

25 Days of Advent

Seeing Jesus Through the Eyes of the Christmas Story Characters

ADVENT DAY 24: Dec. 24 – Jesus, Our Savior God

Devotional

If you are a parent, you no doubt have had times when you wished you could read your child's mind – to know what they were thinking, to get a glimpse into their heart. We used to play a game where we would ask, "If you could have one wish, what would it be?" I would wish for the ability to read my children's minds – not only when they were misbehaving (what *were* you thinking?), but when they would do the most unexpected and sweetest thing (what were *you* thinking?) It would have been so much easier to parent them.

Now I find myself wondering what that little baby Jesus was thinking when He finally emerged as fully human. Still God, was He able to comprehend what was happening around Him even though he couldn't yet speak? Did He wonder what was happening when He messed His diaper? Did He know what that pain in his stomach was when He needed food? Did He want to reach out and offer a hug of comfort to His earthly mother and father when things looked bleak, but unable to physically do so because His muscles had not yet fully developed?

When He was a toddler and the most common word he heard was "No," did He think, "If only you knew who you were talking to, you'd never say no."

We know in Scripture when Jesus was 12 and the family went to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover, Jesus stayed behind and was separated from His mom and dad for 4 days. They were frantic when they finally found Him in the Temple listening to the teachers and asking them questions. Can you imagine losing your child for 4 days? I freaked out when my son would disappear in the clothing racks at a store for a few minutes.

"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" (Luke 2:49)

I can imagine Him thinking, "Good grief, don't you know me by now? I've been with you for 12 years!" Sounds like the hallmark of a rebellious pre-teen, but that would not be Jesus. Luke tells us He went to Nazareth with them and was *obedient* to them. Can we pause for just a minute? Obedient all throughout His teen years? Obedient all throughout His young adult years? Every parent's dream.

Yet Jesus had just one mission during His time on earth – to save sinners and provide a way to reconcile God's people with God. Was that always in the back of His mind as He made friends, delighted His parents, grew up in stature with God and man? Would the heaviness of that purpose weigh Him down or would He be able to fully enjoy His time as man?

Take time today to give thanks for Jesus' sacrifice and wonder at the impact such a small baby boy had on the entire world – an impact still felt today some 2,000 years later. Christmas is so much more than a baby in a manger...it's the greatest gift of all time.

If you haven't yet accepted that gift of salvation, today's the day! Admit you've sinned and need a savior, tell Jesus you believe He's God's son and He came to save you; surrender to Him. Your life will never be the same!

Look Up – Connect with God

Read: Go back and reread the entire Christmas narrative in Luke or Matthew.

Key Verse: “Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?” (Luke 2:49)

Pray: Father God, we cannot begin to fathom what it took for you to send your Son to save us, and what it took for your Son to come and fulfill His mission. But we are so eternally grateful that He did. From the innocent face of an infant wrapped in cloths and laid in a manger to the compassion of the man hanging on the cross, we have been forever changed. And we will never stop telling everyone we know about His amazing love. Thank you Lord.

Look In – Family Memories

Discuss: Which character we talked about during this devotional do you most resonate with and why? Be honest and vulnerable, you'll be amazed at how close your family will be after such sharing.

Activity:

- Advent Tree: select a baby Jesus ornament, or utilize a nail to signify his sacrifice on the cross, and put it on the tree. [Download Ornaments](#) or [Ornament Ideas](#)
- Advent Garland: put the key verse on a paper/card, assign #24, and attach it to the garland twine. [Key Verses](#)
- Advent Cards: select a card and see what the activity might be (i.e., go to Christmas service). [Family Activities](#)

Look Out – Connect with Others

It's Christmas Eve! Bring a plate of seasonal treats and drop off at your local fire and police departments. They still have to fully staff on holidays. Let them know they are very much appreciated. Offer to pray with them when you drop them off. Then pray for them during your Christmas service.