

WRITINGS OF JIM ERWIN

by Jim Erwin

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Jim Erwin, compiled for study and devotional reading.

39 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 01.01.00. Advent Devotional
2. 01.01.01. FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
3. 01.01.02. FIRST MONDAY OF ADVENT
4. 01.01.03. FIRST TUESDAY OF ADVENT
5. 01.01.04. FIRST WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT
6. 01.01.05. FIRST THURSDAY OF ADVENT
7. 01.01.06. FIRST FRIDAY OF ADVENT
8. 01.01.07. FIRST SATURDAY OF ADVENT
9. 01.02.01. SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
10. 01.02.02. SECOND MONDAY OF ADVENT
11. 01.02.03. SECOND TUESDAY OF ADVENT
12. 01.02.04. SECOND WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT
13. 01.02.05. SECOND THURSDAY OF ADVENT
14. 01.02.06. SECOND FRIDAY OF ADVENT
15. 01.02.07. SECOND SATURDAY OF ADVENT
16. 01.03.01. THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
17. 01.03.02. THIRD MONDAY OF ADVENT
18. 01.03.03. THIRD TUESDAY OF ADVENT
19. 01.03.04. THIRD WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT
20. 01.03.05. THIRD THURSDAY OF ADVENT
21. 01.03.06. THIRD FRIDAY OF ADVENT
22. 01.03.07. THIRD SATURDAY OF ADVENT
23. 01.04.01. FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
24. 01.04.02. FOURTH MONDAY OF ADVENT
25. 01.04.03. FOURTH TUESDAY OF ADVENT
26. 01.04.04. FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT
27. 01.04.05. FOURTH THURSDAY OF ADVENT
28. 01.04.06. FOURTH FRIDAY OF ADVENT
29. 01.04.07. Christmas Day
30. 02.01. Sermon Prep (Observe)
31. 02.02. Sermon Prep (Interpret)
32. 02.03. Sermon Prep (Apply)
33. 02.04. Sermon Prep (Ways to Apply Scripture)
34. 02.05. Sermon Prep (Application Identification)
35. 02.06. Sermon Prep (Application Window)
36. 02.07. List of Action Verbs
37. 02.08. Categories for Outlining the Sermon
38. 02.09. Sermon Prep (Internet Sites)
39. 02.10. Sermon Illustrations (Internet Sites)

01.01.00. Advent Devotional

CELEBRATING ADVENT IN GERMANY

Celebrating Advent is a fairly recent Christmas tradition of German origin. Advent is Latin for “coming towards”. The Latin, “ad”, means “towards” whereas “ven/vent” is core of the Latin verb “veno”, meaning “come”. Advent refers to the days approaching the coming of Christ to earth. More specifically, in the German tradition, it refers to the 24 days immediately preceding Christmas day, from December first.

One of the most widely celebrated advent traditions is having an advent calendar. The Advent calendar finds its origins in the 19th Century from the protestant area of Germany. Protestant Christian families made a chalk line for every day in December until Christmas Eve. Before long, commercial entrepreneurs started replacing the ephemeral chalk lines with printed calendars. The first known Advent calendar is for the advent of 1851.

Soon, other devices helped Germans and German immigrants to America celebrate the advent. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Adventclock or the Adventcandle - a candle for 24 days until Christmas - were found in many homes. The first printed calendar was made by Gerhard Lang (1881-1974) who was a Swabian parishioner from Maulbronn in Germany. When he was a child his mother made him an Advent Calendar with 24 “Wibbele” (little candies). Later Lang was a participator of the printing office Reichhold & Lang where he published miniature colored pictures which could be affixed on a cardboard at every day in December. This was the first printed Advent calendar, although without windows to open, published in 1908. The celebration of advent and the associated Advent Calendar caught on like wildfire in the early decades of this century. However, despite the great success of Lang’s Advent calendar, he had to close his company in the 1930s due to World War II. The same war ended this German practices in many homes and certainly stopped the increase of this tradition. The first printed versions of the calendar after the war were printed by Richard Sellmer in 1946. Advent calendars continue to be printed to this day.

GERMANS, MARTIN LUTHER AND THE CHRISTMAS TREE

According to legend, Martin Luther invented the modern concept of the Christmas tree while walking through the woods one Christmas Eve. He allegedly observed the starlit sky sparkling through the branches of fir trees and this sighting moved him to chop down the tree, take it home and erect it. He then adorned it with candles to share his vision with his children.

However, written evidence confirms that the Christmas tree was in German Alsace around 1521. It was clearly established in early 17th century Strasbourg, Germany. Strasbourg’s families decorated their Christmas trees with colored paper roses, apples, wafers, spangle-gold and sweets. The first public display of a Christmas tree, decorated with bright red apples, occurred in Strasbourg.

During the 19th century, glass artists in Lauscha, Germany created ornaments in front of the lamp, using claylike molds to create the first glass ornaments...blown glass interpretations of the fruits and nuts that traditionally ornamented Christmas trees. THE NUTCRACKER In the toy making center of Sonneberg in the Thuringian Forest there was mention in 1735 on "nut-biters". These nut-biters were described as sturdy, energetic forms with large heads. In a carnival parade in 1783, students from Freisingen, Germany presented large models of Berchtesgaden wares, including a nut-biter in the form of a little man whose mouth and stomach were one and the same.

CELEBRATING ADVENT AS A FAMILY The Christmas season is one of joyful anticipation for many, but especially to those who truly understand its meaning and its significance as the birth of our Savior, the Son of God, Jesus Christ. What better time to focus on the Christ child: why He came, who He is, and what He did for us.

It is our prayer that you approach this season with a plan of how to enjoy it as a family, keep the right focus and make memories as a family. There is no better or special place to be during Christmas than in Germany where many of our traditions for celebrating originated. In addition to the daily devotions we have included some other suggestions that you can use to make this a meaningful and joyful family celebration. These ideas emphasize love, the family, and giving of ourselves during the Christmas season. At the back of this booklet are stories of how some of the Christmas traditions we celebrate started in Germany.

FAMILY ADVENT DEVOTIONS

Within this book there are daily devotions for each day beginning the first Sunday of Advent. All you need is this booklet, a Bible, the family, and a little time. With our busy schedules, this is harder than it sounds. It takes a firm commitment for the parents to make it happen, but well worth the investment. Each of the members of the family can be involved by allowing them to read the passages or the devotion or answer questions after the reading is done. An Advent Wreath or Calendar can help add color, involvement of children, and tradition to your devotions, but they aren't necessary.

ADVENT CALENDARS

Get an advent calendar for the children in the family. Typically they are brightly covered with a manger or other Christmas scene and have a little "window" for each day of December until Christmas. You can use this in conjunction with family devotions or as an individual thing for the children. You can buy them in German bookstores, but most have a secular scene and emphasis. You can buy Christian ones over the internet or in German or American Christian bookstores.

HAVE A FAMILY ADVENT WREATH

Buy an Advent wreath. You can get them at German flower shops or department stores, or the town markets or Weihnachtsmarkts. Traditionally they are made of evergreen branches in the shape of a wreath that you use as a centerpiece for your table. There are places for four candles spaced equidistance around the wreath. One candle is lit on each of the four Sundays prior to Christmas. A fifth large candle is placed in the middle of the wreath. This is the Christ Candle that is lit on Christmas day. The meanings of the candles are listed below with an appropriate Bible passage to read. We do this at church as a body, but it is very meaningful and fun to do this at home with the devotional reading.

1st Candle: The Prophet's Candle - Isaiah 9:2-6 2nd Candle: Bethlehem Candle - Matthew 2:4-6
3rd Candle: The Angels' and Shepherds' Candle - Luke 2:8-20 4th Candle: The Wise Men's
Candle - Matthew 2:1-12 5th Candle: The Christ Candle - Luke 2:1-7 LEARN SOME GERMAN
CHRISTMAS SONGS/GO CAROLING

Some of our favorite Christmas hymns have Germanic origins. Silent Night is a good example.
Learn some of these old favorites and some new ones and get with friends and family and carol in
your neighborhood. HAVE SOMEONE OVER TO YOUR HOME FOR CHRISTMAS DINNER Invite
a single person/soldier/airman or family of a deployed service member to have Christmas dinner at
your house.

GO TO WEIHNACHTSMARKTS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Get a group from your Sunday School or other Church friends to go to some of the many beautiful
Christmas markets throughout Germany. Take the kids and spend the afternoon and evening
shopping and eating and fellowshiping together.

READ THE CHRISTMAS STORY TOGETHER AS A FAMILY ON CHRISTMAS

Before you open presents on Christmas morning, take time to read the Christmas story as a family
and then pray together.

01.01.01. FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT Read Genesis 1:1-5 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Advent. The celebration of the coming of light into a sin-darkened world begins today. The most obvious beginning point to consider in Scripture is the very first word found in God's Word. These words remind us that God intends for His creation to live in the light of His presence, not the gloom of darkness.

Think about the light. It appears at the voice of our creator. If you listen to His voice you will sense His light. He sees even today that the light is good, and more than anything else, He desires to walk with you... in His light! Will you prepare your heart for Christmas this year by celebrating Advent in a personal way? Will you make the effort, painful as it may be, to separate dark habits from the light that has been given to you? Confess the dark secrets, give up dark habits, crucify dark desires, and let the light of Christ come shining into the emptiness that has been created.

Pray for personal renewal as the season of Advent begins today.

01.01.02. FIRST MONDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST MONDAY OF ADVENT Read Genesis 1:26-31

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness... God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Christmas is a season of many things but one thing is certain, Christmas is a time for gift giving. Many traditions and stories emerge but don't let Madison Avenue fool you, gift giving originated with God. Look at what He has given us.

First there is life. Not just any life, but life created in His very image. Then there is position or authority. He gives us everything we could possibly need, for He not only is creator but provider as well. He creates us with a purpose in mind and blesses us with responsibility.

Since we are created in His image, it is natural for us to be generous and giving too. Why not look for some way you can let the "family resemblance" of being in His image be seen to others. As you pray today, take a moment and thank your gracious, gift-giving, Heavenly Father for the way He has showered your life with gifts far too numerous to count.

01.01.03. FIRST TUESDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST TUESDAY OF ADVENT Read Genesis 3:9-13 But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

God is the great investigator. His questions reach into our hearts in a deep way, especially when we have decided to listen to the many voices of darkness. It is significant to note that His questions are seasoned with grace, not anger. God the Creator becomes the seeker, seeking that which He loves, that which is important to Him. Listen again: "Where are you?" Not in anger, but in grace He asks "what have you done?"

If you see the compassion in these two questions then you have seen the character of the Redeemer. Every time we stumble, every time we let things get out of His control, He's there. He comes with questions simply because He desires to re-open the lines of communication. God is gracious.

As you pray today, personalize the words to "Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound" making them your very own.

01.01.04. FIRST WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT Read Genesis 3:14-15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.

Advent intentionally brings us to this passage, for it is the promise of God fulfilled in Jesus that has brought light into our darkness. This promise has made victors of those under the curse! We light candles to remind us of each promise. Advent would be a meaningless exercise and a candle lighting farce were it not for the promises of God.

Those who held to this Old Testament promise anticipated the birth of the one who would crush the serpent's head once and for all. With the promises given to us and the personal knowledge of Jesus, the anticipation grows in our hearts that one day, He is going to come again!

Spend time praying today about the impact your life has on those closest to you. Would others know that you are investing time into the lives of our loved ones, spouses, children, or parents?

Lord, save us from offering prayers such as this one: God, the best was taken first by other demands. I've got a small stable you can have. Is that good enough? I'll try to make room for you tomorrow. You understand, don't you? Let me know if you need anything, okay? Okay.

01.01.05. FIRST THURSDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST THURSDAY OF ADVENT

Read Job 19:25 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.

God's people have always been completely satisfied with hope. Job never lit an Advent wreath, but because of a spirit that was sensitive to the purposes of God, he remained ever true in difficult circumstance having claimed his hope. Where is your hope today? Is it in a promotion or a year-end bonus? Is it leading you into a relationship that will in no way honor God? Is it for a material object such as a car, a new house, a boat, new clothes, any one of a number of things that will lose their sparkle in a few years?

Here's Hope: Jesus cares for you! Examine your hopes today. Have you given too much attention and energy to the objects of hope that eventually will leave you dissatisfied and wishing for something more?

Advent is a reminder that God's plan still is the only one that brings joy

Ask God to show you someone today who would benefit by hearing a word of hope. Dare to be the witness to that person today!

01.01.06. FIRST FRIDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST FRIDAY OF ADVENT Read Psalms 23:1-6 The Lord is my shepherd.

Why do you suppose God revealed the birth of His Son to the shepherds first? Had it been up to us, we might have been inclined to send the announcement to the president of the Pharisees, the editor of the Jerusalem News, or perhaps the "movers and shakers" of Palestine.

Maybe God selected the shepherds because they were the ones who most resembled his caring nature. Read the Psalm again paying attention to the way God cares for you. God cares for us when no one else does. He knows our weaknesses, He provides for our well-being, He protects us from danger.

If Christ's first coming were today is your heart such that God would select you to be the first to hear the good news? Are you so close in your resemblance to him that He'd risk letting you in on the greatest news of all?

Read this great passage again as a part of your prayer today. Pray each line of this Psalm back to God acknowledging His care for you. Finally, make a commitment to Him in response to His shepherdly care for you.

01.01.07. FIRST SATURDAY OF ADVENT

FIRST SATURDAY OF ADVENT Read Isaiah 9:6-7 And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

We celebrate the season of Advent because God has entered human history in the form of a man. Never before and never since has humanity had a greater hope than in Jesus Christ. When you are confused, discouraged, or brokenhearted, He is the Wonderful Counselor. When your circumstances seem impossible, when failure appears to be inevitable, and when it looks as though your world is caving in, He is the Mighty God. When loneliness creeps in or it seems no one cares, He is the Everlasting Father. He is the one who passes on to you an inheritance making you a part of a royal family. When the stress of hectic schedules and demands upon your time take their toll, when the family scene is anything but "heaven on earth" remember, He is the Prince of Peace.

Begin your prayer by thanking God for being sufficient for everything you will face today. Commit yourself to living in that sufficiency as a praise offering right now. Be sensitive today to the Word of God. Listen for His voice, look for His hand upon your life. Tune out the garbage. You'll be in for a real adventure.

In today's prayer time, take three minutes to do nothing more than listen with your heart to the voice of God.

01.02.01. SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT Read Isaiah 61:1-3 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. This was the text for one of Jesus' first sermons. (It almost cost him his life.) His entire ministry can be seen as an investment in human need.

What can be said about your personal ministry? How many needs will be met as a result of your willingness to be faithful to His empowering leadership?

God's will for us is to be "encouraged people" on a mission of encouragement, for if you know Christ personally, the Spirit of the sovereign LORD is upon you too!

Pray today for your pastor. Ask God to give him strength to preach faithfully. In addition to this, pray for the encouragement of his soul, mind and body. Ask God to show you one way that you can minister to your pastor during this season of Advent.

01.02.02. SECOND MONDAY OF ADVENT

SECOND MONDAY OF ADVENT Read Jeremiah 31:31-34 "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel.

The Old Testament is a road sign pointing toward Jesus Christ. It points to God's promises for you and me. Here is just one of them which God has already fulfilled in the birth and life of Jesus.

Wouldn't it be a great world if we kept our promises the same way God does? Is your word still good? If you say you're going to do something, can you be depended on to completely fulfill your promise? What about your promises to God? Are there any that need to be rededicated today?

Advent holds great meaning to those who keep their word. Advent is about promises fulfilled. Advent reminds us that He who promised is faithful. He promised to send His son and He did. He promised to send Him again, and He will.

Pray today about the promises you've made to others, and the promises you've made to God. Ask for the strength to keep them both and then look for ways to do that.

01.02.03. SECOND TUESDAY OF ADVENT

SECOND TUESDAY OF ADVENT Read Joel 2:28-29 I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Here's yet another promise kept by God. He keeps His promises to us because He is faithful and true. As you experience this time of remembering God's promises, allow His Spirit to search your heart. Be faithful to deal with everything that the Holy Spirit brings to the light. Following times of confession, we often emerge from our prayer closets with a stronger conviction that God can be counted on to work out His plan for our lives.

Pray for your church today in a very special way. Remember those who serve in leadership positions of your church. Remember the ministries of your church and the people those ministries are seeking to reach. Ask God to allow your church to be sensitive to His already poured out Spirit. Pray for spiritual renewal!

Spend time in your private worship today by asking God to show you how to become more sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.

01.02.04. SECOND WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT

SECOND WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT

Micah 5:2-5 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel.

Here is one more evidence that God keeps His word perfectly. It is a promise, actually a prophecy concerning the birthplace of our Lord. Christ was not born by fluke or chance, it was no accident. Instead, God carefully crafted and masterminded the entire event, even down to the place of Jesus' birth.

Find encouragement today because God keeps His promises. He is absolutely true to His plan. He performs in ways that we do not always understand, but the end result is always according to His plan.

If you have any reservations about what God is doing in your life, admit that in a time of prayer. Recommit yourself today to be sensitive to His leading.

01.02.05. SECOND THURSDAY OF ADVENT

SECOND THURSDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 1:16-17

...and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Christ.

Take a moment to observe the beauty of the crafted, master planned work of God as recorded in the first 17 verses of this chapter. King James has a tendency to lose us in all the "begats" but they are included for a reason.

The generations all experienced hardships, certainly times when to throw in the towel seemed better than life itself. But God had a plan.

He still does. Advent reminds us that the plan continues and includes each of us to a full measure according to God's will.

If you have said no to God in recent days, or if your spiritual indicators point to a stubbornness in your relationship toward His unfolding plan for your life, pause and settle the issue with Him today.

01.02.06. SECOND FRIDAY OF ADVENT

SECOND FRIDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 1:18-21 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.

Ever played "what if?" What if something had not happened the way it did? What if I had been there? What if it had happened today?

First of all, notice Joseph tried to intervene and take care of the situation quietly and discretely. What if he had succeeded? It would only have taken a matter of time and Mary would have become the object of scorn and ridicule, perhaps even stoned for suspicion of adultery.

What if Joseph had been insensitive to the dream dismissing it as coincidence. What if he had said "God, are you sure? I'll believe you if you give me a sign."

What if all of this took place today? Mary would have been a pregnant, unmarried, young teenager. Someone inevitably would suggest that she have an abortion. No one would believe her story.

Regardless, anything other than what we find recorded in Scripture surrounding the birth of Christ would have been man's attempt to make things more convenient with no place for the miraculous fingerprint of God.

Advent brings us to the remembrance of commitments, not convenience. Each candle, successively lit, brings light into the dark corners of our lives. Keep the flame burning brightly today. Trust God to use you as a small instrument in the incredible outworking of His magnificent plan.

Pray for a lost neighbor or coworker today.

01.02.07. SECOND SATURDAY OF ADVENT

SECOND SATURDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 1:22-23 "And they will call him Immanuel"-which means, "God with us."

Dr. Ferris Jordan was a Baptist seminary professor. He was diagnosed with cancer, a diagnosis which not only alarmed his family, but shocked the seminary campus as well. Prayers were said as students and faculty members interceded on his behalf prior to his cancer treatments. Just before the Christmas Holiday break, Dr. Jordan stood in the Seminary Chapel to address the entire student body during chapel service. With grace and dignity this man of God, somewhat weakened by the disease which had touched his life, stood and proclaimed that the name, Immanuel, God with us, had taken on a deeper meaning to him during those difficult days.

It's great to know that the Lord is present with us in such times, but remember, He's there in the good times too. Advent celebrates the birth long ago, the presence today, and the anticipated second coming of our Savior.

If you really need to sense Immanuel in an area of your life, pray now, trusting that God is with you.

01.03.01. THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 1:24-25 He did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him.

Without obedience, there would have been a very different ending to the story of Christmas. Joseph did what he was told. Plenty of room for question, but instead, he simply offered obedience. No wonder God selected Joseph to be the earthly role model for a father to Jesus. What a tender heart he must have had.

If obedience replaced pride, fear, and laziness, God could change our entire world. What could be the effect of total obedience in your world, your sphere of influence? Would apologies be said? Would stewardship increase? Would your neighbor or coworker be won to the Lord?

Ask God for the grace you need to be obedient even under difficult circumstances. Make a list of the things that His Spirit brings to your attention, then get busy practicing obedience.

01.03.02. THIRD MONDAY OF ADVENT

THIRD MONDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:1-2 ... We have come to worship Him.

Why do you worship the Lord? Make a list and place on it all of the reasons you find to worship Jesus. Your answers may include:

He healed the sick. He fed the five thousand. He walked on water. He died for my sin.

He rose from the grave. Not one of those reasons mattered to the Magi.

They worshiped the King, not the things the King had done, after all, He was only a baby, perhaps a small child by this time. They were lead by a star, which is a reflection of light much like the moon. The light was Jesus. In some homes, 24 candles are kept, one for each night from December 1 through Christmas Eve. One candle is lit for a while on December 1, then a new candle is added each day for the 24 day period. However, for those homes using the candles, it was far more common to have four candles for the four weeks before Christmas Eve, two the next week and so on. The candles were often placed on a wreath upon the dining room table. The practice of advent is celebrated primarily in the German-speaking areas of Europe and in the protestant German areas of the United States.

01.03.03. THIRD TUESDAY OF ADVENT

THIRD TUESDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:3-8 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed... He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

Two biblical principles emerge from this passage:

- You will never experience real worship based on someone else's search.
- You cannot fool God by going through the motions of worship with a wrong heart. With Advent upon us, and Christmas just around the corner, do you sense a tendency to be like Herod in your worship patterns? Here's a simple solution if the answer is "yes," and some preventative maintenance if not. Be personal with God. Get to know Him. Stay in constant contact with Him.

Examine your motives for service and attendance at your church. Confess those that are wrong.

Quit playing spiritual games. Herod was probably smiling and backslapping with the Magi, but in his heart he was angry, bitter and fearful. In short, he was a hypocrite, someone acting a part or speaking the scripted lines of another.

Finally, set aside your dark agenda for that which leads to the light. Give up a bad habit, get rid of resentment, restore an unreconciled relationship. As you pray today, ask God to put a new desire in the hearts of those in your church to really worship Him.

01.03.04. THIRD WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT

THIRD WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:9-10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. Do you ever get sidetracked from time to time? Interruptions come our way so often, we learn to expect them. Opposition comes once in a while, and we learn to ignore it. Sometimes the temptation to change our focus seems like the right thing to do. The Magi heard the king, but then they went on THEIR way. What an example to us. The most important man in the entire area gives them an offer and entices them in secret to change their focus. It could have happened, but thank the Lord it didn't!

What was the result? Rejoicing! If in your pilgrimage toward Christmas this year you discover the temptation to listen to the voices of compromise, don't. Set your mind on the things above. Chart your course by the light of the King of Kings. Settle for nothing less.

Confess the times when you have allowed distractions to prevent you from truly worshiping God this year.

01.03.05. THIRD THURSDAY OF ADVENT

THIRD THURSDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

Advent reminds us that God is the giver of every good and perfect gift. God loved and gave! It has also been suggested that the tradition of giving presents at Christmas finds its root in the example of the Magi in this verse. Maybe it does. Unfortunately, we have shifted the gift giving to each other rather than to the One whom we worship.

You have the privilege of being a gift giver all year long. At Christmas, this privilege is underscored. Gifts to foreign missions enable the gospel to spread. Gifts to the Crisis Pregnancy Center enable the message of hope to be given to those who may be experiencing what seems like a hopeless dilemma. Gifts to the poor may provide opportunities for spiritual needs to be met as physical needs are addressed. Worship is giving. As you celebrate advent this year, do so with a gift fit for a King.

We call our thanks to God "worship" when in reality, it is only a portion of worship. While considering the season, try worshiping the Savior, not just the things the Savior has done.

Advent is a time for adoration. Write a prayer today completing this sentence: "Jesus, I love you because..." Try to leave out your thanks for the things He has done for you, and worship Him because of who He is.

01.03.06. THIRD FRIDAY OF ADVENT

THIRD FRIDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

My favorite observation concerning the Magi is this: after worshiping Jesus, they returned another way. Real worship accomplishes this. To worship is to become vulnerable to the sovereignty of another. Real worship effects personal change.

You cannot have a real encounter with the King of Kings and return to your old patterns of hostility, materialism, resentment, cowardice, fear, laziness, pettiness, or hardheartedness. Jesus will change all of that. You will see Him, fall down in worship, and return a changed individual. The old path you've grown used to will no longer satisfy. Is there a need to change the route of your life today? Come and worship. Come and be changed.

Pray, asking God for clear insight regarding the spiritual compass of your life. Check the direction you are heading. Make any course corrections deemed necessary by the Spirit.

01.03.07. THIRD SATURDAY OF ADVENT

THIRD SATURDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:13-15 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.

Joseph must have had an extremely sensitive heart to be used in the way he was during the time of Jesus' life, especially during these days when Jesus was such a little, vulnerable, baby boy. Joseph's mind must have been clear and clean, for God spoke to him in dreams. Would you ask God to do a miracle in cleansing the hearts and minds of His people? Media influences such as television, movies, the music we listen to and the magazines we often read have so polluted our thought patterns that the discerning ability of God's people has been disastrously affected. We search for God's will in everyday matters; yet, we often get confused because of a value system that is ungodly.

01.04.01. FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:16-18 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem.

God has a plan, but He isn't the only one in the planning business. Herod was being used in a diabolical plot to end the life of Jesus before it had much of a chance to begin. You see the fruit of a wicked heart in Herod's life, a heart unwilling to personally search for the Lord.

Pray that in the personal planning of your daily schedule, there will be time set aside to personally get in on the search for God's personal reality in your life. If you are reading this near the end of the day, ask yourself this question: Where was God in my day today? If you are beginning your day with this devotion, determine to find where God is working and find fulfillment in His plans.

01.04.02. FOURTH MONDAY OF ADVENT

FOURTH MONDAY OF ADVENT Read Matthew 2:19-21

Herod died.

Kings and kingdoms will all pass away, but there's something about the name of Jesus. In God's scheme of things, He provided a way of escape for His son on more than one occasion. This was because God's plan was greater than man's, and greater than Satan's. His plan for your life is greater than anything else too. At times, we do not understand what God is doing. We question the difficulties we face wondering why things don't always go our way. I'm sure that Joseph wondered at the logic of closing down his carpenter's shop in his hometown to pack everything up and head for Egypt. Yet it was a part of God's plan.

Pray today for someone you know who is going through a time of uncertainty. Ask God to show you a way that you can minister.

Pray for the Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions. If you have not given yet, consider doing so this week.

01.04.03. FOURTH TUESDAY OF ADVENT

FOURTH TUESDAY OF ADVENT Read Luke 1:26-30 Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.

If God broke into human history once again as He did at the birth of Jesus, would He find us "favorable?" Mary's testimony, recorded for the world to see, is phenomenal. What made her favorable to God?

We might imagine several character traits such as devotion, purity or dependability Maybe God found Mary's prayer life to be favorable. We really don't know. A better question might be "Does God find favor with me?"

You have been chosen to accomplish something significant in the Kingdom. Live your life in such a way that when God gets ready to do a special work in and through you, you will not have to make emergency preparations, forsake sin, mend your ways, nor rebuild your reputation in order to be used.

Pray about the unfavorable characteristics in your heart today.

01.04.04. FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT

FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF ADVENT Read Luke 1:34-35 How will this be?

Sometimes, the challenges we face in life feel impossible. Regardless of what some say, this is true even when we are walking close to the Lord and in the light we celebrate at a time like Advent.

Difficult circumstances do not mean that we are walking in darkness. Often they give testimony to the reality of our faith.

Trusting God allows us to faithfully accept the challenges that come our way. We may not understand what God is leading us to do, but we can learn to accept His answers. His grace is sufficient. Our God is a seasoned helper (Psalms 46:1-11).

When you pray today, allow God to show you where you need to step out in faith in the coming year. Trust Him with the circumstances of life, knowing that He sees before us, watches over us, and comes behind us.

01.04.05. FOURTH THURSDAY OF ADVENT

FOURTH THURSDAY OF ADVENT Read Luke 1:38; Luke 1:46-50 I am the Lord's servant...

Once Mary had the assurance and the promise that nothing was impossible with God, she willingly risked reputation, probably even her life, and accepted the challenge of being the human instrument needed to cradle within her the Son of God. Mary had the capacity of servanthood.

Read Mary's musical response once again. Think about the commitment required for Mary to risk glorifying God at this point in her life. The world does not come by this understanding of servanthood naturally. It is a characteristic of those in the family of faith.

How can you bring glory to God today in the form of a servant? Proddings from the Holy Spirit often enable us to become servants of the Most High. How has God's Spirit been moving or prodding you?

Reflect upon what you have experienced during this season of Advent. Use a lighted candle and sing a chorus or hymn that expresses your love for the Lord.

01.04.06. FOURTH FRIDAY OF ADVENT

FOURTH FRIDAY OF ADVENT

Read Luke 2:1-7 She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was not room for them in the inn. When God looks into our lives, all of the business of our days, rushing to shops, fighting traffic, meeting deadlines, hurrying off to parties, cooking, baking, wrapping, making, mailing. Does he find any room at all to be born, fresh and new? When God looks at our homes, is there a place prepared for him? Is there room reserved on the schedule where time is given in prayer? Have we given to Him an opportunity to use us by anticipating the fulfillment of His promises by the faith we exhibit in everyday circumstances?

Pray that God will give you quiet moments to make room for Him in your Christmas Celebration.

01.04.07. Christmas Day

CHRISTMAS DAY Read Luke 2:8-20 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

There is something about this story which never grows old. God chose the shepherds to hear the gospel proclamation first. He sent the angelic choir in all of its majesty and splendor, to herald the good news. He provided a way for Joseph and Mary to get the child to the exact place where Old Testament prophecy could become reality. God allowed the animals in the manger to witness the miracle of miracles.

Shepherds and animals. Simple and sometimes a bit smelly, but they alone witness the magnificent. When is the last time you witnessed a miracle? When is the last time you dropped everything, your schedule, your busy agenda, your business concerns, even your religious traditions, so that you could witness first-hand something God was doing? God may have chosen shepherds because they were the only ones being still on the night Jesus was born. Maybe you need to be still and wait upon God too.

Pray for those who still have not heard the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ

02.01. Sermon Prep (Observe)

Keep on being doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.

James 1:22 ISV OBSERVE “What do I see?”

Write all of the observations down. Ask these questions.

1. Who is writing or speaking and to whom?
2. What is the passage about?
3. What are the commands?
4. What are the promises or cause/effect relationships?
5. What are the repeated words or ideas?
6. What problems are the recipients facing?
7. Where does this take place?
8. When does this take place?
9. Why does the speaker or author say/write what s/he does?
10. What do I learn about God?
11. What do I learn about Jesus?
12. What do I learn about the Holy Spirit?
13. What do I learn about me (or humanity)?

Write down additional observations. Include contrasts, comparisons, lists, etc.

02.02. Sermon Prep (Interpret)

And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

Acts 2:12 ESV INTERPRET "What does it mean?"

What is the "BIG IDEA" of the passage - your theme?

Summarize the theme into smaller points. Write these points out in the form of an outline. Take your main theme and break it into sub-points. These sub-points form the principles.

Questions to answer which help interpret the text:

1. What are the meanings of the words?
2. What does the immediate context suggest (preceding and succeeding verses)?
3. What does the broader context suggest (chapter and book)?
4. What do other cross references suggest?
5. What is the cultural meaning? (What did it mean to those to whom it was originally addressed?)
6. What do commentaries suggest?

02.03. Sermon Prep (Apply)

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for:

2 Timothy 3:16 APPLY "What do I do?"

TEACHING: What did I learn?

REPROOF: Where do I fall short? Why do I fall?

CORRECTION: What will I do about it?

TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: How can I make this principle a consistent part of my life?

Questions I must ask when I go through the text for application:

1. What do I need to believe as a result of this text?
2. What do I not need to believe as a result of this text?
3. What do I need to do as a result of this text?
4. What do I not need to do as a result of this text?

02.04. Sermon Prep (Ways to Apply Scripture)

WAYS TO APPLY SCRIPTURE Is there a sin to confess? Is there a promise to claim? Is there an attitude to change? Is there a command to obey? Is there an example to follow? Is there a prayer to pray? Is there an error to avoid? Is there a truth to believe? Is there something to praise God for?

02.05. Sermon Prep (Application Identification)

Identify the action Identify how I can apply this action in my life

02.06. Sermon Prep (Application Window)

PEOPLE'S NEED/PROBLEM

THEN

NOW

ME GOD'S ACTION/SOLUTION

THEN

NOW

ME PEOPLE'S RESPONSE/OBEDIENCE

THEN

NOW

ME

02.07. List of Action Verbs

Note: Below you will find a list of over 2300 action verbs that are used to enhance your points within a sermon. This follows the James 1:22 principle of being a doer of the word. The “do’s” and “don’ts” apply to the usage of the word to make the point. For example: The positive use of the verb makes your point read like this-“Attain peace through Christ.” The negative use of the verb makes the point read like this-“Don’t abuse God’s grace for your life.”

Therefore, use the words as you see fit to best help you communicate God’s Word for life change.

Action Verbs- things to do or not do A

Abandon

Abolish

Absolve

Absorb

Abstain

Abuse

Accelerate

Accentuate

Accept

Access

Accommodate

Accomplish

Accumulate

Achieve

Acknowledge

Acquaint

Acquire

Act

Activate

Adapt

Add
Address
Adjust
Administer
Admire
Admit
Adopt
Adore
Adorn
Advance
Advertise
Advise
Advocate
Affect
Affirm
Afford
Aggravate
Agitate
Agree
Aid
Aim
Alienate
Align
Alleviate
Allow
Alter
Alternate
Amass
Amaze

Ambush
Amend
Amplify
Amuse
Analyze
Anesthetize
Animate
Announce
Annul
Anoint
Answer
Antagonize
Anticipate
Apologize
Appeal
Appear
Appease
Applaud
Apply
Appoint
Appraise
Appreciate
Approach
Appropriate
Approve
Argue
Arm
Arouse
Arrange

Arrest
Ask
Aspire
Assault
Assemble
Assert
Assess
Assign
Assimilate
Assist
Associate
Assume
Atone
Attach
Attack
Attain
Attempt
Attend
Attest
Attract
Audit
Augment
Authorize
Avail
Avenge
Avert
Avoid
Awake
Award

B

Back

Backslide

Badger

Balance

Ban

Banish

Baptize

Bare

Bargain

Barricade

Base

Bathe Be

Bear

Beat

Beautify

Beg

Begin

Begrudge

Behave

Behold

Believe

Belittle

Belong

Bemoan

Bend

Benefit

Bestow

Betray

Beware
Bias
Bicker
Bid
Bind
Blame
Blend
Bless
Blind
Block
Bloom
Blossom
Blot
Blur
Board
Boast
Bombard
Book
Boost
Bore
Borrow
Bother
Bow
Boycott
Brace
Brag
Brake
Break
Breathe

Bribe
Bridge
Bridle
Brighten
Bring
Broadcast
Broaden
Browbeat
Browse
Buck
Budge
Build
Bully
Burden
Bury
Buttonhole
Buy
By-pass
C Cajole (Don't)
Calculate
Call
Calm Camouflage(Don't)
Cancel
Canvass
Capitalize on
Capitulate
Captivate
Capture
Care for

Caress
Carry
Carve
Cast
Catch
Cause
Caution
Celebrate
Cement
Censor
Center
Centralize
Certify
Chafe
Chain
Challenge
Champion
Change
Channel
Characterize
Charge
Charm
Chart
Charter
Chase
Chastise
Cheapen
Cheat
Check

Cheer
Cherish
Chisel
Choose
Choke
Chop
Chuck
Circle
Circulate
Circumvent
Clarify
Classify
Clean
Clear
Cleave
Climb
Cling
Close
Clothe
Coax
Coerce
Collaborate
Collect
Combat
Come
Comfort
Command
Commemorate
Commence

Commend
Commission
Commit
Communicate
Compare
Compel
Compensate
Compete
Compile
Complain
Complete
Complicate
Compliment
Compose
Comprehend
Compress
Compromise
Compute
Conceal
Concede
Conceive
Concentrate
Concern
Conclude
Condemn
Condense
Condone
Conduct
Confer

Confess
Confide
Confine
Confirm
Conform
Confuse
Congratulate
Congregate
Connect
Conquer
Consecrate
Consent
Conserve
Consider
Console
Consolidate
Conspire
Constitute
Constrict
Construct
Consult
Contain
Contemplate
Contend
Continue
Contract
Contradict
Contribute
Control

Convene
Converge
Converse
Convert
Convey
Convict
Convince
Co-operate
Co-ordinate
Copy
Correct
Corrupt
Counsel
Count
Counter
Counteract
Counterbalance
Count on
Cover
Covet
Cower
Crack
Crave
Create
Criticize
Cross
Crowd
Crown
Crucify

Cruise
Crumble
Crush
Cry
Cultivate
Curb
Cure
Curse
Curtail
Cut
D
Damage
Dampen
Dare
Date
Deaden
Deal
Debase
Debate
Deceive
Decide
Declare
Decline
Decorate
Decrease
Dedicate
Deduct
Deepen
Defame

Default
Defeat
Defend
Defer
Defy
Defile
Define
Defraud
Defy
Degrade
Deify
Delay
Delegate
Deliberate
Delight
Delineate
Deliver
Demand
Demean
Demolish
Demonstrate
Demote
Deny
Denounce
Depart
Depend
Deplete
Deplore
Deposit

Depreciate
Depress
Deprive
Deepen
Descend
Describe
Desecrate
Desert
Design
Designate
Desire
Despair
Despise
Destroy
Detach
Detail
Detect
Deter
Determine
Detest
Devastate
Develop
Deviate
Devise
Devote
Devour
Die
Differ
Differentiate

Diffuse
Digest
Dig
Dignify
Dim
Diminish
Direct
Disable
Disagree
Disappear
Disappoint
Disband
Disburse
Discard
Discern
Discharge
Discipline
Disclaim
Disconnect
Discontinue
Discount
Discourage
Discover
Discredit
Discriminate
Discuss
Disdain
Disengage
Disguise

Dishearten
Dishonor
Dislike
Dismiss
Disorganize
Disown
Disparage
Dispel
Disperse
Display
Dispose
Disprove
Dispute
Disqualify
Disregard
Disrespect
Disseminate
Dissipate
Dissolve
Distill
Distinguish
Distort
Distract
Distribute
Distrust
Disturb
Diversify
Divide
Dive

Divulge Do
Dodge
Dominate
Donate
Double
Doubt
Downgrade
Draft
Drag
Dress
Drift
Drill
Drink
Drive
Drop
Duck
Dull
Dump
Duplicate
E
Earn
Ease
Eat
Ebb
Echo
Economize
Edify
Edit
Educate

Effect
Eject
Elapse
Elect
Electrify
Elevate
Elicit
Eliminate
Emanate
Emancipate
Embark
Embarrass
Embellish
Embitter
Embody
Embrace
Embroider
Emerge
Emit
Emphasize
Employ
Empower
Emulate
Enable
Enact
Enamor
Enchant
Enclose
Encounter

Encourage
Encumber
End
Endanger
Endorse
Endow
Endure
Energize
Enforce
Engage
Engender
Engrave
Enhance
Enjoy
Enlarge
Enlighten
Enliven
Ennoble
Enroll
Enslave
Ensnare
Ensue
Entail
Entangle
Enter
Entertain
Entitle
Entreat
Entrust

Entwine
Enumerate
Envision
Envy
Epitomize
Equal
Equate
Equip
Eradicate
Erase
Erect
Erode
Err
Erupt
Escape
Escort
Establish
Esteem
Estimate
Estrange
Evacuate
Evade
Evaluate
Even
Eventuate
Evict
Evoke
Exact
Exaggerate

Examine
Exasperate
Excavate
Exceed
Excel
Excerpt
Exchange
Excite
Exclaim
Exclude
Excuse
Execute
Exemplify
Exempt
Exhale
Exhaust
Exhibit
Exhilarate
Exhort
Exile
Exist
Expand
Expect
Expedite
Expel
Expire
Explain
Explode
Exploit

Explore
Export
Expose
Expound
Express
Extend
Exterminate
Extinguish
Extract
Exude
Exult
Eye
F
Fabricate
Face
Facilitate
Fade
Fail
Faint
Fake
Fall
Falsify
Falter
Familiarize
Famish
Fan
Fancy
Fantasy
Fare

Farm
Fascinate
Fashion
Fast
Father
Fathom
Fatigue
Fatten
Favor
Fawn
Fear
Feast
Feather
Feature
Federate
Feed
Feel
Feign
Felicitate
Fence
Ferment
Fertilize
Fester
Fetch
Fetter
Fight
Figure
Filch
File

Fill
Find
Finger
Finish
Fire
Firm
Fish
Fix
Flag
Flake
Flare
Flash
Flatten
Flaunt
Flavor
Flee
Fleece
Flex
Flinch
Fling
Flip
Flirt
Flock
Flood
Flourish
Flow
Flower
Fluctuate
Flurry

Flush
Fluster
Flutter
Fly
Focus
Foil
Fold
Follow
Fool
Foment
Forbear
Forbid
Force
Forecast
Foresee
Forestall
Forewarn
Forge
Forget
Forgive
Forgo
Form
Formalize
Formulate
Forsake
Fortify
Forward
Foster
Found

Fracture
Frame
Free
Freeze
Frequent
Fret
Frighten
Fritter
Front
Frown
Frustrate
Fuel
Fulfill
Fume
Fumigate
Function
Furnish
Fuse
Fuss
G
Gain
Galvanize
Gamble
Gather
Gauge
Gaze
Generate
Germinate
Gesture

Get
Give
Glamorize
Glance
Glare
Gleam
Glide
Glimmer
Glimpse
Glisten
Glitter
Gloat
Gloom
Glorify
Gloss
Glow
Go
Goad
Gossip
Govern
Grace
Grade
Graduate
Graft
Grant
Grapple
Grasp
Gratify
Graze

Greet
Grieve
Grill
Grind
Grip
Groom
Grope
Ground
Group
Grovel
Grow
Grudge
Grumble
Guarantee
Guard
Guess
Guide
H
Hail
Hallow
Halt
Hamper
Hand
Handle
Hang
Happen
Harass
Harbor
Harden

Harken
Harm
Harmonize
Harvest
Hasten
Hatch
Hate
Haul Have
Hazard
Head
Heal
Hear
Hearten
Heat
Heave
Hedge
Heed
Heighten
Help
Hem
Herald
Hesitate
Hide
Hinder
Hint
Hire
Hit
Hoard
Hobble

Hold
Hollow
Hone
Honor
Hook
Hop
House
Hover
Huddle
Huff
Hug
Humble
Humiliate
Humor
Hunger
Hunt
Hurry
Hurt
Hush
Hustle
I
Identify
Idle
Idolize
Ignite
Ignore
Illuminate
Illustrate
Imagine

Imbibe
Imbue
Imitate
Immerse
Immigrate
Immortalize
Immunize
Impair
Impart
Impassion
Impeach
Impede
Impel
Impend
Imperil
Impersonate
Implement
Implore
Imply
Import
Impound
Impoverish
Impregnate
Impress
Imprint
Imprison
Improve
Improvise
Inactivate

Inaugurate
Incapacitate
Incarcerate
Incase
Inch
Incinerate
Incite
Incline
Include
Inconvenience
Incorporate
Increase
Incriminate
Incubate
Incur
Indebt
Indemnify
Indent
Index
Indicate
Indict
Involve
Indoctrinate
Induce
Induct
Indulge
Infer
Infest
Infiltrate

Inflame
Inflate
Influence
Inform
Infringe
Infuriate
Infuse
Inhabit
Inhale
Inherit
Inhibit
Initial
Initiate
Inject
Injure
Inoculate
Inquire
Inscribe
Insert
Insinuate
Insist
Inspect
Inspire
Install
Instigate
Institute
Instruct
Insulate
Insult

Intend
Intensify
Inter
Intercede
Interchange
Interest
Interfere
Interject
Interpose
Interpret
Interrogate
Interrupt
Intersect
Intertwine
Interval
Intervene
Interview
Intimate
Intimidate
Intone
Intoxicate
Intrigue
Introduce
Intrude
Inundate
Inure
Invade
Invalidate
Invade

Invalidate
Invent
Invert
Invest
Investigate
Invigorate
Invite
Invoke
Involve
Irk
Iron
Irritate
Isolate
Issue
Itch
Itemize
J
Jell
Jerk
Jest
Jog
Join
Joke
Jolt
Journey
Judge
Juggle
Jump
Justify

K

Keep

Kick

Kid

Kill

Kindle

Kiss

Kneel

Knit

Knock

Know

L

Labor

Lag

Lament

Laminate

Lampoon

Lance

Land

Languish

Lap

Lapse

Lash

Last

Laud

Laugh

Launch

Launder

Lavish

Litigate
Lay
Laze
Lead
League
Leak
Lean
Leap
Learn
Lease
Leash
Leave
Lecture
Legalize
Legislate
Lend
Lengthen
Lessen
Let
Letter
Level
Levy
Libel
Liberate
Lie
Lift
Light
Lighten
Like

Liken
Limit
Limp
Line
Linger
Link
Liquefy
List
Listen
Litigate
Litter
Live
Load
Loaf
Loan
Loathe
Localize
Locate
Lodge
Loft
Long
Look
Loom
Loop
Loose
Loosen
Loot
Lose
Lounge

Love

Lug

Lunge

Lurch

Lurk

Lynch

M

Madden

Magnify

Mail

Maim

Maintain

Make

Malign

Man

Manage

Maneuver

Mangle

Manifest

Manipulate

Manufacture

Map

Mar

March

Mark

Market

Maroon

Marry

Marvel

Mask
Mass
Master
Match
Mate
Materialize
Matter
Mature
Maul
Mean
Meander
Measure
Meddle
Mediate
Meditate
Meet
Mellow
Melt
Memorize
Menace
Mend
Mention
Merge
Merit
Mess
Mimic
Mince
Mind
Mine

Mingle
Minimize
Minister
Mirror
Misbehave
Miscalculate
Miscall
Miscarry
Misconstrue
Misfire
Misinform
Mislaid
Mislead
Misplace
Misquote
Misrepresent
Miss
Misstate
Mistreat
Mistrust
Misunderstand
Misuse
Mitigate
Mix
Moan
Mob
Mobilize
Mock
Moderate

Modify

Moisten

Mold

Mollify

Mope

Moralize

Mortgage

Move

Motivate

Motor

Mottle

Mount

Mourn

Mouth

Move

Muddle

Muddy

Multiply

Mumble

Murder

Murmur

Mute

Mutter

Muzzle

Mystify

N

Nab

Nag

Name

Nap
Narrate
Narrow
Naturalize
Navigate
Neaten
Necessitate
Need
Needle
Negate
Neglect
Negotiate
Nestle
Net
Neutralize
Nibble
Nick
Nip
Nod
Nominate
Nonplus
Notch
Note
Notice
Notify
Nourish
Nudge
Nullify
Numb

Nurse

Nurture

O

Obey

Object

Obligate

Oblige

Obliterate

Obscure

Observe

Obstruct

Obtain

Occupy

Occur

Offend

Offer

Offset

Omit

Open

Operate

Oppose

Oppress

Ordain

Order

Organize

Originate

Ostracize

Oust

Outdo

Outfit
Outlast
Outlaw
Outline
Outlive
Outrun
Overburden
Overcome
Overdo
Overestimate
Overflow
Overhaul
Overlap
Overlie
Overpower
Overrate
Override
Overrun
Oversee
Overshadow
Overstate
Overtake
Overthrow
Overturn
Overuse
Overwhelm
Overwork
Owe
Own

P

Pace

Pacify

Pack

Pad

Paddle

Page

Pain

Paint

Pair

Pamper

Panic

Parachute

Parade

Parallel

Paralyze

Paraphrase

Pardon

Pare

Park

Parody

Parrot

Parry

Part

Partake

Participate

Pass

Pasture

Pat

Patch
Patrol
Patronize
Patter
Pause
Pay
Peal
Peddle
Peek
Peel
Penalize
Pen
Penetrate
People
Perceive
Perch
Perfect
Perforate
Perform
Perish
Perjure
Permeate
Permit
Perpetuate
Perplex
Persecute
Persevere
Persist
Personify

Persuade
Perturb
Peruse
Pervade
Pervert
Pester
Petition
Photograph
Phrase
Pick
Picture
Pierce
Pigeonhole
Pile
Pilot
Pinch
Pitch
Pity
Placate
Place
Plague
Plan
Plant
Plaster
Plate
Play
Plead
Please
Pleasure

Pledge
Plot
Plow
Pluck
Plumb
Plunge
Ply
Point
Poise
Poison
Poke
Police
Polish
Poll
Pollute
Ponder
Popularize
Populate
Portray
Pose
Possess
Postpone
Posture
Pound
Pore
Pout
Powder
Practice
Praise

Prance
Pray
Preach
Precede
Preclude
Predestine
Predetermine
Predict
Predispose
Prefer
Prejudge
Prejudice
Premeditate
Prepare
Present
Preserve
Press
Presume
Pretend
Prevail
Prevent
Print
Privilege
Prize
Proceed
Proclaim
Proceed
Proclaim
Procrastinate

Prod
Produce
Profane
Proffer
Profit
Profiteer
Progress
Prohibit
Project
Prolong
Promise
Promote
Prompt
Pronounce
Prove
Prop
Propel
Prophecy
Propitiate
Propose
Propound
Proscribe
Prosecute
Proselytize
Prosper
Prostitute
Prostrate
Protect
Protest

Protrude
Prove
Provide
Provision
Provoke
Prune
Pry
Publish
Publicize
Publish
Pull
Pulse
Pump
Punch
Punctuate
Puncture
Punish
Purchase
Purge
Purify
Purpose
Pursue
Purvey
Push
Put
Puzzle
Q
Quack
Quake

Qualify

Quarrel

Quarry

Quell

Query

Question

Quibble

Quicken

Quiet

Quit

Quiver

Quiz

Quote

R

Race

Radiate

Rage

Raid

Raise

Rake

Rally

Ram

Ramble

Range

Rank

Ransom

Rant

Rate

Ratify

Rave
Reach
React
Read
Ready
Realize
Reappear
Reason
Reassure
Rebel
Rebound
Rebuild
Rebuke
Recall
Recant
Recast
Recede
Receive
Reciprocate
Recite
Reckon
Reclaim
Recline
Recognize
Recoil
Recollect
Recommence
Recommend
Recompense

Reconcile
Recondition
Reconstruct
Record
Recount
Recover
Rectify
Recuperate
Recur
Redeem
Reduce
Refine
Reflect
Reform
Refrain
Refresh
Refund
Refurbish
Refuse
Refute
Regain
Regard
Regenerate
Register
Regress
Regret
Regulate
Rehabilitate
Rehash

Rehearse
Reign
Reimburse
Reinvigorate
Reiterate
Reject
Rejoice
Rejuvenate
Relapse
Relate
Relax
Release
Relent
Relieve
Relinquish
Relish
Remark
Remedy
Remember
Remind
Reminisce
Remit
Remodel
Remove
Rend
Render
Renew
Renounce
Renovate

Reorganize
Repair
Repay
Repeal
Repeat
Repel
Repent
Rephrase
Replace
Report
Repose
Represent
Repress
Relieve
Reprimand
Reproach
Reproduce
Reprove
Repudiate
Repulse
Request
Require
Rescue
Research
Resemble
Resent
Reserve
Reshape
Resign

Resist
Resolve
Resound
Respect
Respond
Rest
Restate
Restore
Restrain
Restrict
Result
Resume
Resurrect
Resuscitate
Retain
Retaliate
Retard
Retire
Retort
Retract
Retreat
Retrieve
Return
Reveal
Reverberate
Revere
Reverse
Revert
Reville

Revise

Revive

Revoke

Revolt

Revolve

Reword

Rib

Rid

Ride

Ridicule

Rip

Ripen

Rise

Risk

Roam

Rob

Rock

Roll

Romanticize

Root

Rotate

Roughen

Ruin

Rule

Run

Rust

S

Sanctify

Sacrifice

Sadden
Safeguard
Sag
Sail
Saint
Sell
Spit
Salt
Salute
Sample
Sanctify
Sanction
Sap
Sate
Sate
Satisfy
Saturate
Saunter
Save
Savor
Say
Scale
Scan
Scare
Scatter
Schedule
School
Scintillate

Scold
Score
Scorn
Scour
Scrap
Scrape
Scratch
Scrawl
Scream
Screen
Scrimp
Scrub
Scruple
Scrutinize
Sculpture
Scurry
Scuttle
Seal
Seam
Search
Season
Seat
Secede
Seclude
Second
Secure
Seduce
See
Seek

Seem
Seep
Seesaw
Segregate
Seize
Select
Sell
Send
Sense
Sensitize
Separate
Serve
Set
Settle
Sever
Sew
Shackle
Shade
Shadow
Shake
Shame
Shape
Share
Sharpen
Shatter
Shave
Shed
Shell
Shelve

Shepherd
Shift
Shine
Ship
Shock
Shoot
Shop
Shore
Shorten
Shoulder
Shove
Show
Shower
Shred
Shrill
Shrink
Shrivel
Shudder
Shun
Shut
Shutter
Shy away
Side-step
Siege
Sift
Sigh
Sight
Sign
Signal

Sign

Signify

Silence

Simmer

Simper

Simplify

Simulate

Sin

Sing

Sink

Sip

Sit

Situate

Size

Skim

Skimp

Skin

Skip

Skirmish

Skirt

Slacken

Slander

Slant

Slay

Sleek

Sleep

Slide

Slight

Slip

Slow
Smash
Smear
Smile
Smooth
Smother
Snake
Snap
Snare
Snatch
Sneak
Sneer
Snicker
Sniff
Snoop
Snooze
Snub
Soak
Soar
Sob
Soften
Soil
Solicit
Solve
Soothe
Sorrow
Sort
Sound
Sour

Sow
Space
Span
Spare
Speak
Specify
Speculate
Speed
Spell
Spend
Spice
Spite
Split
Spoil
Sponsor
Spot
Spout
Spray
Spread
Spring
Sprinkle
Sprint
Sprout
Spruce
Spur
Spurn
Squander
Square
Squash

Squeeze
Squirm
Stab
Stabilize
Stack
Stagger
Stagnate
Stain
Stalk
Stall
Stamp
Stampede
Stand
Standardize
Stare
Start
Starve
State
Station
Stay
Steady
Steal
Steam
Steep
Steer
Step
Stew
Stick
Stiffen

Stifle
Stigmatize
Still
Stimulate
Stipulate
Stir
Stitch
Stock
Stoop
Stop
Store
Straddle
Straighten
Strain
Strand
Strangle
Strip
Strap
Stray
Stream
Strengthen
Stress
Stretch
Strike
Strip
Strive
Struggle
Strut
Study

Stuff
Stumble
Stun
Subdue
Subject
Subjugate
Sublimate
Submerge
Submit
Subscribe
Subside
Subsist
Substantiate
Substitute
Subtract
Succeed
Succumb
Suffer
Suffocate
Suggest
Suit
Sum up
Summarize
Supersede
Supervise
Supply
Support
Suppose
Suppress

Surpass
Surprise
Surrender
Surround
Survey
Survive
Suspect
Suspend
Sustain
Swallow
Swap
Sway
Sweat
Sweep
Swerve
Swim
Swing
Switch
Swivel
Symbolize
Sympathize
Systematize
T
Table
Tackle
Tag
Take
Talk
Tame

Tap
Taper
Tarnish
Tarry
Taste
Taunt
Tax
Teach
Tear
Team
Teeter
Tell
Temper
Tempt
Tend
Tenderize
Term
Terminate
Test
Testify
Thank
Thaw
Think
Thin
Threaten
Thrill
Thrive
Throttle
Throw

Thrust
Tie
Tighten
Tilt
Time
Tip
Tiptoe
Tire
Toil
Tolerate
Top
Topple
Torment
Torture
Toss
Total
Touch
Toughen
Tour
Tow
Tower
Toy
Trace
Track
Trade
Trail
Train
Trample
Tranquilize

Transact
Transcend
Transcribe
Transfer
Transfix
Transform
Transgress
Translate
Transmit
Transplant
Transport
Travel
Tread
Treasure
Treat
Trek
Tremble
Trend
Trespass
Trick
Trim
Trip
Trouble
Trust
Try
Tug
Tune
Turn
Tutor

Tweak

Twist

Type

Typify

U

Unbend

Unblock

Unbolt

Unchain

Unclog

Uncoil

Uncover

Underestimate

Undergo

Underline

Undermine

Underrate

Underscore

Understand

Undertake

Undervalue

Undo

Unearth

Unfold

Unify

Unite

Unlatch

Unleash

Unload

Unlock
Unloose
Unmask
Unpack
Unplug
Unravel
Untangle
Untie
Untwist
Unveil
Unwind
Upgrade
Uphold
Uplift
Uproot
Upset
Upturn
Urge
Use
Usher
Utilize
Utter
V
Vacate
Vaccinate
Vacillate
Validate
Value
Vanish

Vary
Vault
Veer
Vegetate
Veil
Venerate
Vent
Ventilate
Venture
Verify
Victimize
View
Vindicate
Violate
Visit
Visualize
Vitalize
Vocalize
Void
Volunteer
Vote
Vow
W
Wade
Wag
Wage
Wager
Wail
Wait

Waken
Walk
Wall
Wallow
Wander
Want
War
Warm
Warn
Warp
Wash
Waste
Watch
Water
Wave
Waver
Weaken
Wear
Weave
Wed
Weep
Weigh
Welcome
Weld
Well
Wench
Wet
Whet Whine (Don't)
Whip

Whisper Whitewash (Don't)

Widen Will Wilt (Don't)

Win

Wipe

Wish

Withdraw

Withhold

Withstand

Witness

Wonder

Work Worry (Don't) Worsen (Don't)

Worship Wound (Don't) Wreck (Don't)

Write Wrong (Don't)

X x-ray

Y

Yank

Yearn

Yell

Yield

Yoke

Z

Zero in

02.08. Categories for Outlining the Sermon

Categories for Outlining the Sermon

Note: Finding creative categories to outline your sermon can be difficult. Below are over 240 categories to help you outline your sermon. Some examples of how to use the categories are the following: The 5 Choices of Every Person, The 7 Essentials to becoming a person of faith, The 10 Clues your marriage might be in trouble, 5 Evils every person should avoid, and 5 ways to Reduce conflict in relationships.

Abuses

Accusations

Acts

Advantages

Affirmations

Agreements

Aims

Alternatives

Ambitions

Ambushes

Angles

Answers

Approaches

Areas

Arguments

Aspects

Aspirations

Assertions

Assumptions

Assurances

Attitudes

Attributes
Bargains
Barriers
Basics
Beliefs
Benefits
Blessings
Blunders
Boundaries
Catastrophes
Causes
Certainties
Challenges
Chances
Changes
Characteristics
Choices
Clues
Classes
Commands
Commitments
Comparisons
Conditions
Conflicts
Consequences
Contrasts
Corrections
Criteria
Criticisms

Customs
Dangers
Deals
Decisions
Defenses
Deficiencies
Definitions
Degrees
Demands
Designs
Desires
Details
Differences
Directives
Disadvantages
Disasters
Disciplines
Discoveries
Distinctions
Dreams
Duties
Elements
Encouragement
Errors
Essentials
Evidences
Evils
Examples
Exhortations

Expectations
Experiences
Explanations
Expressions
Facets
Factors
Facts
Failures
Faults
Fears
Features
Flaws
Forces
Forms
Formulas
Functions
Fundamentals
Gifts
Goals
Groups
Guidelines
Guarantees
Habits
Handicaps
Hazards
Hopes
Hungers
Hurts
Ideas

Ideals
Imperatives
Implications
Impressions
Improvements
Impulses
Incentives
Indications
Indictments
Ingredients
Injuries
Insights
Instances
Instructions
Interpretations
Invitations
Issues
Jobs
Joys
Judgements
Keys
Kinds
Laws
Labels
Legends
Lessons
Levels
Liabilities
Limits

Links
Losses
Marks
Masks
Messages
Methods
Mistakes Misunderstandings
Models
Morals
Motives
Mysteries
Myths
Needs
Obligations
Observations
Obstacles
Opinions
Options
Outlets
Paradoxes
Parallels
Parts
Paths
Patterns
Perspectives
Phases
Pieces
Plans
Points

Policies
Positions
Possibilities
Presents
Principles
Problems
Procedures
Promises
Properties
Proposals
Purposes
Puzzles
Qualities
Quarrels
Questions
Reasons
Regrets
Remedies
Reminders
Replies
Requirements
Responses
Results
Rewards
Risks
Roles
Routines
Rules
Schemes

Secrets
Sides
Signs
Signals
Sins
Situations
Solutions
Sources
Stages
Standards
Statements
Steps
Strategies
Strengths
Struggles
Substitutes
Successes
Suggestions
Supports
Symbols
Tactics
Targets
Tasks
Techniques
Temptations
Tests
Theories
Thieves
Thoughts

Threats
Tickets
Tips
Tools
Tracks
Traps
Treasures
Trials
Tricks
Triumphs
Truths
Types
Uses
Values
Victories
Views
Viewpoints
Violations
Virtues
Walls
Warnings
Wars
Ways
Weaknesses

02.09. Sermon Prep (Internet Sites)

List of Internet sites that can help in sermon preparation:

<http://www.newsday.com/ap/topnews/index.htm> <http://www.opinion-pages.org/application.htm>
<http://www.pastors.com/portal/> <http://www.pastors.com/portal/>
<http://www.gospelcom.net/rbc/10rsn.home/> <http://nt.excite.com/?UID=EE7F138E34F51862>
<http://www.purposedriven.com/> <http://www.zondervan.com/newslink.htm>
<http://www.saddleback.com/> <http://www.5clicks.com/> <http://www.abcnews.com/>
<http://management.about.com/smallbusiness/management/index.htm> <http://about.com/>
<http://www.gospelcom.net/actsi/> <http://babel.altavista.com/translate.dyn> <http://www.bpnews.net/>
<http://www.billygraham.org/> <http://www.blanchardtraining.com/> <http://www.christianitytoday.com/>
<http://www.christiananswers.net/> <http://www.ccel.org/>
<http://www.christianity.net/christianhistory/current/> <http://www.christianitytoday.com/parenting/>
<http://www.cbmw.org/> <http://www.onelook.com/browse.shtml> <http://www.navpress.com/dj.asp>
<http://dogpile.com/> <http://elmertowns.com/> <http://encarta.msn.com/reference/>
<http://www.ideafisher.com/> <http://www.gospelcom.net/navsoft/>
<http://www.infosearch.com/index1.html> <http://www.marriagebuilders.com/>
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/marriage/> <http://meaningatwork.com/>
<http://www.apuritansmind.com/MainPage.htm> <http://purposedriven.com/>
http://www.sccu.edu/faculty/R_Harris/ <http://rex.skyline.net/> <http://botspot.com/search/>
<http://www.search.com/> <http://www.smallgroups.com/> <http://www.time.com/time/>
<http://www.refdesk.com/> <http://www.pastors.com/pcom/sermons/search.asp>

02.10. Sermon Illustrations (Internet Sites)

Here is a list of websites with good sermon illustrations, mostly in a database format.

PAY-SITES:

3. Movie Ministry <http://www.movieministry.com/> 4. The Preacher's Illustration Service <http://www.voicings.com/illus.htm> 1. Preaching Today <http://www.preachingtoday.com/>

2. PreachingNow <http://www.preaching.com/>

5. Pulpit Helps <http://www.pulphelps.com/> 2. Sermon Central <http://sermoncentral.com/> and <http://www.sermoncentralpro.com/>

FREE-SITES:

1. OZ Sermon Illustrations <http://www.ozsermonillustrations.com/> 5. PreachingNow (Archive site) <http://www.preaching.com/newsletter/archive.html> 3. Reader's Digest <http://www.rd.com/> 2. Sermonillustrations.com <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/> 4. The Sermon Illustrator <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/> 3. Tan's Encyclopedia of Illustrations http://www.tanbible.com/tol_ill/tol_ill_0Menu.htm

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
 - 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net