

## 3 truths to consider this Christmas

Between the string of parties, dinners, gift-buying, school and church programs, the Christmas season can feel like such a flurry of activity.

One minute, we're looking for that perfect present for the aunt for whom we never know what to buy, and the next we're pulling out those cookies from the oven that Pinterest told us would look cute.

It can be so easy to become overwhelmed with stress this season, and that stress can steal the very joy and awe upon which this time of year is built. So, this year, I want to bring us back to three core truths in which we can take solace to remind ourselves of the gospel that sets us free, but also to keep our peace in the midst of a packed schedule.



### **He is 'God with us.'**

To me, the greatest miracle of Christmas is that he came to earth, lived as we do and conquered all the things we fight against: fear, shame, anxiety and sin. It brings hope to my heart—that everything I face in my life, he intimately knows. And he doesn't just slap us on the back and stop there—he steps in with a more powerful solution; victory, resurrection and overcoming.

This reality—that he is so driven by love that when you draw close to him you cannot help but melt in awe—it floors me. When I can climb into that truth like a little child, it makes me come alive and sets me on fire with a hope for my future. This season is an opportunity to lean into it, and be mindful of it.

He is God with me. He is God with you. He is God with us.

### **The greatest gift we can give is our presence.**

We can become so consumed with wrapping presents and making the house look perfect, that we forget to sit and listen and laugh and hold those who are closest to us.

Have you ever been in a situation where someone was so busy and so distracted that they couldn't even seem to look at you? Where all you were longing for in that moment was to have their attention? I know I've been there, and I know this holiday season can hold a lot of these moments for all of us.

So, I wonder what would happen if we gave others our presence—our time and eye contact, our attention and care. And I wonder what would happen if we requested that of others, too. It could be as simple as asking, “Would you sit with me? I’d really like that.”

**Miracles happen in the quiet moments too.**

We really like noise. We enjoy the frenetic pace of social media, the customized news alerts at our fingertips—the information inundation, if you will. This, however, leaves us open to discarding the quiet spaces.

There’s something refreshing about sitting in the quiet, unplugged from electronics, when it’s just you and your thoughts. That can be scary, but there is a clarity and honesty that can come from it. And if you’ve taken the time to embrace quiet moments before, you know just how often miracles can happen. Suddenly, you might remember the truths you’ve forgotten. Or you might feel a peace come over yourself about your future. Or maybe your heart is hurt and you simply allow it to feel that, because it needs to feel that.

Miracles aren’t always massive spectacles in front of a hundred thousand faces. Sometimes, miracles are a subtle shift of the heart in the quietest of spaces.

So, this Christmas, slow down, give others your presence and remember just how much he is with you. Soak it in and receive it. Let it inspire hope within you.