



## Putting Christ Back In Christmas



By Raelynn Pineda

Matthew 12:34 says that the mouth spills out what fills the heart. As the season of cheer and merry-filled blessings come upon us, what is your heart filled with? What overflow out of the abundance of your heart will those around you experience? Joy or sadness? Happiness or anger?

During this time of the year, I want to encourage us to put Christ back into our Christmas. The Christ I know is loving, patient, kind, gracious, merciful, and good. I want you and your loved ones to experience all of that and more this Christmas, as well. The unfortunate reality is that, for many, this time of year is a time when people lose sight of all that Christ is to them. We lose sight of his goodness and allow fear, anxiety, shame, sadness, loneliness, hopelessness, and so on creep in. Maybe we are not the person who loses sight of God's goodness, but a friend or family member is. How can we stand firm on God's promises and encourage someone else to do so during this season? Here are practical steps of how we can keep Christ in Christmas:

1. Recognize that Jesus is the reason for the season.

First and foremost, in order to put Christ back into Christmas, we have to recognize why we are celebrating Christmas in the first place. Over 2000 years ago, a little baby was born and placed in

a manger as the leading light of the world. This manger-laying boy was to be the Messiah of all; ordained to give all human beings the gift of eternal life. Christmas is the time of year when we celebrate God's gift of Christ to us.

Meditate on John 3:16.

## 2. Dig into His Word.

What we hide in our heart is what will grow in abundance and spill over out of our mouths. The more we dig into God's word, the more we hide his word in our hearts. Digging into his word equips us for such a time as this, so that we may boldly stand by his promises when doubt and fear creep in. Digging into his word also equips us to be able to share His word with our brothers and sisters who may not be feeling God's goodness during this time of year.

Meditate on II Timothy 2:15 and II Timothy 3:16.

## 3. Give Praise and Thanksgiving.

Allowing praise and thanksgiving to flow from our mouth switches our focus to the goodness of God and all that He has done and continues to do for you and for those around you. The active celebration of God's goodness and grace changes our mindset and posture to one of thanksgiving. Give God the praise when feeling down, and remind yourself that He is still worthy of our praise even in the midst of our trials.

Mediate on Psalms 107:8-9.

## 4. Serve Someone Else.

Take some time to do something for someone else. As an anthropocentric people, it is very natural for us to often think of ourselves as the center of our focus. I want to challenge us to look at the people around us, not from a human lens, but from the lens of the Holy Spirit and start asking ourselves, "How can I serve another individual with a divine sense of service?" Oftentimes when we focus on the 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest command of Christ, and that's to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, then we begin to step outside of our own human self-centered approach to our thinking and divinely think to love on someone else. This is yet another tool to shift our focus off of us— along with our hurt, fear, and loneliness— and on to God's goodness in our lives and the lives of others.

Meditate on Hebrew 6:10.

Putting Christ back into the Christmas is as simple as putting Christ back in Christians. As his chosen people it is our place to show Christ in all things, so as the holidays come and go, let's use our discernment to seek out those who need to be reminded of our God's love this Christmas.

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**THIS MONTH'S VERSE FOR MEMORY/MEDITATION:**

"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.."

**Isaiah 9:6**

**DECEMBER PRAYER FOCUS**

Pray for those who have lost loved ones and are doing their best to ward off the spirit of loneliness and hopelessness during this holiday season.