be the first Christmas without a loved one, or maybe the first Christmas where the kids are not home. Maybe you had something fun planned today, but things fell through. Or, maybe you wanted something and you did not get it. Today has a lot going on, and it will be really easy to be inward focused. Today is Christmas though, which means it is not about you today, but about Jesus. Perhaps you were reminded of that when you went to the Christmas Eve Service yesterday, but this morning has flown by with breakfast and gifts, and you missed out on Jesus in the moment.

The problem with missing the Jesus aspect though is why Jesus came, and you do not need to feel guilty about it. Jesus came as a human being both divine and in flesh – a universal mystery. To fully participate in Christmas, is to fully participate in what is called the Incarnation. The Incarnation is the bringing together of the human and the divine – which is what we have in Jesus. Christmas is the day we remember the Incarnation was fully revealed, and a way was made for us, so we would not have to constantly be on our toes to make things right with God.

The Incarnation is a lot to comprehend, and sometimes we are not capable of comprehending it or fully understanding the impact of what it has to offer us. We simply have to sit in awe of what God has done. In fact, this whole day is really a day of awe. Look at what God has done today! God has extended Himself to us this day! It is a gift we receive, not a gift we have to give. If you have not yet received it, today is no better day! God has already given you all you need today in Jesus, what are you waiting for? My prayer for you today is that you would receive what God has done for you through the birth of Jesus!

Prayer | Lord, thank you for Christmas. Thank you for Jesus. It is sometimes difficult to comprehend what you have done for me. You sent Your only Son, as a child, to bring hope and joy into my life. I stand in awe of you today. I accept the only gift I need today, and that is Your Son, Jesus. Amen.





25 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

A DAILY DEVOTIONAL

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