



# guidelines for living

*a 5 minute message*

December 26, 2017

AFTER-CHRISTMAS BLUES

**I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Matthew 28:20, NKJV**

Christmas is over, at least it is for most of you. However, in some places such as in Russia, Christmas is observed in early January. But no matter when you celebrate Christmas, there comes a time when it is over; and when it is over, it is over.

You may be rather glad Christmas is over because now you can start to put your home back in order and get the kids back in school. Others of you may also be glad it is over, not because you can now eliminate the mess caused by your children or grandchildren, but because in your heart you felt the loneliness and quietness of your room as you sat by yourself and did battle with the memories of the past.

There is always a psychological letdown after any big push, and the post-Christmas blues are part of it. It would not only be inaccurate but rather foolish if I told you that your emotions should never dip. No one enjoys a perfectly level plane of emotional stability, not even the principal characters of the nativity drama.

After the excitement of Jesus' birth and the visit from the shepherds, there had to be a letdown for Mary and her husband, Joseph. It is well possible that a period of time--perhaps 12 to 18 months--elapsed after Jesus' birth until the wise men came who were guided by the star. Meanwhile, life took on a daily schedule of shopping, cooking, cleaning, and washing.

There must also have been large periods of time in the life of Jesus which were neither spectacular or exciting. Following the excitement at Bethlehem came the two-year sojourn in Egypt as Herod sought the life of the infant Jesus. As Jesus grew up, His early childhood was lived in a rather dull village called Nazareth, where Joseph had a carpenter shop. The most outstanding, and I think I could add exciting, event in the youth of Jesus, was the trip to Jerusalem at age 12, when He became separated from His parents and amazed the learned doctors of the law. Luke passes over those years by saying simply that "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52).



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There is good news no matter where you are, and no matter how you feel. The coming of Jesus Christ to our earth has an abiding importance the week after Christmas, and the week after that. His coming can bring the touch of God to your life in such a way that the common, routine, ordinary things can take on new significance. How? By accepting and believing Jesus meant what He said. Take note of the promises He made to those who believe in Him. For example, He said, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20, NKJV), and "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5, NKJV).

This includes the day after Christmas. It spans times of depression or periods of loneliness. His presence is not an emotion or a psychological elevator. It is a fact which touches the depths of my being, my emotions included. G. Campbell Morgan once read the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:20 to an old woman on her deathbed and said, "Isn't that a wonderful promise!" "Sir," replied the woman, "that isn't a promise--it is a fact!"

Be encouraged, no matter where you are, no matter how you feel, there is one who cares for you deeply. His presence can flood your heart and lift your spirits. Never forget He promised, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20, NKJV).

Resource reading: Hebrews 13.