

Dear Furtherance Family:

Greetings in Jesus' precious name! With our postal service just going off strike in Canada, we pray things will begin to get back to normal. It has been a challenge with just getting our Newsletters mailed out this week.

A few thoughts on handling Christmas. The word on my mind this morning is the word **"STAY"**.

1. **Stay focused on the Facts of Christmas**

Christmas is about Christ. It is time we celebrate His birth. Why did He come? He came to seek and to save that which was lost. (Luke 19:10) He came to **save us**. He would be called Emmanuel - **"God with us."** (Matthew 1:23) There is even a deeper meaning in the words of John 14:17 *"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."* For those who believe, Christ dwells **in us**.

Jesus came **to us** to be **with us** so He might dwell **in us** through His Holy Spirit. He would later rise from the dead to prepare a place **for us**. (John 14:1-6) He will soon return to **take us** to be with Him forever. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-16) He came to **save us**, be **with us**, **in us**, to prepare a place **for us** until He comes to **take us** to be with Him forever more.

2. **Stay focused on the Finances at Christmas**

Try not to fill up the credit card just to impress people with gifts. A call, text message, handwritten note, email, video call, a personal card, a hug, something you crafted with your hands, a poem, etc these things mean far more than money and will be remembered far longer in people's hearts and minds. You will find joy in January, if you stay clear of debt in December.

3. **Stay focused on the Fatness of Christmas**

I used to tell the kids at camp to say **"grace"** for the first helping, **"thank you"** for the second helping and **"oink"** if you go back for the third helping. Maybe just one helping would keep off that extra weight. I have gained an extra pound and it is not even Christmas yet.

4. **Stay Focused on Family this Christmas**

In the recent US elections, people were told not to fellowship with their families who voted differently than them. Maybe we should make families a priority this Christmas. Have a meal together and express our love for each other.

5. **Stay focused on the Fields at Christmas**

If ever there was a time during the year when it is easier to share the gospel, it is during the Christmas season. Yesterday, I realized I had not shared Christ with anyone for a few days.

Theresa and I went to Kings Landing for a Christmas visit. This place is a historic recreation of a 19th century village where you get to see 70 historic buildings including homes, farms, a mill, a school, and two churches. Before the day was over at Kings Landing, I had chances to share Christ.

Inside the door at Kings Landing is a thank you sign for the many ways people have ministered to this organization. I jotted them down. *"Thank you for visiting, supporting, donating, writing, encouraging, reminiscing, connecting, caring, enquiring, researching, celebrating, learning, volunteering, sharing, laughing, preserving, partnering."* I thought about you, our support base financially and prayerfully. Thank you.

May you and yours be richly blessed this Christmas.

Keeping on keeping on for Christ,

Ed, Theresa, & Eloise



