

SENT: “The Coming Messenger” Part 3

**“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me,
for the Lord has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to comfort
the brokenhearted and to proclaim
that captives will be released and prisoners
will be freed.” Isaiah 61:1**

A. The Messenger is from God...

1. Jesus is the Messenger from God.

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me...”

2. Jesus is God’s Word to us.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:1,14

3. Jesus is God’s presence with us.

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means ‘God with us’).” Matthew 1:23

4. Jesus is God’s grace to us!

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” John 1:17

B. This Messenger brings...

1. Good news to the poor.

“...to bring good news to the poor...”

2. Comfort to the brokenhearted.

“He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted...”

3. Release to the captives held in darkness.

“...to proclaim that captives will be released...”

4. Freedom to prisoners.

“...prisoners will be freed.”

C. This messenger brings gifts...

1. A crown of beauty instead of ashes.

“...to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes...”

2. The oil of gladness instead of mourning.

“...the oil of gladness instead of mourning...”

3. A garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

“...a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”

4. A right relationship with God instead of sin.

“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

D. So what gifts will you give to those in your world?

“For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me...when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!” Matthew 25:35,36,40b

1. When you give to others who have no opportunity to give in return, you are giving to Jesus.
2. When you give to meet the needs of others in your world, in food, clothing, and shelter, you are giving to Jesus.
3. When you reach out to those around you who are sick or imprisoned, you are giving to Jesus.
4. When you love those in your world unconditionally, you are giving to Jesus.

E. Pray that God gives you eyes to see...

1. The poor in your world who need Jesus.
2. The broken in your world who need comfort.
3. Those held prisoner in their world.
4. Those who need your hands and feet as the hands and feet of Jesus.

Simple gifts to give this Christmas and ways to keep Christ in Christmas:

1. Prepare your heart daily. Keeping Christ in Christmas is, at its most basic, the same as keeping Christ in your everyday.

2. Read the Christmas story (find it in Luke 1:5-56; 2:1-20 and Matthew 1:18-2:12). It’s so simple that even Linus in Charlie Brown got it right. THE Christmas story comes from the Bible. THE Christmas story is simple and poignant. THE Christmas story should be read aloud often in every home during this joyous season.

3. Display and discuss a Nativity in your home.

4. Give often. There are a myriad of ways to give during the holiday season. You can take an ornament off an Angel Tree or buy gifts for a family in need. You can give money, time or gifts, just do it with a cheerful heart.

5. Celebrate a birthday on Christmas.

6. Attend church on Christmas Eve.

7. Send Christmas cards with a spiritual flavor.

8. Give thanks. We often reserve our thanksgiving for November, but remind your kids to look for things to be thankful for. Help them to pray thanks for those gifts, both before and after Christmas.

9. Give a gift of empathy. Make it a habit to try to place yourself in the shoes of another person- any person: Loved ones, coworkers, people you meet on the street. Really try to understand, to the extent that you can, what it is like to be them, what they are going through, and why they do what they do.

10. Give a gift of compassion. Once you can understand another person, and feel what they’re going through, learn to want to end their suffering. And when you can, take even a small action to somehow ease their suffering in some way.

11. Give a gift of kindness. The Golden Rule doesn’t really mean that you should treat someone else exactly as you’d want them to treat you ... it means that you should try to imagine how they want to be treated, and do that. So when you put yourself in their shoes, ask yourself how you think they want to be treated.

12. Give a gift of a smile. When in doubt, follow this tip. It’s usually safe to be friendly towards others.

13. Give a hand. Find ways to reach out to someone and make a difference.

14. Give a gift of courtesy in traffic. Another weakness of our society. There are few times when we are as selfish as when we're driving. We don't want to give up the right of way, we cut people off, we honk and curse. Perhaps it's the isolation of the automobile. We certainly don't act that rude in person, most of the time. So, try to be courteous in traffic.

15. Give a gift of listening to others. Another weakness: we all want to talk, but very few of us want to listen. And yet, we all want to be listened to. So, take the time to actually listen to another person, rather than just wait your turn to talk. It'll also go a long way to helping you understand others.

16. Give a gift of no criticism. Hold back your criticism, and instead learn to interact.

17. Be the change this Christmas that you want to see in others and your world.

*This week...your Advent Advent-urø is to
reach out to someone in your world
and make a difference!*

*Your Advent-urø is
to let your light shine!!*