

alive
magazine
Chrstitmas'18

The

Wonder

of

Christmas

Support

**ALIVE TO GOD IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOU!
AND OTHER GENEROUS READERS SUCH AS YOURSELF**

BANKING DETAILS

Account Name: Alive to God
Bank: Standard Bank
Account Number: 411338196
(Cheque/transmission)
Branch: Menlyn
Reference: Your email address

DEBIT ORDERS

You can give regularly by means of a debit order. If you would like to make use of this option, please email us at andrew@alivetogod.com



www.AliveToGod.com/donate-support



<https://paypal.com/webapps/mpp/send-money-online>



CONTENTS

+ featured articles



- 4 THE WONDER OF CHRISTMAS**
- Andrew Roebert -
- 6 CHRISTMAS MARRIAGE TIPS**
-MarriageMissions.com -
- 8 5 CHRISTMAS SHOPPING MISTAKES TO AVOID**
- SeedTime.com-
- 10 WHY DO WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?**
- GotQuestinos.org-
- 12 A LIFE OF RESTING IN GOD**
- Andrew Roebert -
- 14 BE KIND TO YOURSELF**
- Andrew Roebert -
- 16 WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT CHRISTIANS ARE ADOPTED BY GOD?**
- GotQuestions.org -
- 18 15 FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF PERSONAL FINANCE**
- SeedTime.com-



The Wonder Of Christmas

By: Andrew Roebert

*"For unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given." - Isaiah
9:6*

IS THIS FACT TRUTH?

The whole basis for what you and I believe comes down to the simple question: Do you believe that this is true. The question as to whether Christmas is real or not, is based on whether we believe that a child was born and that this prophesy was, in fact, fulfilled. Some time back I was watching some of the documentary channels on TV. A program came on about the life of Jesus. The narrator made that following comment: He said: 'The greatest attested fact of ancient history was Jesus Christ!' I have never forgotten this statement. But is it true? Is it true or is it just fable, legend and tradition? The wonder of Christmas is that we can believe with all our hearts that this is true. That God became flesh, the flesh of a human child and came to live among humanity. Just think about it, the same planet that

you and I live, walk and work on, the Saviour of the world, the creator of the universe, lived, walked and worked on. Christmas will never truly be Christmas for you, until you accept this as a reality and a truth.

IS THIS FACT TRUE FOR YOU?

More than just a historical fact, more that just a part of ancient history, we need to ask ourselves the question: 'IS THIS FACT TRUE FOR YOU'?

*"For unto us a child is born, unto us
a son is given."
- Isaiah 9:6*

Let's personalize this verse. Take the word 'US' and replace it with your own name.

"For unto Andrew a child is born, unto Andrew a son is given." - Isaiah 9:6

This is the true wonder of the Christmas story. The Child and the Son was given to you and to me. Not just to humanity and history, but to you and to me! Not only must we accept this as a historical fact, we have to go a step further. We must accept it as a personal gift! Not for the person next to you, but for you! A Child was born for you! A Son was given for you! Have you received Him as your personal gift? Strip away, for a moment, all the history, the commercialization, the carols, the presents, the holidays and let's get back to basics. Have you received this Child, this Son that God gave to you!

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ACCEPTING THE CHILD AND BEING A CHILD

So we realize that that we must accept the historical event as the truth. We have to receive this Child as a personal gift to us. But we also need to be changed as a result. My children are young and in the primary school change. Ever since they were born we have been under pressure to get them grown up. I remember someone trying to encourage me to get my daughter to start reading just after her third birthday. Other people would tell me that their daughter had a vocabulary of 1000 words at 3 years of age and asking me how many words were in my daughter's vocabulary. This question took me by complete surprise. We rush our children to develop into mature, well-rounded adults and then we speak of lost childhoods and missed youth! As a child you believe what adults say and tell you, but as we grow up we expect our children to question and decide for themselves, on everything they hear. We move from belief to rational explanation. But when we receive THE CHILD, something needs to change!

Matthew 18:2-4 And He (Jesus) called a little child to Himself and put him in the midst of them, 3 And said, Truly I say to you, unless you repent (change, turn about) and become like little children [trusting, lowly - humble, loving, forgiving], you can never enter the kingdom of heaven [at all]. 4 Whoever will humble himself therefore and become like this little child [trusting, lowly, loving, forgiving] is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

We must become like a child. This is so foreign to human nature and what society tells us. There is a difference between childlike and childish. Childish – Immature, simple/silly, befitting a child.

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

Childlike – Having the qualities of a child, innocent, trust, humble, loving and forgiving, teachable, obedient and willing to do his father's will.

Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Luke 10:21 Then Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit and said, "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding the truth from those who think themselves so wise and clever, and for revealing it to the childlike. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way."

As we accept the Child, let us return to childlikeness. Childlike faith, childlike belief and childlike confidence in the Child that was given to us!

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ACCEPTING THE SON AND BEING A SON

Yes, we must accept the Historical fact as truth. Yes, we must accept the Child as a personal gift to us. Yes, we must be changed as a result. But it goes a step further.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." - Isaiah 9:6

We have been given a Son. The question is: 'Are you a son yourself?'

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

Make the connection - Accept the Son and be a son or a daughter of God. As you receive the Son, you can become a son and a daughter of God. Are you a son or a daughter of God? Do you trust your Heavenly Father? Do you trust Him to be a father, a provider and a friend to you? Accept the Son and be a son! Don't settle for anything less!

IF GOD HAS GIVEN US A CHILD AND A SON, IF GOD HAS ALLOWED US TO BE HIS CHILD AND HIS SON, SURELY WE CAN GIVE OURSELVES COMPLETELY TO HIM!

Have you given yourself to Jesus Christ? Have you given EVERYTHING to Jesus Christ? There was an old hymn we used to sing: JUST AS I AM. Here are the words: Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me, and that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come! God has given us everything.

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Surely we can give everything in return?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Do you not know that your body is the temple (the very sanctuary) of the Holy Spirit Who lives within you, Whom you have received [as a Gift] from God? You are not your own, You were bought with a price [purchased with a preciousness and paid for, made His own]. So then, honor God and bring glory to Him in your body.

So now all that remains is to spend the rest of your life bringing glory to God in everything you do and say! Let the Child that was given to you be everything to you!

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought with a price [purchased with a preciousness and paid for by Christ]; then do not yield yourselves up to become [in your own estimation] slaves to men [but consider yourselves slaves to Christ].

Christmas Marriage Tips

MarriageMissions.com

There's one phrase we've both said, and we've both heard from others repeatedly. It is, "Oh how I wish I would have had that info before now. It would have prevented so many problems!" That includes having Christmas marriage tips that can help our celebration times go a little bit smoother.

Any holiday season can be stressful because of the many expectations we put upon ourselves (or we allow to be put upon us). But we'd like to make this Christmas time a little more peaceful and joyful. We're sure that's what the Lord would want.

Here are some tips you may find helpful as you read and then apply what you can use.

Christmas Marriage Ideas:

- * "Say what you expect. As holiday tensions increase, so do conflicts. As you get more tired, the more you expect your spouse to pick up the slack. When these unfair expectations don't get met, you both feel resentful. So expectations should be stated, collaborated and related. 'Stating' means discussing roles and responsibilities for each person. 'Collaborating' is working together to resolve differences. 'Relating' is honouring your relationship in all your actions." (James and Heather Sells)
- * "Grab your spouse and talk thru the important things in your holiday season. Factor them into the budget and drop the rest. Let people know you're opting for simpler celebrations. Think small gifts, coupon gifts, etc. Have more potluck type gatherings. Be respectful of your marriage by governing your finances wisely. Don't let the season run away with your finances." (Lori Byerly) "Debt is normal. Be weird." (Dave Ramsey)
- * Keep in mind: "You and your spouse don't have to go to a party just because you're invited to it. Be good stewards of your time and energy. Even Jesus, the Son of God knew He had to retreat from the clamour of the crowds for quiet times with His Father to renew His strength. Pace yourselves and find the balance between togetherness and separateness." (Deborah Tyrell)
- * "Holidays can be stressful. We're often with people who are difficult to be around. You don't have to like what family members do. But you do need to show love and grace. Dr Minirth, a Christian psychiatrist, warns that this is NOT the time to try to fix your family. There are 364 other days of the year to address problems." (Keryn Horwood)



More Christmas Marriage Tips:

- * “Blessed are the pure in heart. Don’t let the negative stay with you. When you see something that’s nasty or snarky or interested only in itself heading your way, step aside, and let it roll right past. Wave to it as it goes by, and then turn your attention back to the Holy Spirit within you. That is God, who, the Bible tells us, is LOVE.” (John Shore)
- * “When you and your spouse plan a gathering of family and friends, set aside a ‘fellowship’ time when everyone can take turns listening to one another. Ask: ‘what were you most thankful for this past year? What have you learned from the past year? How would you like to grow next year?’ If you take the time for authentic fellowship, everyone remembers it far longer than if you merely socialize with them.” (Rick Warren)
- * “Keep in mind the best gift you can give each other is a loving relationship. So make decisions that nurture your marriage and reduce tension. What’s the gift we want most? A marriage that reflects the beauty and sacrifice of God’s gift to humankind.” (James and Heather Sells)

Additional Christmas Marriage Tips:

- * Make it a point to give your spouse some “good press” (talking well about them) when you’re with others. “Few things can boost a person’s self-esteem more than hearing that their partner has been putting them in a positive light to others. When 2 people are doing that for each other, they reap a double dose of love. So, consider making it your mission to spread some good press about your spouse.” (Les and Leslie Parrott)
- * This time of the year and beyond, take note: “When the fire of prayer goes out, the barrenness of busyness takes over.” (George Carey) Also note that when you’re too busy to be kind, you’re too busy. Pray for your marriage and family life —for peace and love to be lived out. Prayerfully examine all you have to do and cut back on that, which you can, that really won’t matter in the years ahead.
- * “I’ve declared this Christmas the ‘Christmas of my First Love’ where I’ll help my spouse and our family shift our focus from the mall to the manger. The manger is quiet and less crowded. It’s a place where children are always welcome. Spending time here will help us to keep our eyes and hearts fully focused on Jesus.” (Jim Burns)

5 Christmas Shopping Mistakes to Avoid

SeedTime.com

Christmas is around the corner, and with Black Friday behind us you might need to up your game if you're not done with your list.

But before you rush to the store or add something to your cart online, now's the perfect time to think about some of the biggest mistakes that you should avoid this season. Maybe think about making some homemade Christmas gifts this year.

Whether you've already completed your shopping, or still have a lot to do, these five mistakes could make for a blue Christmas if you're not careful.

1

Going into debt for a good deal.

I'm fully aware that some shops are practically giving away flat screen TVs, but a good deal doesn't justify going into debt. Financing a TV through a credit card can really add up, so your best bet is to make sure you have the money for it first.

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy using credit cards for the perks but I'd only recommend doing this if you can pay off the balance at the end of the month. Keep debt out from under the tree this year.

2

Ignoring the budget.

I hope you've set your Christmas budget and follow it this year. We usually keep our budget online because it's easy, but sometimes it's just nice to see it on paper.

One sure way to stick to the budget is to use cash and to put each person's gift money into an envelope. Yes, it takes a little longer, but if you're strapped for cash as it is, this will keep you from pulling out the credit card to pay for it throughout the year – a mistake we know to avoid!

For those who feel like Christmas sneaks up each year, try automating a Christmas budget. Many small banks and credit unions still have Christmas savings accounts that draw a few dollars from your checking account automatically.

It's worth checking into so that you're better prepared for next year!

3

Getting the warranty.

I have mixed feelings about warranties, but most of the time I choose not to get the warranty. Most electronics and high dollar items will already have a manufacturer's warranty, so if breaks, you're already covered.

Signing up for extra warranties on your computer, TV or printer may sound wise, but think through it before you commit to an extra warranty at the register.

We purchased a TV one year and passed on the warranty. When we brought it home, it didn't work. Talk about disappointment! We didn't need a warranty to exchange it to for a new TV because it was covered under the manufacturer's warranty.

If you're afraid your kids will break something expensive or if you're generally clumsy, purchasing a warranty might give you peace of mind and could pay off for you.

The chance of you using the warranty is less than you would expect – but the fear of being 'the one' to need it often drives people to purchase expensive. Do your research and don't let fear drive you to buy a warranty at the register. Often times you can add a warranty later when you've done some research.

4

Not understanding return policies.

You're probably aware of most return policies, but is your gift recipient aware of their options for returning a gift? Make sure you get a gift receipt and tell the person to return the item promptly if they want to exchange it.

5

Defaulting to a gift card.

Sometimes a gift card is nice, especially since you can buy what you want. But the downside to giving a gift card is that you might be passing up some great deals that the recipient wouldn't get after the holidays.

There are two sides to this dilemma because after-Christmas sales can mean great deals for someone with a gift card, but just make sure that the gift card is to a place they'll enjoy shopping at.

WHY DO WE

Celebrate CHRISTMAS?

GotQuestions.org

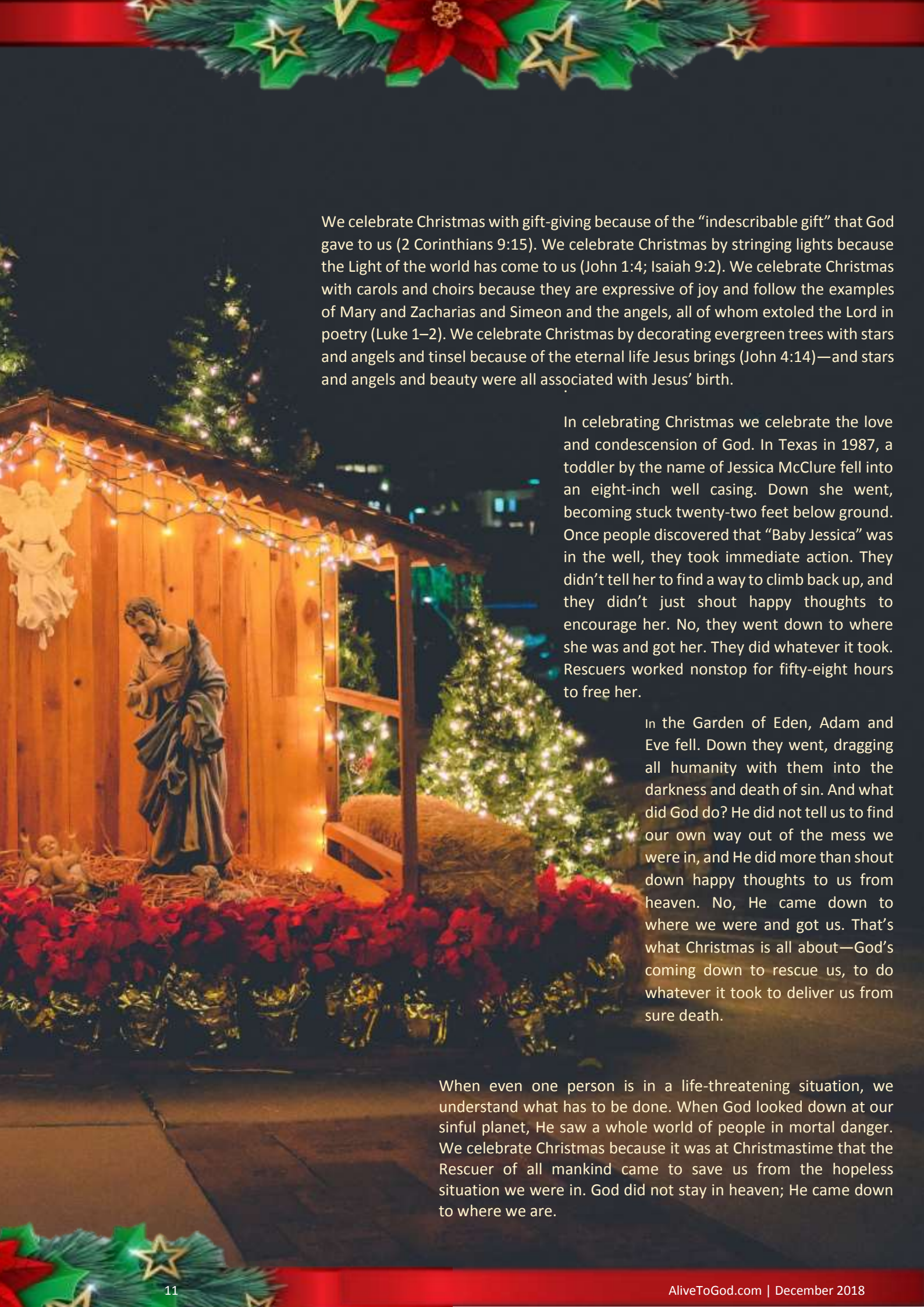
Christians the world over celebrate Christmas in honour of the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. Various Christmas traditions have been associated with the celebration of Christmas, and different cultures celebrate different ways. The unifying factor is the historical fact that Jesus was born. The angel who appeared to the shepherds the night of Jesus' birth said, "I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:10–11).

We celebrate Christmas because, as the angel said, the birth of Jesus Christ is "good news." Good news is meant to be celebrated. In fact, the angel said the news of Jesus' birth would cause "great joy" and would be "for all the people"—the joyful celebration would be universal. People around the globe would be glad for this occasion.

We celebrate Christmas because, as the angel said, "A Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." The three titles the angel applies to Jesus are important.

Jesus is the Saviour who delivers us from sin and death (Matthew 1:21). He is the human Messiah (or Christ) who fulfils the Law and the Prophets, showing that God is faithful (see Matthew 5:17). And He is the divine Lord who has entered our world: the Almighty has taken on human flesh; God and man have been fused together in an indivisible, eternal bond; God is truly with us (see Matthew 1:23).

In celebrating Christmas, we celebrate the Saviour, because we needed deliverance. We celebrate the Christ in whom all of God's promises are "Yes" and "Amen" (2 Corinthians 1:20). We celebrate the Lord who in humility took on "the very nature of a servant" for our sakes (see Philippians 2:6–8).



We celebrate Christmas with gift-giving because of the “indescribable gift” that God gave to us (2 Corinthians 9:15). We celebrate Christmas by stringing lights because the Light of the world has come to us (John 1:4; Isaiah 9:2). We celebrate Christmas with carols and choirs because they are expressive of joy and follow the examples of Mary and Zacharias and Simeon and the angels, all of whom extolled the Lord in poetry (Luke 1–2). We celebrate Christmas by decorating evergreen trees with stars and angels and tinsel because of the eternal life Jesus brings (John 4:14)—and stars and angels and beauty were all associated with Jesus’ birth.

In celebrating Christmas we celebrate the love and condescension of God. In Texas in 1987, a toddler by the name of Jessica McClure fell into an eight-inch well casing. Down she went, becoming stuck twenty-two feet below ground. Once people discovered that “Baby Jessica” was in the well, they took immediate action. They didn’t tell her to find a way to climb back up, and they didn’t just shout happy thoughts to encourage her. No, they went down to where she was and got her. They did whatever it took. Rescuers worked nonstop for fifty-eight hours to free her.

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve fell. Down they went, dragging all humanity with them into the darkness and death of sin. And what did God do? He did not tell us to find our own way out of the mess we were in, and He did more than shout down happy thoughts to us from heaven. No, He came down to where we were and got us. That’s what Christmas is all about—God’s coming down to rescue us, to do whatever it took to deliver us from sure death.

When even one person is in a life-threatening situation, we understand what has to be done. When God looked down at our sinful planet, He saw a whole world of people in mortal danger. We celebrate Christmas because it was at Christmastime that the Rescuer of all mankind came to save us from the hopeless situation we were in. God did not stay in heaven; He came down to where we are.

A Life of Resting In God

By: Andrew Roebert

Isaiah 30:15 – 18 15 For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning [to Me] and resting [in Me] you shall be saved; in quietness and in [trusting] confidence shall be your strength. But you would not, 16 And you said, No! We will speed [our own course] on horses! Therefore you will speed [in flight from your enemies]! You said, We will ride upon swift steeds [doing our own way]! Therefore will they who pursue you be swift, [so swift that] 17 One thousand of you will flee at the threat of one of them; at the threat of five you will flee till you are left like a beacon or a flagpole on the top of a mountain, and like a signal on a hill. 18 And therefore the Lord [earnestly] waits [expecting, looking, and longing] to be gracious to you; and therefore He lifts Himself up, that He may have mercy on you and show loving-kindness to you. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) are all those who [earnestly] wait for Him, who expect and look and long for Him [for His victory, His favor, His love, His peace, His joy, and His matchless, unbroken companionship]!

Life has a strange way of getting us stressed, pressured and busy. Life has uncanny way of getting complicated and losses its simplicity. We exchange simplicity for complexity. We exchange resting with busyness. We exchange trusting with stressing. We exchange quiet confidence with pressure. We may even begin to believe that pressure, stress, striving and busyness is the key to success. The issue is how does God desire that we should live? Have we adopted a way of dealing with life, and is it the pattern that God had in mind?

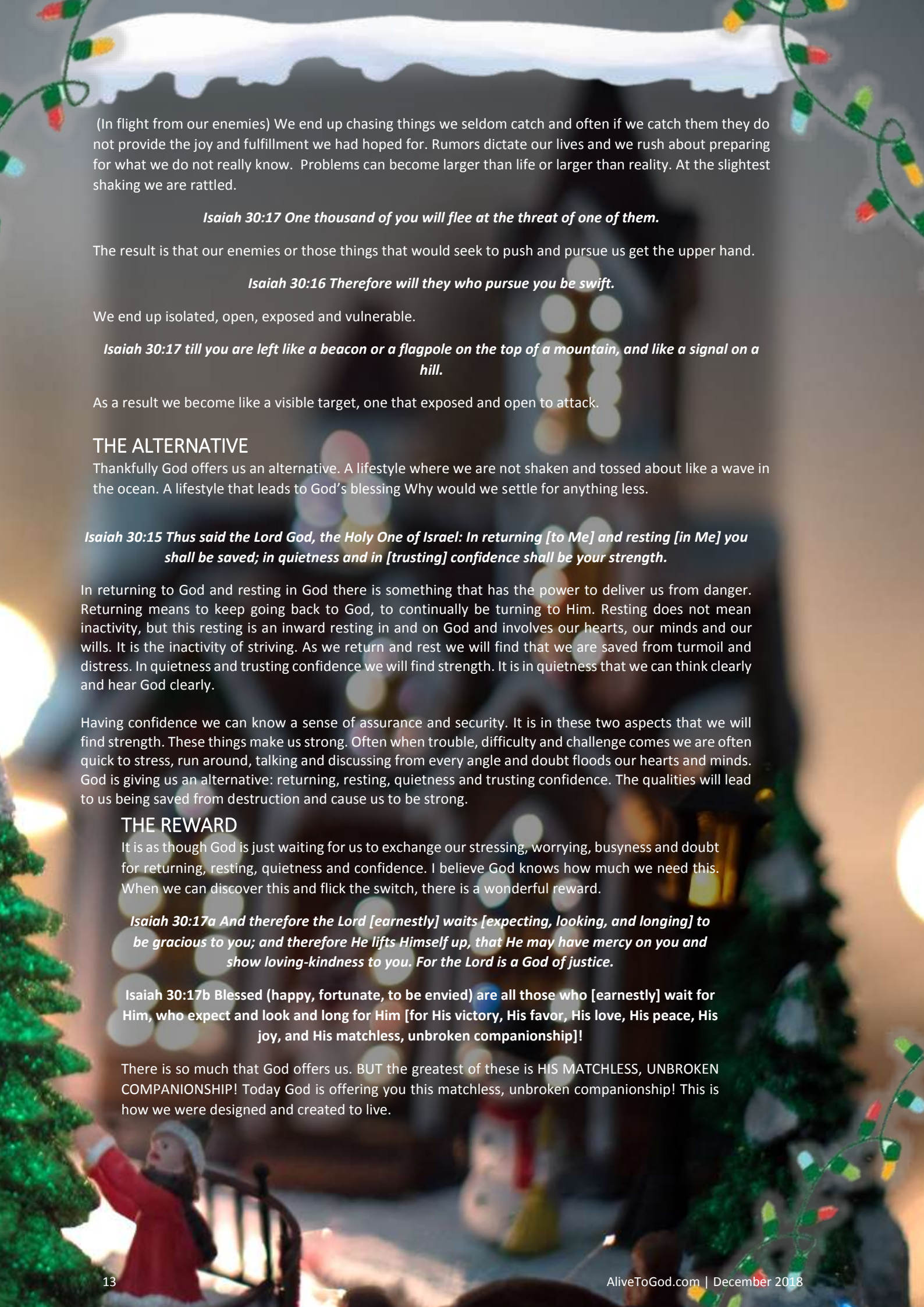
THE NATURAL CHOICE

In a very real sense we seen to naturally gravitate towards a lifestyle of independence and the resultant stress and pressure it brings. This is accurate depicted in this scripture.

Isaiah 30:16-17 But you would not and you said, No! We will speed [our own course] on horses! Therefore you will speed [in flight from your enemies]! You said, we will ride upon swift steeds [doing our own way]!

Therefore will they who pursue you be swift, [so swift that] 17 One thousand of you will flee at the threat of one of them; at the threat of five you will flee till you are left like a beacon or a flagpole on the top of a mountain, and like a signal on a hill.

The natural choice is not a default way of living, it is a choice! Notice that it says: 'and you said, No!' The natural course is to do what seems good to us. (Our own course) This includes doing what we want to do. (EG: Visit to Las Vegas) The natural course is to do what we want to do. (Doing our own way) This includes doing things in a manner that suits us. The natural course ends us up running.



(In flight from our enemies) We end up chasing things we seldom catch and often if we catch them they do not provide the joy and fulfillment we had hoped for. Rumors dictate our lives and we rush about preparing for what we do not really know. Problems can become larger than life or larger than reality. At the slightest shaking we are rattled.

Isaiah 30:17 One thousand of you will flee at the threat of one of them.

The result is that our enemies or those things that would seek to push and pursue us get the upper hand.

Isaiah 30:16 Therefore will they who pursue you be swift.

We end up isolated, open, exposed and vulnerable.

Isaiah 30:17 till you are left like a beacon or a flagpole on the top of a mountain, and like a signal on a hill.

As a result we become like a visible target, one that exposed and open to attack.

THE ALTERNATIVE

Thankfully God offers us an alternative. A lifestyle where we are not shaken and tossed about like a wave in the ocean. A lifestyle that leads to God's blessing Why would we settle for anything less.

Isaiah 30:15 Thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning [to Me] and resting [in Me] you shall be saved; in quietness and in [trusting] confidence shall be your strength.

In returning to God and resting in God there is something that has the power to deliver us from danger. Returning means to keep going back to God, to continually be turning to Him. Resting does not mean inactivity, but this resting is an inward resting in and on God and involves our hearts, our minds and our wills. It is the inactivity of striving. As we return and rest we will find that we are saved from turmoil and distress. In quietness and trusting confidence we will find strength. It is in quietness that we can think clearly and hear God clearly.

Having confidence we can know a sense of assurance and security. It is in these two aspects that we will find strength. These things make us strong. Often when trouble, difficulty and challenge comes we are often quick to stress, run around, talking and discussing from every angle and doubt floods our hearts and minds. God is giving us an alternative: returning, resting, quietness and trusting confidence. The qualities will lead to us being saved from destruction and cause us to be strong.

THE REWARD

It is as though God is just waiting for us to exchange our stressing, worrying, busyness and doubt for returning, resting, quietness and confidence. I believe God knows how much we need this. When we can discover this and flick the switch, there is a wonderful reward.

Isaiah 30:17a And therefore the Lord [earnestly] waits [expecting, looking, and longing] to be gracious to you; and therefore He lifts Himself up, that He may have mercy on you and show loving-kindness to you. For the Lord is a God of justice.

Isaiah 30:17b Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) are all those who [earnestly] wait for Him, who expect and look and long for Him [for His victory, His favor, His love, His peace, His joy, and His matchless, unbroken companionship]!

There is so much that God offers us. BUT the greatest of these is HIS MATCHLESS, UNBROKEN COMPANIONSHIP! Today God is offering you this matchless, unbroken companionship! This is how we were designed and created to live.

Be Kind TO Yourself

By: Andrew Roebert

This is one of the most vital keys to success. It may sound like such a simple and almost stupid concept. Why would one need to be kind to oneself? But yet this is such an evident aspect of people's lives. I have dealt with many people and so often they are so hard on themselves. How easily we get disappointed in ourselves or think we should have or could have or simply failed or did not live up to some standard. Often we spend so much time being kind to others or to those close to us, like children etc, that we don't afford ourselves the time to be kind to ourselves.

BE KIND TO BE KIND!

How can we be kind to others if we cannot be kind to ourselves? How can we love others if we cannot love ourselves? Kindness to others often flows out of a sense of security that comes from within us! This happens as an outflow of the kindness we afford ourselves. I once read the following quote: "Stand up so you'll be seen. Speak up so you'll be heard. And then sit down so you'll be appreciated". John Davies. We seem to spend so much time standing up for ourselves, speaking up for ourselves that we often miss the opportunity to sit back and be appreciated. We say we must do this and we must do that and God says that He loves us anyway! The Bible speaks of the cares of this world and the fact that these cares can throttle us.

Matthew 12:22 The thorny ground represents those who hear and accept the Good News, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares of this life and the lure of wealth, so no crop is produced.

God wants us to be productive and this scripture indicates that this cannot happen while the cares of life crowd out the truly important! Life can consume us and before we know it we are consumed with pressures that we would never have placed ourselves under by choice.

Deuteronomy 4:9 Only take heed, and guard your life diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen and lest they depart from your [mind and] heart all the days of your life.

BE KIND TO YOURSELF BECAUSE GOD LOVES YOU

Do we realize that God loves us or how much He loves us? If God loves us and wants to be kind to us, surely we can be kind to ourselves. Don't speak negatively about yourself, don't down or criticize yourself. I once heard a story of a man who constantly told his family that he was a bad (sleg) person. Eventually he became what he spent time telling himself he was and it affected his wife and family and did immense damage.

You are God's creation and God does not make junk. You are valuable and precious to God and He loves you! Perhaps people have told you that you are no good, useless or that you will never amount to anything. Over time you have entertained these ideas and been hard on yourself by believing such lies. It is time to stop believing the lies, give yourself the benefit of the doubt and believe what God says about you! God does not make junk!

Joshua 23:11 Be very watchful of yourselves, therefore, to love the Lord your God.

LOVE YOURSELF

The Bible indicates that we are expected to love ourselves.

James 2:8 Love your neighbor as you love yourself.

We can love ourselves because we are fearfully and wonderfully made by God Himself and He loves us.

Ephesians 5:28-29 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church.

Take time and invest in your life, wellbeing and health and make sure you guard and protect your heart.

Proverbs 4:23 Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.

2 John 8 Look to yourselves (take care) that you may not lose (throw away or destroy) all that we and you have labored for.

If we don't offer ourselves the kindness of caring for ourselves and those things that are important to us we may end up losing those very things that are precious to us.

YOUR OWN WORST CRITIC

Often we can be so hard on ourselves. We blame ourselves for things that happened. We blame ourselves for success lost or opportunities missed. We often harp on our mistakes or things we should have done when God sees things so differently. God sees all the things you have been through and perhaps failed in and He wants to take all those things and work them together for good!!

Romans 8:28 All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

You may say: 'I could have, I should have, I would have' but God says I will take your could have's, should have's and would have's and I will still give them value by using for something good! With God we can know what it means to not have regrets. We all have regrets, but God can even use them. Your misery could still become your ministry, your problems could still become a potential victory and your pain could become an area of power

ROOM FOR ERROR

Give yourself the room to make mistakes. The right to make mistakes is part of life. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Failing is part of discovering what God has. The Bible says we prophesy in part. We are never 100% correct, but that does not mean we do not try. What we regret the most is not the things we failed at, but we regret the things we never attempted. We must also give ourselves time! We have to face so many things in life and we often do not give ourselves time to adjust or make the necessary changes.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

Even Jesus spent time alone to renew His strength and spend time with His Heavenly Father. Jesus was not always completely at everyone's disposal. There were times when He separated Himself so that He could take care of what was really important. This did not mean that He was not kind to others, but He understood the priority of attending to His own wellbeing and to be kind to Himself in the process, so that He could be kind to others.

If we cannot be kind to ourselves how will we be kind to others? If we can't give to ourselves the time and attention that we need how will we find the strength to give it others?

DON'T COMPLICATE LIFE!

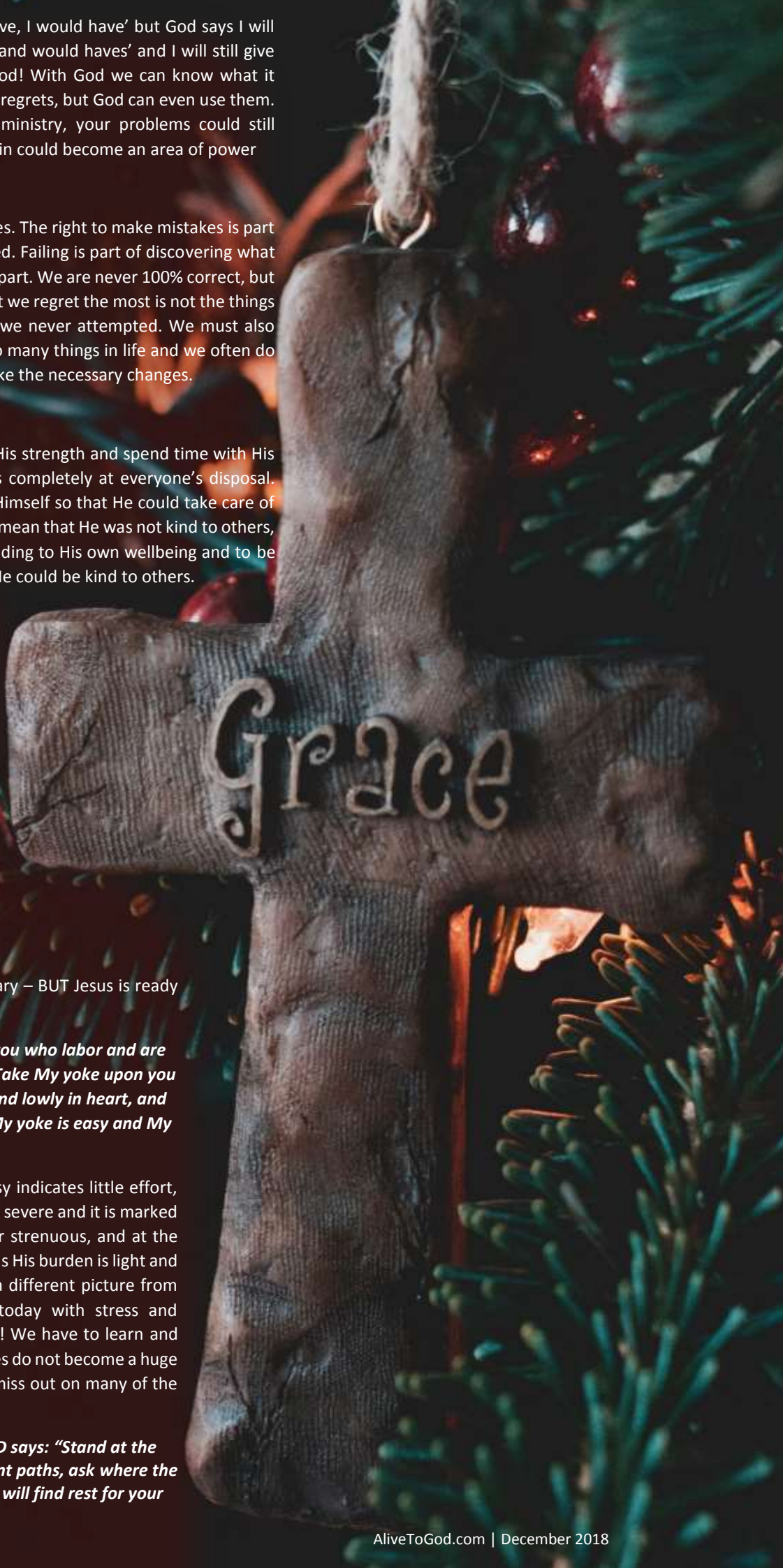
How often we complicate life. Simple situations can become so complicated and so burdensome that we stumble under the load. It can be as simple as making wrong decisions or acting without wisdom that leads to this complicated life.

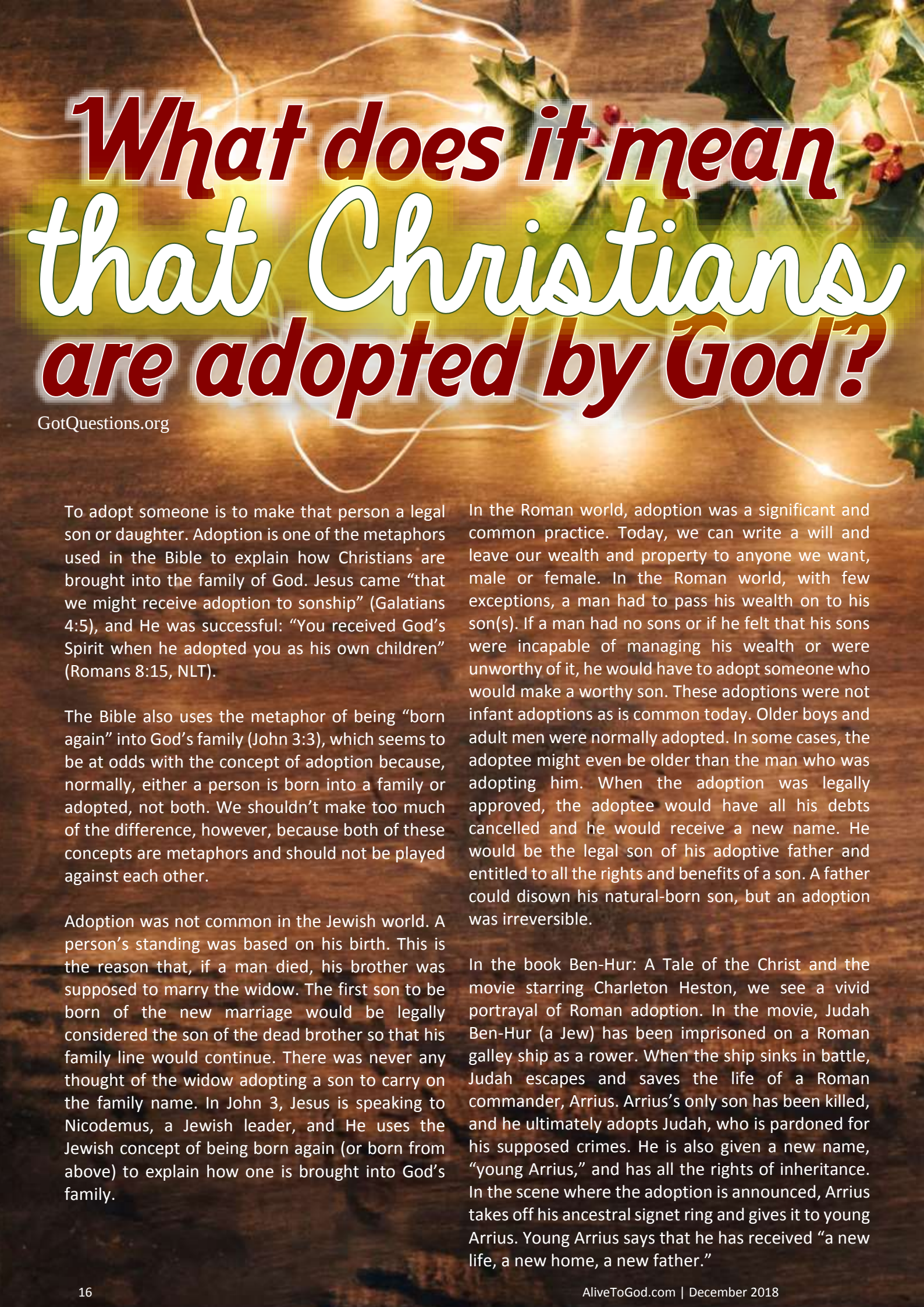
The result is we become tired and weary – BUT Jesus is ready to meet us at our point of need.

Matthew 11:28-30 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Jesus tells us that His yoke is easy. Easy indicates little effort, thought, or reflection, it means it is not severe and it is marked by peace. It is pleasant, not harried or strenuous, and at the same time providing comfort. He tells us His burden is light and that means it is not heavy. It is such a different picture from what is so prevalent in the world today with stress and depression being the order of the day! We have to learn and make the right decisions so that our lives do not become a huge complicated mass and in the process miss out on many of the simple joys of life!

Jeremiah 6:16 This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls."





What does it mean that Christians are adopted by God?

GotQuestions.org

To adopt someone is to make that person a legal son or daughter. Adoption is one of the metaphors used in the Bible to explain how Christians are brought into the family of God. Jesus came “that we might receive adoption to sonship” (Galatians 4:5), and He was successful: “You received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children” (Romans 8:15, NLT).

The Bible also uses the metaphor of being “born again” into God’s family (John 3:3), which seems to be at odds with the concept of adoption because, normally, either a person is born into a family or adopted, not both. We shouldn’t make too much of the difference, however, because both of these concepts are metaphors and should not be played against each other.

Adoption was not common in the Jewish world. A person’s standing was based on his birth. This is the reason that, if a man died, his brother was supposed to marry the widow. The first son to be born of the new marriage would be legally considered the son of the dead brother so that his family line would continue. There was never any thought of the widow adopting a son to carry on the family name. In John 3, Jesus is speaking to Nicodemus, a Jewish leader, and He uses the Jewish concept of being born again (or born from above) to explain how one is brought into God’s family.

In the Roman world, adoption was a significant and common practice. Today, we can write a will and leave our wealth and property to anyone we want, male or female. In the Roman world, with few exceptions, a man had to pass his wealth on to his son(s). If a man had no sons or if he felt that his sons were incapable of managing his wealth or were unworthy of it, he would have to adopt someone who would make a worthy son. These adoptions were not infant adoptions as is common today. Older boys and adult men were normally adopted. In some cases, the adoptee might even be older than the man who was adopting him. When the adoption was legally approved, the adoptee would have all his debts cancelled and he would receive a new name. He would be the legal son of his adoptive father and entitled to all the rights and benefits of a son. A father could disown his natural-born son, but an adoption was irreversible.

In the book *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ* and the movie starring Charlton Heston, we see a vivid portrayal of Roman adoption. In the movie, Judah Ben-Hur (a Jew) has been imprisoned on a Roman galley ship as a rower. When the ship sinks in battle, Judah escapes and saves the life of a Roman commander, Arrius. Arrius’s only son has been killed, and he ultimately adopts Judah, who is pardoned for his supposed crimes. He is also given a new name, “young Arrius,” and has all the rights of inheritance. In the scene where the adoption is announced, Arrius takes off his ancestral signet ring and gives it to young Arrius. Young Arrius says that he has received “a new life, a new home, a new father.”



Paul, writing to Roman audiences, uses the metaphor of adoption, which a Roman audience would have understood. Galatians 4:3–7 says, “So also, when we were children, we were enslaved under the basic principles of the world. But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those under the Law, that we might receive our adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, you are also an heir through God.” In this passage, Christians are born enslaved, but Jesus buys them out of slavery and they are adopted by the Father and given the Spirit, so now they are heirs.

Some have objected to the language that refers to our adoption as “sons.” What about the daughters? In the Roman world, daughters could not normally receive an inheritance. Paul, writing to male and female believers, says that both genders have been adopted so as to receive full legal rights that sons receive. Rather than diminishing the status of women, this wording elevates it. A woman may not be able to be an heir of a Roman father, but a believing woman is an heir of God.

When we come to faith in Christ, our debts are cancelled, we are given a new name, and we are given all the rights that heirs of God possess. One difference from Roman adoption is that Christians are not adopted because God thinks they will make worthy heirs. God adopts people who are completely unworthy, because He adopts on the basis of His grace.

So, Christians have been born into God’s family (using a Jewish metaphor) and adopted into God’s family (using a Roman metaphor). The end result is the same; Christians are a forever part of God’s family.

15 Fundamental Truths of Personal Finance

SeedTime.com

It's best to set in stone some core financial principles sooner rather than later. Here are some fundamental truths you should always keep in mind.

1. You should pay God first.

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:21). It's important to understand that money shouldn't be the sole reason behind why we work each day. Our hope doesn't lie in the dollar, euro, or gold; it's founded in Christ. Personal finance is no different. When we acknowledge our dependence on Christ, we can start to see how faithful God really is. This is why giving is so important. We give so that others might hear the Gospel and find the same hope that we have.

2. You should pay yourself second.

You may have heard of the 10-10-80 principle: Pay God 10%, pay yourself 10%, and pay the bills with 80%. For some, that may seem impossible in your current financial situation.

There's no magic way to suddenly change your financial picture so that you can use 80% of your income to pay bills and give/save the other 20%. The reality is that it's easiest when you implement this practice early and make it a priority. But regardless of your current situation, ask God to help you get there and He will.

3. Roth IRAs are awesome.

Saving for your retirement years doesn't need to be complicated. Putting money aside in a Roth IRA can mean huge tax savings for you in the future.

Remember, the contributions you make into a Roth IRA have already been taxed, so both the earnings and principal within the IRA will be distributed tax-free.

4. Take the match!

If you aren't taking advantage of your employer's 401(k) match, you're leaving free money on the table. You cannot afford to NOT take the match, so always be sure to contribute as much to a 401(k) or 403(b) that will qualify you for any company match.

5. Build an emergency fund.

Having 3-6 months of expenses in an emergency fund is an excellent goal for someone who has already created a baby emergency fund of \$1,000. If you have to tap into your emergency fund, make it a habit to refill the emergency fund as soon as possible!

6. Make a budget that works for you.

It will take a little time to work and rework your budget. In fact, I often find that it takes about 3 months of adjusting before you will get it right. Be patient. It is a challenge at first, but once you get it dialed in, it really helps!

7. Spend less than you make.

Sounds too simple, but it's true. It goes hand in hand with creating a budget and should be a no-brainer. Unfortunately, credit card debt is still a problem in America today, which tells me that we're living on borrowed money.

8. Eliminate debt with fury.

The borrower is slave to the lender. Do all that you can to pay down debt as fast as you can. Put every spare dollar towards debt and you'll soon realize the freedom that comes with being debt free.

9. Invest wisely.

Don't invest in something that you don't understand. And work to stay diversified with your investments (i.e. don't invest all your money in a single stock). If you are thinking of the investment as a get-rich-quick scheme, you should avoid it and think long-term instead.

10. Use insurance properly.

Whether you're looking for car insurance or finding rates for term life insurance, be sure that you don't compromise your coverage for the monthly premium. Also, it's always wise to do your research before signing the contract with an insurance company as there are often many caveats and fine print that can be overlooked if you aren't careful.

11. An investment should increase in value.

Unfortunately, I've heard people say that cars, clothes, and electronics are to be called investments. Unless you're buying a very rare car or a collectible, these items are simply expenses. A real investment will increase in value and provide a return for your investment.

12. Side income is achievable.

You can make money with your passion. With a little creativity and a lot of persistence, there's no reason why you shouldn't have opportunities to make as little as \$50 each month to \$500 or more by doing what you love on the side. (also check out these legit home based business ideas)

13. Keep impulsive behavior out of your purchases.

This can be a challenge, especially with the holidays coming soon.

One of the best pieces of advice that I've ever heard regarding impulse spending was to create a 30-day rule. Before you buy something on impulse, make it a point to wait 30 days before you buy. If you're still passionate about buying it, give it some serious thought. If you're over it, you've just successfully saved yourself some money!

14. Enjoy your money.

There's a careful balance that you need to keep as you become better at managing your personal finances. If you don't leave room for enjoyment, you'll soon become a slave to your budget and feel overwhelmed and trapped by it.

Make it a point to have a little fun money each month and reward yourself (within reason) for a job well done.

15. Generosity is contagious.

All our resources are from God and we can use our finances to spread the Gospel.

Outside of giving to your church or to missions, you can practice generosity in the smallest of areas. Sometimes small things like paying for a friend's coffee, buying lunch for someone, or buying some school supplies for a teacher in need can speak volumes!

Timeless Christian Resources

RoebertMinistries.co.za



ROEBERT
MINISTRIES

ADDICTION?

ELIEZER MINISTRIES CAN HELP

Contact us for ministry in discipleship, Christian healing and deliverance from addiction

EliezerMinistries.com | healing@eliezerministries.com

062 HEALING (4325464) | Pretoria, South Africa

Trevor & Violet

ON AIR
IMPACT

103FM

**CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITY
RADIO STATION**

LISTEN LIVE
IMPACTRADIO.CO.ZA

MIDWEEK SPECIAL Santorini in Ballito

FRONT ROW, GROUND FLOOR

SLEEPS 6, 2 BATHROOMS

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY

@R950 PER NIGHT

GET THURSDAY NIGHT FREE!

AKROTIRI19.WORDPRESS.COM

AKROTIRI19@GMAIL.COM

Igoda Mouth Resort

**AFFORDABLE SELF-CATERING FAMILY
HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION IN EAST LONDON**

IgodaMouthResort.co.za

+27 43 736 7017

FREE DAILY BIBLE VERSE

AliveToGod.com