



### **For those who have nothing to give at Christmas**

Have you done this before, going to your favourite store and asking for a Christmas freebie? I admit I have done that too!

Unfortunately, Christmas has been equated to freebies, promos, commercials and ads. The malls are out to woo buyers, make more sales and cash in. Businesses see Christmas as a time to reward loyal customers.

For others, it is simply a time to remember those less privileged. Don't get me wrong some of all these stuff are good.

But Christmas is more than a social work.

It is beyond shopping at cheaper rates or selling at discounted prices. It is beyond the sparkly decorated trees, fences and homes.

It is more than the carols and the yearly Joseph and Mary and the star story.

Christmas is not another Corporate Social Responsibility.

Christmas is more than wrapped gifts under trees or surprise gifts to random strangers. Christmas may not be the actual date of birth of Christ but according to history it is set aside to honour and mark the birth of Jesus Christ.

**Journal:** Write three words that come to mind when you think of Christmas?

**Bible Study:** 1 Kings 17:10-15, Luke 21:1-4, Matthew 2: 1-11



### **What is Christmas about?**

I read posts from my fellow writers about having a Christ-centred Christmas. I nod my head in affirmation. We will have a Christ-filled Christmas when we find and live out the true meaning of Christmas.

To be truly about Christmas, we need to appreciate the reason for it, Jesus.

Christmas is all about the gift of Christ to the world. It is about the gift of salvation. Having Jesus in your heart and anchored in your soul is the most important gift in the world. That is what Christmas is about.

When we grasp this, then everything we do becomes an expression of that love of Christ we have received. The love we have for Christ allows us to show love to others. That love we have received is not reserved only for the 25<sup>th</sup> day of December but for all year round and 24 hours of the day.

With that said, the Love of God in our hearts who we are as believers.

### **Christmas is also for those of us who have nothing to give**

We have made Christmas about giving items, money or food. It has become like a ritual. And when we have little money in our accounts we become panicky and anxious. You know why? Because we too want to be a part of the big Christmas fun affair.

What of the family struggling to eat a meal sitting at the back pew of church. They want to be a part of what the church is doing helping the local community.

Oh did I miss the single woman, who has no job, no shelter, not sure where her next meal would come from. She is in church not to receive hand-outs she wants to belong there. She wants to join in and give something.

Let's think about it for a moment...

Do we leave room for those who have nothing to give to be a part of our Christmas?

Do you see if Christmas is only about giving as we know it, many of us would be left out of the process? We will end up sitting only at the receiver's chair. The truth is many of us who have little want to give too.

In our Bible study we go to the Zarapheth Woman and the widow who gave her last mite as an offering. I see hope for us who have not enough.

One solid truth for you sitting behind the screen hoping to join in, Christmas is for you too. Christ came for you and you and me. It is not reserved for a special few.

We rarely make reference to these women during this season but they have powerful lessons to teach our hearts about giving.

## **FIVE TRUTHS FOR THOSE WHO THINK THEY HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE**

 **Giving should be done in faith.** If it is impressed upon your heart to cook, do your cooking in faith. Knowing God honours your every act of faith, cook with all your heart.

I imagine the widow who lived down the streets. She came to the synagogue that day. She heard Jesus deliver a heart moving sermon. When it was time to offer something, she dug deep into her pockets hoping that some miraculous coin would appear. Alas, she found two mites. She was glad That moment she stepped forward, many thoughts would have raced through her mind. She knew her pots were empty. She knows the pangs of hunger, yet those were not going to hold her back.

Her neighbours with fancy shoes and clothing stepping forward to cast their offering, yet she pressed forward through the pews. The priests knew her well. Her two mite means nothing compared to those whose gifts made clanging sounds. But the Lord was there waiting for her. He saw her heart. She tuned out every feeling of fear, of want, of disapproval and tuned in to answer the call deep within her soul. Luke 21:2

What lies have you allowed to hold you back? Are they those that says you are small or you have nothing or you will be hungry?

The widow didn't ever act in comparison. She cared less about what others gave. She gave what she had.

Would you tune out the lies of comparison today?

She did not know Jesus would notice. She wasn't expecting it! Guess what Jesus did. Every mite, bite size gift wrapped in love and faith, Jesus sees.

The Zarapheth widow gave according to the Word of God that came through the prophet. She believed and gave. It didn't stop there she was blessed by that act of faith and obedience.

✚ **Giving is an opportunity.** You see that hungry prophet walking down the dusty road, his feet covered up with dust. She looks up and sees a man of God in need. Perhaps all night for several weeks she had been praying for a divine meeting. God would come to her as a hungry tired and needy prophet.

That one act of giving to the prophet of God was the one in a life time opportunity she needed. Luke 4:25-26

✚ **Giving should be obedience.** Thank God the widow of Zarapheth seized that opportunity. Notice it was not in the size of her gift but it was in her obedience. She was willing not coerced into giving.

We all have something to offer. These women lived in very difficult era where widows were living in oppression, hard times, harsh rules and all. They proved to us that God has put something in our hands. You have something to offer. Don't going around sad and thinking you have nothing. God has giving you something.

Has God placed something in your heart for your community or family, or church?

Are you willing to step forward in obedience?

The widows we read about here were not waiting for the church board, or the pastors or the groups or their neighbours. They did not need anyone's stamp of

approval to give what they had. They knew the Word. They obeyed with all their heart. That is enough.

My two favourite scriptures on willingness 2 Corinthians 8: 11-12 and Philippians 2: 13

✚ **Giving is an act of worship and gratitude.** They were not the only ones that noticed the star that cool night. They saw it, but understood what it meant. They had angelic visitation. Their eyes were opened to see the rejoicing going on. They made the decision to travel along the course of the star. When they came to Jesus they came to worship. They came with gifts to worship.

When we begin to see giving as an act of worship it changes our attitude towards giving.

✚ **Giving is not about you.** Yes, giving is not about you but about Christ. The love of God in our hearts is not for us alone but for others.



**Journal:** What are the concepts and thoughts you have about giving?

Do they line up with God's Word or are they worldly?

**Prayer:** *Lord, give me a willing and obedient heart. As the shepherds searched and found you, Lord, let me find you. Let everything be about your love and your priceless gift of love. Help me to focus on you this season. I have learnt these truths about giving. Teach me to give with my whole heart in obedience to your Word in Jesus name.*