



As the Christmas season rings its arrival, scriptures and advent studies begin to circulate in hopes of helping us remember the Reason for the Season. Sadly, however, it can be all too easy to find these warm passages dry or 'old' and take their depth for granted. However, it is at this point Jesus' Words to his disciples in Matthew ring most clear:

*At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying,
"Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"
And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said,
"Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children,
you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself
like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."
– Matthew 18:1-4*

I believe Christmastime to be the most wonderful time for putting on that child-like heart and indulging in a season of tradition and hope and love. Even through the hardest times in my life; losing my mother, a struggling marriage, attacks on my family and wandering children; I have always found comfort and peace in the Christmas season and the scriptures which memory can recite while heart can find new.

Throughout history the Jewish people have marked numerous 'Holy days' for observance. Many with feasts and all steeped in tradition. They read the same passages, perform the same rites and, from my experience, the most devout do not consider it rote, but rather, a time of re-focusing with great dedication and celebration.

I believe Christmas to embody much of the same. With innocent hearts ready to receive, we can roll out traditions and read those wonderful passages, all the while thinking deep and soaking in their profound purpose and meaning. It is these passages of Christmas which are the guiding light for each new year ahead. The Truths for focus are varied and exponential but each one points back to the simple message of how *the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it... because God has made him known.*(John 1)

And so, we pause to culminate each year with remembrances of mangers, angels, signs and love. We may take these varied approaches and consider:

Christmas...

.... Through the eyes of Mary

.... Through the eyes of Joseph

.... Through the eyes of the Wise Men

... Through the eyes of shepherds

... Through the eyes of wisemen

The list could go on. We will begin, well, in the beginning! To see Christ's pre-eminence and then move through to anticipation and finally His magnificent arrival. This year, I personally plan to consider the timeless Christmas story and the impact Jesus' coming has had on creating deep-heart joy and peace, not just in a season or for a good day, but peace and joy through all seasons and situations. After all....

Zechariah prophesied our savior would come,

*...to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of **peace**.*

~ Luke 1:79 ~

... and angels declared,

*"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news
of great **joy** that will be for all the people.*

~ Luke 2:10b ~

I hope you will join me for this advent study. I have arranged it as a scripture list which can be read part-by-part each day alone or with family. It can also be further studied during devotions each morning. I encourage you to make time to write out the passages and see how this penned process can make these spectacular words pop!

If you would like to take your study time even further, I have included a simple print-out which aligns with my S.W.A.P. method. One general template page is enclosed but you can select to make additional copies if you plan to follow this model for study OR use it as a guided outline as you journal through this study in your own notebook.

I pray your Christmas season is filled with child-like wonder; that the old may become new and that the peace and joy of the gift of Christ will fill your heart with hope to help renew and prepare you for the new year ahead ♥

Blessings,

Amanda

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. ~ Romans 15:13

- ✧ Day 1 – John 1:1-5
- ✧ Day 2 – John 1:9-13
- ✧ Day 3 – John 1:14, 16-18
- ✧ Day 4 – Luke 1:26-33
- ✧ Day 5 – Luke 1:34-38
- ✧ Day 6 – Luke 1:39-45
- ✧ Day 7 – Luke 1:46-50
- ✧ Day 8 – Luke 1:51-55
- ✧ Day 9 – Matthew 1:18-21
- ✧ Day 10 – Matthew 1:22-25
- ✧ Day 11 – Luke 2:1-5
- ✧ Day 12 – Luke 2:6-7
- ✧ Day 13 – Luke 2:8-12
- ✧ Day 14 – Luke 2:13-14, Isaiah 9:6
- ✧ Day 15 – Luke 2:15-20
- ✧ Day 16 – Matthew 2:1-2
- ✧ Day 17 – Matthew 2:3-6
- ✧ Day 18 – Matthew 2:7-9
- ✧ Day 19 – Matthew 2:10-12
- ✧ Day 20 – Luke 2:22-24
- ✧ Day 21 – Luke 2:25-26
- ✧ Day 22 – Luke 2:27-32
- ✧ Day 23 – Luke 2:33-35
- ✧ Day 24 – Luke 2:36-38
- ✧ Day 25 – Luke 2:39-40



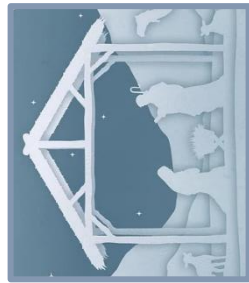
Scripture passage: _____

What words or phrases stand out to you and why? **What** can be discerned about the Character of God and/or His heart for mankind here?

Apply... how can you apply this message in your own life? Is there an element from reading and studying today which reminds you how or why to walk in joy and/or peace?

Pray: _____

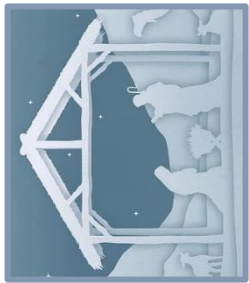
Scripture passage: _____



Scripture passage: _____



Scripture passage: _____



Scripture passage: _____

