

Christmas Medley

Presented by Mary Lowman

Air Dates: December 23-27, 2024

Day One

Do you have days when you feel like the score is: The World - 100; God - 0? Does it sometimes appear you're on the losing team?

Maybe you go to a job where God is irrelevant to the people around you—where his name is used only in profanity, and they seemingly give no thought to God as Creator, Ruler, or Sovereign. You're in a daily environment where a commitment to Jesus Christ is looked upon as foolish, naive, or laughable. When you apply biblical principles in your everyday world, people take advantage of you, ignore you, or discount your ideas altogether.

Let's face it, that's the way it seems at times. You're walking the straight and narrow, but what for? Where does it get you? The other team does what they please and gets ahead for it. Do you sometimes feel like joining the other team? Are you tired of being in the minority all the time—seemingly losing all these skirmishes you face every day?

Well, I want to encourage you today to remember one thing: The final chapter has been written, and we know what the end will be. I think of the young boy who was reading a thrilling mystery book when his mom insisted he put the book down and do his chores. "But, mom, I'm in the fourth chapter and the villain has the hero in his clutches. Looks like he's going to die! I can't quit now." But mom insisted so hurriedly he flips to the last chapter and reads the final page. He then bounds into the kitchen where his mother is waiting and says, "Wow, that old villain is doing real good in Chapter 4, but just wait till he gets to the end of the book. Is he in for a surprise." It looked like disaster in Chapter 4, but when you know the end, then Chapter 4 takes on a whole new perspective.

Maybe you're in Chapter 4 today, and you need to flip to the end and read the last page. It's already been written, and I can tell you the outcome: Jesus wins and those of us who are his followers will win and reign with him. Read Revelations 20, 21, and 22 today.

Remember, God has not lost control of this world. He is bringing it to its end in his time and for his purposes. He is Sovereign and he still reigns in heaven.

As you head into a world where it may appear the score is unevenly in favor of the world's crowd, remember the last chapter, and don't let Chapter 4 get you down. If you know Christ as your Savior, you're on the winning team!

Day Two

Are you feeling anxious about something today? Are you very disturbed over a situation in your life? Does it seem impossible to find any rest and peace right now? Recently, a passage in Isaiah 48 gave me some insight into the reasons behind the anxiety and unrest I was experiencing.

This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord your God who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid

attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea (Isaiah 48:17-18).

How incisively the Word of God cuts through and exposes the real issues. I was reminded anxiety and unrest are often a result of my failure to pay attention to what I know about God. Rarely do I need some new truth or principle to help me out; I just need to practice what I know already.

God's direction and commands are there for all of us to see and understand. We know the basics, don't we? And yet our feet tend to stray. We leave off something here and something else there, which we know we should be doing, and we fail to completely follow the commands of God, which are clearly understood.

I find I rarely make a deliberate decision to wander from God's principles. It's simply a failure to pay attention to what I know already. My focus becomes fractured. I move slightly off-center, simply because I haven't paid attention like I should.

And when that happens, the results are anxiety, frustration, and loss of peace and rest. When you start to dig underneath those outward effects, you often discover the cause is a failure to pay attention to God's commands. It may be something that seems very small, but if we walk away from doing it God's way, we can expect to lose the peace and rest we so need.

The Lord told his people, "If only you had paid attention to my commands, your peace would have been like a river." If you're missing peace in your life today, check out the obedience department and see if there's some area where you're not paying attention to God. Once you get that straightened out, that wonderful, marvelous, indescribable peace will return, like a river, flooding your heart and calming your nerves.

Day Three

Merry Christmas! Perhaps you're gathering with family to open gifts and eat great food, or maybe it's a quiet day for you. However you are celebrating today, the team here at The Christian Working Woman is here to wish you a blessed day. We just want to send you words of joy, reminding all of us of the miracle we are celebrating today.

I'll begin with this passage from Mary's Magnificat, the amazing words she spoke as she visited her cousin Elizabeth. Here she is, a very young woman who will bear the Son of God, and she said:

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name (Luke 1:46-49).

Here's a familiar passage from the prophet Isaiah:

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this (Isaiah 9:5-7).

And the Apostle Paul said this:

Who, [Jesus Christ] being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by

becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:6-11).

Remember—you are deeply loved by the Savior of the world who came to sacrifice himself for our sake.

Let me close with this reminder that what we are truly celebrating today is Jesus is our salvation:

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Merry Christmas!

Day Four

I know at this time of year many people are especially lonely.

God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land (Psalm 68:6).

I have found this verse to be exactly true in my life. As I have allowed God to make a home for me and to accept his presence as sufficient in my life, I have been set free from the awful heaviness of loneliness.

That verse says only the rebellious dwell in a parched land. When we refuse to allow God to be our cure for loneliness, when we continue to try to do it our way and fill the empty void with people and activities, we'll continue to find loneliness our companion. Your feelings of loneliness may be because you are still rebelling against God's answers. You don't like the idea of learning to let him fill up your empty time and change your lonely feelings. As long as you continue to rebel, you will continue to live in that parched land of loneliness.

But there's no doubt God created us for fellowship and companionship, and we need people in our lives, too. When Jesus was facing crucifixion, he took his three closest companions with him while he prayed. He needed God's presence, and he needed their presence and support. The Apostle Paul spoke of his need to be with his companions and his encouragers.

If you are lonely because you don't have good friends or they're not nearby, I would remind you that in order to have friends, you have to reach out to others and be a friend. Ask yourself what you could do for someone else to be their friend, to meet their need, instead of waiting for someone to be your friend. We reap what we sow—that's a biblical principle. If you want friendships, sow friendships; become a friend to others.

Loneliness can be very crippling, and it is at epidemic levels these days. But you can take positive steps—by God's grace—to overcome those depressing feelings of loneliness. Of course, the most important step to take is to spend time developing your relationship with Jesus through Bible study and prayer. He is a friend who sticks closer than a brother, and believe me, he is capable of filling that lonely space inside of you.

Day Five

Everybody needs encouragement and help at times, don't they? As I read 2 Corinthians 7, I realized even the great Apostle Paul had his bad times when he needed other people.

For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn—conflicts on the outside, fears within (2 Corinthians 7:5).

Doesn't that describe the way you feel at times? Conflicts without, fears within? But this is the spiritual giant, Paul, and it surprises us to realize he would have these same feelings. We really need to remember that positions of prominence do not isolate anyone from being human. Paul was tired and fearful. He needed help.

Where did his help come from? He goes on to say, "But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus." He needed a friend at his side to comfort him, and so Titus came along. We could say to Paul, "But wasn't it enough to have the Lord there?" And Paul would respond, "The Lord was there in the person of Titus. He comforted me by sending Titus."

Yes indeed, that's how the Body of Christ should function. God wants to use us in each other's lives as messengers of comfort and encouragement, to pick up each other at those weary and frightening moments of our lives. God has given us each other for that purpose.

Paul goes on to say he was comforted by the good report Titus brought to him of his friend's concern for his welfare. Paul needed to know they cared. They hadn't forgotten him; they still loved him.

How often do we miss these opportunities to be God's comfort in the lives of others? How often do we need to be by a friend's side when they're experiencing dark days? Or send a message to them—by email, on the phone—just to say, I care.

Hallmark Cards has coined the phrase, "When you care enough to send the very best." When we as Christians care enough about each other, we can send our very best, which is the comfort of God pouring through us to those who need it.

Is there someone in your life today that needs a Titus? Ask God to show you and allow him to use you as his agent of comfort and encouragement.