

Daily Devotional, December 2, 2020 Creating Space For Christmas

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’” Matthew 3:1-3 (NIV)

The early store decorations each year may send you into a place of either frustration or excitement. I believe most people want to enjoy the entrance of fall, Halloween, and the beginning of the Thanksgiving season before thinking about Christmas. Others are elated at the very first sights and smells of a holiday they find to be most special and heartwarming. The reminders of how many shopping days left until Christmas may overwhelm you or challenge you—especially when the countdown begins in October! But no matter what, these signals do tell us something—Christmas is coming!

With the amount of preparation that we put into decorating and shopping each year, how much space and time do we give to prepare in our hearts for the coming of Christ? How much space and time do we give to God each week or each day? While the decorations and music may mostly apply to a few particular weeks of the year, we should not just give God room in our life only at this time of year.

In fact, the busyness of the holiday season sometimes can distract us from God more than draw us closer to Him. Because there are so many things that can distract, I love hearing about family traditions that encourage important faith-filled moments.

Opportunities to serve others, families coming together for worship—even virtual—and spending extra time with devotions or scripture help teach us about the true spirit of this holiday. While many of our traditions will become severely altered this year, perhaps we can develop new, more meditative moments that will enrich our celebration of this sacred season. This moment of Jesus coming into the world over 2000 years ago has impacted the world ever since. God showed us His amazing love and it transformed everything. And as we reflect on the significance of God’s presence through Jesus, this impacts and transforms our lives as well.

So, Christmas is coming! Jesus Christ *has* come! And though we may not be able to create space for these meaningful moments with our family, or to spend time at church this Christmas, there are still ways that we can help those in need to have a bit of joy this year. When we create room in our hearts and lives for God to enter in – we should allow Him to not only linger, but to abide with us and show us how to make this possible. Let’s allow God’s spirit to truly find a home and resting place with us. In this season of Christmas, prepare your heart for Christ and invite Him to speak to you in new ways that impact the days after as well.

Prayer: Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in Him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to Him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:17-21 (NLT)