



~ *The Gift of Christmas* ~

Christmas Devotional



December 1, 2024

## ~ Jesus, Our True Hope ~

“He will not crush the weakest reed or put out a flickering candle. Finally he will cause justice to be victorious. And his name will be the hope of all the world.” (vs. 21; NLT)

— Read Matthew 12:18-21 —

**D**uring the Christmas season, there are a lot of things to hope for. Maybe it's hoping to spend more time with family or hoping for that shiny new toy you just can't wait to play with. But there's one thing you can hope in that will never let you down: Jesus Christ!

The Bible is full of prophecies foretelling the birth of Jesus. Nearly every Old Testament writer, from Moses to Isaiah, writes of the coming Messiah and the hope He will bring to the world. Hundreds of years later, that same hope was finally fulfilled when Jesus was born. Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the wise men were just a few of the first people to hear the wonderful news of Jesus' birth. Even today, this same hope Jesus brings can still be found all over the world. Take this story from Samuel in Ecuador:

*“For a long time I was distant from my peers and relatives. I felt lonely and hopeless, until I watched the JESUS film. Through that film I began to reflect on my own life and look for answers in spirituality. It was then that I came to know God in a personal and profound way. I discovered that my worth was found in God and He loved me unconditionally and had a plan for my life. Now, my life has a purpose and a hope that I have never experienced before.”*

The good news of Jesus' birth is hope that can be shared anywhere and to anyone. It's okay to hope for family time or a cool new toy this Christmas, but remember that our true hope should be put in Christ Jesus.

— By Josh Robinson, JFHP  
Communications Coordinator

- 
- ◆ What are you putting your hope in?
  - ◆ How can you hope in Jesus?

### *For Kids:*

- ◆ What is something you're hoping for this Christmas?
- ◆ How can you hope in Jesus?







December 8, 2024

## ~Peace...More Than Just the Absence of Conflict~

“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.” (vs. 6; ESV)

— Read Isaiah 9:1-7 —

**O**ur world today is in desperate need of peace. Wars and conflicts are nothing new to our world. And neither are calls for peace. But it is important to recognize that when the Bible talks about peace, it is often not talking about the kind of peace many people today expect: peace as the absence of conflict or wars. Instead, when the Bible talks about peace, it is referring to something much deeper and more significant. Peace is not the absence of anything, it is the filling of our hearts with God's very presence.

Yuri, from Peru, testifies to this peace that came to reign in his life after attending a showing of the *JESUS* film:

*“Seeing the film of the life of Jesus at a cinema attracted me and I attended the showing. I did not think that my life would change that day. I did not have peace in my heart due to a series of problems that I faced because of the pandemic. Now I can understand that Jesus was the only one who could give me that peace. I gave my life to Him, and now I am very eager to learn more and more of His Word, I have the peace of God in my heart.”*

— By Bill Kirkemo, JFHP Resource Associate, Pastor

---

◆ Have you experienced the incredible peace that comes from giving up your life entirely and inviting Christ to just take over?

### *For Kids:*

- ◆ When was the last time you felt scared?
- ◆ How can knowing Jesus loves you help you the next time you are scared?





December 15, 2024

## ~ The Magnitude of God's Love ~

“He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” (vs. 32; ESV)

— Read Romans 8:31-35 —

**G**rowing up in Latin America, I learned a Spanish children’s church song that says God’s love is so big that we cannot go over it, under it, or around it. It helps children picture a love so great that there is no way to be outside of it.

God’s love is so encompassing that He was willing to sacrifice His Son to atone for the sins of the entire world. Sometimes we have trouble applying this on a personal level, remembering that the magnitude of that love can apply to an individual. God’s love is not divided among all people who have ever existed. All His love is, yes, for all people, but in equal measure for everyone. He would have given Jesus for one of us as much as He did for all of us. It’s no wonder that the Apostle Paul was able to say: “If God is for us, who can be against us?” This testimony shows what happened when Azul learned this truth:

*“Years ago, my parents got a divorce which caused financial problems for my family and I fell into a depression. I had no desire to keep going in life. But that changed when a neighbor invited me to her home and shared the gospel with me. I learned there is a God who loves me, a good and loving Father who will provide. I decided to give my life to Christ. Now, I have a job and help my mother with the house expenses. I hope soon that I can share the love of Christ with her.”*

As we continue in this Christmas season, reflect for a moment on the magnitude of God’s love and the implications it has for how we see our circumstances, the people, and the world around us. Jesus came so that this truth about God’s love could be revealed to us.

— By Daniel Herrera, JFHP Field Services Director

- 
- ◆ How does the magnitude of God’s love change the way we think about this season?
    - ◆ What can we do differently this year to show someone God’s love?

### *For Kids:*

- ◆ What are some ways we can show love to other people, around us who would normally be outside our own love?







December 22, 2024

## ~ Jesus Brings Joy ~

“And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.’” (vs. 10-11; ESV)

— Read Luke 2:8-15 —

In Biblical times, sheep would be a source of income for a shepherd’s family, so it was vital that they be well taken care of. Shepherds were often the youngest in the family. They had to face harsh weather conditions, live in the dry wilderness for days at a time and protect the sheep from any wild animals or thieves.

In Luke 2, we read that God chose to first announce the birth of His Son, the long-awaited Messiah, to the shepherds. Though they were often looked down upon in their society, He chose them to be the first ones to spread the news of the Savior’s coming and the joy that would be for all people.

Jesus brought us joy that we can cling to in the face of any kind of trial. In the waiting, the grieving, and the striving, we can rejoice in the goodness and

faithfulness of God and His gift of eternal life with Him. Though we face difficulties in life, we can have joy in knowing that God can use those circumstances for His glory and purpose. Hector learned this truth in this testimony:

*“I feel very grateful that through the beautiful JESUS film showings, I was able to get closer to God because of the precious blood of Jesus that He shed on the cross. Now I feel very safe and excited to serve Him, and no longer belong to the world and its evils. Before I met Christ, I was so lost and there was no joy and peace in me. I lived in loneliness and fear, but now I will live happier and more peacefully in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior.”*

— By Randi Jenner, JFHP Assistant Field Services Coordinator

---

◆ In what ways can you find joy in your daily life?

*For Kids:*

◆ How would you describe the difference between joy and happiness?





Christmas Eve, December 24th

## ~ A Faithful Response ~

“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!” (vs. 45; NIV)

— Read Luke 1:35-45 —

**I** find Mary’s faith in this passage remarkable. She first responds with a willing heart. Instead of an attitude of anger and resentment toward God for interrupting her life, she willingly accepts God’s plan and direction for her own life. She responds to the angel, “I am the Lord’s servant...may your word to me be fulfilled.”

After the angel leaves, Mary responds with willing feet. She stopped what she was doing and hurried to visit her relative Elizabeth. She believed the angel’s message that Elizabeth was pregnant, and her actions revealed how she believed God’s word would also be true for herself. Mary believed the angel’s message that “no word from God will ever fail.” Elizabeth’s words to Mary were also true: “blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”

Just like Mary, we can also have this remarkable faith. Let us respond to the words of God with a willing

heart and willing feet. We may not have complete control over how our lives turn out, but we can be like Mary and have a faithful response.

*“My baby daughter had a fever and nothing I did throughout the night helped. By early morning, she wasn’t responding. Due to living in a rural area and having no phone signal, I didn’t know what to do. In desperation I took her outside and tried to look for some help, but there was no one. So, I cried out, ‘Help me God or something worse could happen to my daughter’. At that point a taxi appeared out of nowhere. He stopped and took us to the hospital. At the hospital, I remembered hearing that ‘only with God impossible things are possible.’ So, I asked some Christians to come visit me. They repeatedly came to visit and share God’s Word with me until my baby was discharged. After this, I visited their church and responded to the altar call. With gratitude I made Christ my Lord.” -Gloria, Mexico*

— By Aaron Acheson, JFHP Graphic Designer

- 
- ◆ When has God asked you to respond with actions to the love He has given to you?

*For Kids:*

- ◆ Why is it sometimes hard to obey your parents?
- ◆ How can you show God's love to other people this week?







Christmas, December 25

## ~ The Gift of Christmas ~

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (vs. 16; NASB)

— Read John 3:13-18 —

**G**iving gifts is perhaps one of the kindest actions you can do for someone else. There’s nothing quite like seeing the joy and excitement on a loved one’s face when they receive a gift you’ve thoughtfully picked out for them. The act of giving without an expectation of reciprocation is one of the purest ways to show your love to another.

Christmas Day reminds us that our gifts to each other are mere reflections of the very best gift that we’ve all received: God’s gift to us of Jesus Christ. We are reminded that the Savior of the world, the one who will one day destroy sin and rule over every tribe, nation, and tongue in mercy and love, humbled Himself and came to us as a baby.

Salvation was a gift freely given to us through Jesus’ birth. As John 3:16 tells us, God loved the world so much that He **gave** His only Son, so that those who believe in Him will have eternal life. This great gift was nothing that we deserved, but on Christmas Day we can remember that Jesus was born to save us all.

This good news of joy and hope – this perfect gift – is one we can give to all.

God’s gift of salvation is freely given today, like in this testimony from a team in South Asia:

*“A man named A. became very sick. Our team shared with him the love and compassion that Jesus has for everyone, despite our backgrounds or previous beliefs. We read to him from the Bible, and over the next few days he made a full recovery! He was curious about the source of his newfound healing and peace, so we spent time discussing Jesus’ gift of salvation. With an open heart and seeking spirit, he embraced Christianity and accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. Today, A. stands as a living testimony of God’s gifts of healing and grace.”*

— By Josh Robinson, JFHP  
Communications Coordinator

---

◆ How can you share the Good News this Christmas?

*For Kids:*

- ◆ What’s the best gift you’ve ever received?
- ◆ What’s the best gift you’ve ever given?

