



*An* **EMOTIONAL**  
*Christmas*



*An Anxious*  
**CHRISTMAS**

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**Week 1**  
**Devotional №1**

**“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” – Philippians 4:6**

Does the thought of “home for the holidays” conjure up more anxiety than joy? More trepidation than comfort? For many people, Christmas is a time of loneliness as they watch others gather at parties and family celebrations. For others, it is a time to worry about overspending and putting the credit card debt over the top. As far as kids are concerned, sometimes they are so anxious to receive that perfect gift they forget all about Jesus. We can fall into wanting to give others such a wonderful Christmas we find ourselves caught up with money worries, last-minute shopping, and unreal expectations of holiday cheer.

Consider King Herod and his great anxiety over the coming Messiah. Matthew tells us that King Herod found out the Jewish Messiah was born, the one who was being called “king of the Jews.” That is a title Herod had used for around 30 years. In fact, Herod tried to have Jesus killed so there would not be challenges to his position.

So, you see, for whatever reason, Christmas anxiety has always existed. A time that should be filled with joy at the coming of the Savior, is often overshadowed by the anxiety of fear and expectation – fear that we will not measure up to the expectations others have for us. The right gifts, the right decorations, the right food, the right gatherings are always shouting for dominance in your holiday schedule. When all these distractions begin to wear on your patience and peace, remember this verse from Psalm 94:19: “When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy.”

It is easy for us to think of Christmas in terms of the material joys – trees, lights, mistletoe, carols, and cookies. There is nothing wrong with those wonderful joys, but they will not stave off the anxiety of the holidays. Only one thing can do that: remembering what the true meaning of Christmas is – “For today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.” When the worries of Christmas sneak up on you, remember that Jesus is the only true gift that matters.

What would you have felt? What would you have done when you saw and heard the angels?

Have someone from your family read this verse:

**”Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests.” – Luke 2:14**

Christmas is all about peace and joy, sharing the glory of God with others. There is no need to be anxious for anything during the holidays. Jesus gave us all we need to have a joyful and merry Christmas when He came from “heaven to earth, from earth to the cross, from the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky.” The shepherds in the fields that first Christmas night in Bethlehem had every reason to be anxious and scared. They had seen the angel, and the “glory of the Lord shined around them and they were terrified.”

But the angel made it clear to them that fear, and anxiety were not necessary: “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” (Luke 2:11) Believing in that baby in the manger, the promise of the Salvation He brings, and the love that Jesus has for all of us brings this incredible season into focus and wipes all the fears and anxieties away.

## DISCUSS

- What is the most important part of Christmas to remember this holiday season?
- What is it that makes people anxious this time of year? Is it wanting to receive the right gift? Is it wanting to give the right gift? Is it forgetting that Jesus truly is the reason for the season?
- How can your family help someone who is feeling anxious or lonely this Christmas?
- How would you describe the joy of Christmas that overcomes all anxiety?

