

Waiting for Christmas

Luke 2:25-38

Each holiday season (Thanksgiving through the New Year), we engage in a veritable blizzard of pursuits: shopping, baking, feasting, traveling, gifting, hunting, partying—to name just a few. *[Check out the back of this outline for a more complete list.]*

While many of these pursuits are fun and good, there are four hugely important, often-overlooked actions that we want to talk about today...and over the next three Sundays leading up to Christmas. If we look closely, we can actually see these responses in the lives of some of the Bible people who were part of the very first Christmas...long before there was a Black Friday or Small Business Saturday or Cyber Monday.

What we can learn from two old souls:

The long-lost discipline of **waiting** (*why is it so hard?*):

We are _____ people.

We like to be _____.

The meaning & history of **Advent**

Three perspectives the Advent season can give us on waiting:

Advent reminds us that Christ _____.

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How will *you* spend your time this holiday season?

Watching classic holiday movies • Looking for the UPS truck • Decorating • Shopping • Staying up late • Sleeping in • Singing Christmas carols • Overspending • Baking • Going to the movies to see the newest holiday release • Eating • Wrapping presents • *Overeating* • Driving • Dreading • Remembering • Inviting • Taking time off from work • Rushing • **Waiting** • People watching • Partying • Going to the mall • Cooking • Choosing a Christmas tree • Bringing in firewood • Swapping goodies with the neighbors • Celebrating • Shopping a little more • Baking • Eating • Opening presents • Arguing • Stressing • Gathering • Sitting by the fire • Checking Facebook • Reading Christmas cards • **Witnessing** • Bundling up • Shopping online • Hoping for snow • Re-gifting • Tasting • Egg-nogging • Snuggling • Being sentimental • Nibbling • Buying • Taking family pictures • Reading the Christmas story • Spending • Sampling • Daydreaming • Napping • Watching football bowl games • Returning gifts • Eating fruitcake • Sending fruitcake • Making jokes about fruitcake • Resting • Fighting depression • Getting stuff out of the attic • Hiding stuff in the attic • Candy making • Driving around and looking at the lights • Making umpteen trips to Walmart • **Worshipping** • Assembling assorted gifts (instructions not included) • Lighting candles • Drinking wassail • Looking in your Christmas stocking • Making a list and checking it twice • Saying, “Next year, we’ve got to simplify all this holiday hoopla!” • Roasting chestnuts by an open fire • Hanging mistletoe • Trying to covertly navigate your sweetie (or would-be sweetie) under the mistletoe • Watching “A Charlie Brown Christmas” • Shaking a snow globe • Wearing your favorite Christmas sweater—the one your spouse hates • Yelling at the dog to stop drinking out of the Christmas tree stand • Listening to Handel’s “Messiah” • Vowing to not eat turkey again till March • Being still • Reading • Raking leaves • Fighting back tears • Blowing your diet • Packing • Going to your office Christmas party • Purchasing assorted gift cards • Flying • Skiing • **Wondering** • Asking God for a miracle • Hunting • Reviewing 2013 • Stepping on the scales (or opening your credit card statement) and shaking your head in disbelief • Snacking yourself into oblivion • Wishing it were all over and done with • Getting weary of Christmas carols • Making resolutions • Shaking your head at your weird & wacky family • Spending time with old friends who are in for the holidays • Thanking God • Looking ahead to 2014 •