

The Songs of Christmas



The Binder Co. Devotionals December 2018

The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Welcome to The Binder Co.: a do-it-yourself devotional and journaling experience for women who desire to grow deeper in God's Word on a daily basis. All you need is a 3-ring binder and a printer to get started — for free!

ABOUT THE BINDER CO.

The Binder Co exists to help women dive deeper into their faith and connect with others through free monthly eBooks of devotionals written by women for women. Every aspect of The Binder Co. is run by volunteers. Once a month, we release a free ebook with daily devotionals, corresponding scriptures, and daily challenges to help put what we learn into action. These daily devotionals are free to read, download, and print anytime. You can use them for yourself, your small group, friend group, or church group!

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Access the free archives of every calendar at emilyfurda.com/thebinderco

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Binder Co. (originally called Her Binder Project) was started in 2014 by Morgan Harper Nichols as a way to challenge herself to dig deeper into God's Word and put her faith into action on a daily basis. She made a calendar one month that included weekly themes, Bible verses, and daily challenges. Even though she originally started writing and designing these for herself, she felt the Lord leading her to share it with others. So, she put it on Pinterest, and was unbelievable with more women studying along each month. You can learn more about Morgan at themhn.co

When I was 11 years old, my worship dance teacher gave all of the dancers a small hot pink booklet of devotionals for Christmas. That was my first devotional, and I fell in love with studying God's word and learning how to apply it to my life. I've rarely been without a daily devotional since then. When Morgan asked me to help with The Binder Co. in 2016, it was a dream come true to be able to write devotionals. This Ministry and the women who read every day captured my heart. The more I became involved as a writer, editor, and project manager, the more it became a part of me.

In 2018, Morgan asked me if she could give me The Binder Co. I was speechless, which rarely happens. It was not an easy decision for her or one made lightly by myself. My joy comes when I see women come alive as they study each month. I'm studying and learning along with you. Today, thousands of women are joining this project each month, and we are so grateful for each one of you!

-Emily Furda Director, Editor In Chief emilyfurda.com instagram.com/emilyfurda

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Ephesians 5:19-20 NIV

2

James 1:2-4

Listen to "Joy to the World" by Love & The Outcome.
youtu.be/FhBPm8QJyRg

3

Matthew 20:25-28

Listen to "I Wonder as I Wander" (remix) by This Hope.
youtu.be/iOKb4XG1FOI

4

Psalm 148

Listen to "The Holly and the Ivy" by Hawk Nelson.
youtu.be/ojfVg91pDww

5

Matthew 24:6-7

Listen to "Do You hear what I Hear?" By Cece Winans.
youtu.be/FE8-gUJAglS

6

John 1:29

Listen to "Away in a Manger" by Seventh Day Slumber.
youtu.be/TsSWINhKB0E

7

Isaiah 60:1-2

Listen to "In the Bleak Midwinter" by Sheila Walsh.
youtu.be/p0PzP6lccq8

8

Matthew 2:12-18

Listen to "Coventry Carol" by Eden's Bridge.
youtu.be/4QYcMpG9l6k

9

Luke 4:17-21

Listen to "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" by Chris Tomlin and Christy Nockels.
youtu.be/WWj9sDXIT0A

10

Micah 5

Listen to "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" by 7eventh Day Down.
youtu.be/04MLDUXrHM

11

2 Corinthians 5:21

Listen to "What Child is This" by Chris Tomlin feat. All Sons & Daughters.
youtu.be/6jroBAI3WW8

12

Psalm 68:3

Listen to "Joyful, Joyful" by Seth & Nirva.
youtu.be/SoOQ7r08nIA

13

Hebrews 12:1-3

Listen to "O Little Town of Bethlehem" by Rebecca St. James.
youtu.be/1dYGOgmbZ40

14

Luke 1:26-38

Listen to "Mary did You Know?" by Danny Gokey.
youtu.be/2zybbNvK25Y

15

John 3:16

Listen to "O Holy Night" by Kari Jobe.
youtu.be/0hP83Bd18RE

16

Psalm 121

Listen to "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" by Kutless.
youtu.be/gS3xx4Qj5ac

17

Isaiah 53

Listen to "Sweet Little Jesus Boy" by Natalie Grant.
youtu.be/mz-uxBYGDxU

18

Isaiah 26:3

Listen to "Silent Night" by Casting Crowns.
youtu.be/4AD9Bo9b36g

19

1 Peter 4:10

Listen to "Little Drummer Boy" by Mercy Me.
youtu.be/Qb2VLQhHpNU

20

Psalm 34:1-3

Listen to "Angels We have Heard on High" by Sarah Reeves.
youtu.be/FhuHgvOfQRY

21

Exodus 3:14

Listen to "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" by For King and Country.
youtu.be/bRaGbjW-9Nc

22

Luke 2:8-18

Listen to "How Great Our Joy" by Point of Grace.
youtu.be/SWa3XKuS92o

23

John 6:37-40

Listen to "O Come, All Ye Faithful" by Britt Nicole.
youtu.be/EfnWnacuBIY

24

Luke 2:8-20

Listen to "The First Noel" by David Crowder Band.
youtu.be/snJ7kWitFOM

25

Psalm 96

Listen to "Angels from the Realms of Glory" by Steven Curtis Chapman.
youtu.be/XCfFP9-tt3o

26

Ephesians 1:13-23

Listen to "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" by Tenth Ave North feat. Sara Reeves.
youtu.be/fUZZfMqQ0Y

27

1 John 5:11-13

Listen to "Mary's Little Boy Child" by Mandisa.
youtu.be/YZMJ7x35aHI

28

Habakkuk 3

Listen to "O Come O Come Emmanuel" by Rebecca St. James.
youtu.be/dCknM3X3YFA

29

Matthew 5:14-16

Listen to "Go Tell it on the Mountain" Morgan Harper Nichols.
youtu.be/XQWB24ypn88

30

Matthew 2:1-12

Listen to "We Three Kings" Tenth Avenue North feat. Britt Nicole.
youtu.be/rE_whUfj26E

31

Acts 1:8

Listen to "Children Go Where I Send Thee" Mandisa.
youtu.be/-1x52BzPFRI

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For more downloads visit: emilyfurda.com/thebinderco

When do you start listening to Christmas Carols? Are you the one who your friends tune out because you listen to them year-round? Are you the friend who pulls out her playlist and starts dancing at the stroke of midnight on November first, annoying the people around you? Maybe you hold out until a respectable date of December first. Perhaps, you're just not that enamored by Christmas music.

No matter when you start listening, or if you're not fond of Christmas music, it's hard to escape hearing those familiar Christmas tunes. Whether it's walking through a store, hearing your neighbor gleefully singing off key at the top of her lungs, or in a church service with a mesmerizing choir you're bound to hear at least a few Christmas carols. You may even find yourself humming along or caroling door to door with your friends.

Have you ever stopped to think about what those familiar words mean? Songs have also always been an important part of not just of Christmas, but of history as well. For centuries, songs have been a way of telling important stories to pass them from one generation to the next. Christmas carols do that well. Even our theme scripture this month tells us to sing and make music in our hearts.

This month we'll be learning about the Songs of Christmas. An amazing team of writers made this month possible. The songs are ones you know well and maybe a few that are unfamiliar. We'll be learning about what they mean and hopefully hearing the lyrics in a brand-new way. The songs we're learning about were written all throughout history, from centuries ago to the 1990's. They all keep the true story of Christmas alive from one generation to the next.

Each day will focus on a specific song. There is a link with each devotional to listen to a favorite version from one of the writers, or you can listen to your own favorite. Instead of having specific challenges each day, we want the songs to come alive in a personal way for you. So, you're encouraged to find creative ways to reflect on them and enjoy them. There are some ideas after each devotional, but don't limit yourself to just those. Be creative and enjoy yourself.

Most of all, enjoy the Songs of Christmas.

-Emily Furda, Director of The Binder Co. Devotionals

*speaking to one another
with psalms, hymns, and
songs from the Spirit. Sing
and make music from your
heart to the Lord, 20
always giving thanks to
God the Father for
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our Lord Jesus Christ.
Ephesians 5:19-20 NIV*

Saturday, December 1

Carol of the Bells/Sing We now of Christmas

Songwriters Carol of the Bells, Lyrics: Peter J. Willbousky, Music: Mykola Leontovych.

Sing We now of Christmas: Unknown, Traditional French Carol

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Ephesians 5:19-20

Years ago, bells were rung to signal important news. From the birth of a new royal king to the death of a beloved ruler, ringing bells had meaning. From church bells to sleigh bells, they're an unmistakable part of Christmas as well.

Bells ring out as a reminder of Christmas. They can also be a reminder of what Christmas is about. It's a chance to come in worship before the Lord. It's a time to encourage one another. When we sing about Christmas, we're not just singing about a date on the calendar. We're singing about Jesus. We're singing about His birth, life, and even His death and resurrection. We're singing encouragement to others and ourselves.

This month take the time to set aside your worries and fears and focus on Jesus and the message of hope in the Songs of Christmas.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Carol of the Bells/Sing We now of Christmas" by Barlow Girl, youtu.be/To1uM0LSc8g and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Sunday, December 2

Joy to the World

Songwriter: Isaac Watts

Devotional written by Diane Marie

Read James 1:2-4

Christmas is a time of great joy and celebration. We celebrate the birth of the One who brings us salvation! God became man so that we, though we are all sinners, can be reconciled with our Creator and have a relationship with Him lasting all of eternity. The Lord has come!

Yet, at times, Christmas can be anything but joyful. Looking around we see such sadness and devastation. Maybe we are having a difficult time financially, have suffered the loss of a loved one, or are just stressed out from all the pressure that comes with the holidays. Yet, as the song “Joy to the World” says, we must prepare Him room in our hearts. We must welcome Him into our lives, into the good, the bad, and the ugly. God wants us to take our trials to Him. As we lean into Him and persevere through our hardships, He will use those trials to mature us and make us more like Jesus. It may seem impossible, but in Christ, we can have that joy He brought into the world no matter what is going on around us.

God has given us the very best gift of all, salvation through Jesus, the little baby in the manger who grew up to die for us so that we might live. Receive your king!

Daily Challenge

Listen to “Joy to the World” by Love & The Outcome, youtu.be/FhBPm8QJyRg and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

Written by Diane Marie

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Monday, December 3

I Wonder as I Wander

Songwriter: John Jacob Niles

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Matthew 20:25-28

Have you ever wondered about all the crazy things that happened surrounding Jesus’s birth? His mother was a virgin. Because Caesar wanted to prove his prowess and expand his wealth, Joseph and a pregnant Mary had to travel to Bethlehem to pay taxes in person. While there, Jesus was born in a manger among animals. Then, angels announced His birth to shepherds. To top it all off wise, wealthy men traveled a long distance following a star so they could worship Him.

That sounds like a plot for a movie that would be rejected because it’s too outlandish. Yet, it’s true. Not only is it true, it was planned. Every single detail of Jesus’s birth was planned long before it happened. Today’s Carol, “I Wonder as I Wander” sums up the craziness of it all so well. Even a long wandering walk isn’t enough for us to sort out why it happened the way it did.

While don’t know why everything happened exactly why it did, we can learn a great deal from it. Maybe it’s an example for us all. Jesus could’ve commanded angels to make sure He was born in a palace, but He chose a lowly manger. Today’s scripture tells us Jesus came to serve others, not to hold His unmatched power over them. He calls us to have the same attitude of humility.

This Christmas season, instead of worrying about how to pay for the perfect present or sing a perfect solo in church, why not focus on serving? Serving can be as simple as holding a door for a stranger or stacking chairs after a meeting. It can also be giving a heartfelt gift to a friend or using your talents to the best of your abilities. It doesn’t have to be elaborate or perfect. It just has to come from a humble, servant like heart.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “I Wonder as I Wander” (remix) by This Hope, youtu.be/iOKb4XG1FOI and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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Tuesday, December 4

The Holly and the Ivy

Written by Cecil Sharp

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Psalm 148

At first listen, “The Holly has the Ivy” may sound like a song about botany. While it does teach us a little about what a holly plant looks like, it’s about so much more.

Every day we’re surrounded by things God has created, but how often do we take time to look at and think about what God has created? We can find reminders of who God is everywhere we look. The “Holly and the Ivy” is a good reminder of that.

When a Holly tree blooms, it has a white flower that can remind us of the purity of Christ. The white flower becomes a red berry that can remind us of the blood Jesus shed when He died on the cross. The shape of the leaves on the holly tree makes them sharp and prickly, reminding us of the crown of thorns Jesus wore as He was crucified.

While all of those are mentioned in the song, not much is said about ivy, yet ivy is in the title. Perhaps, it’s to remind us of our need to depend on Jesus to sustain us. In order for ivy to grow, it needs something to support it. It needs a trellis, wall, or even another plant to grow against and wrap itself around. Its survival depends on it clinging to something bigger than itself. It’s the same way with us. We need to cling tightly to Jesus who is infinitely bigger and stronger than we are.

The next time you look outside, let this song be a reminder to pause and look at nature. What can you see in a sunset that reflects who God is? When you see snow or sand, what does that remind you of? All of creation sings the praises of God. Their glorious songs are everywhere. All we have to do is listen.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “The Holly and the Ivy” by Hawk Nelson, youtu.be/ojfvG91pDww and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Wednesday, December 5

Do You Hear What I Hear?

Songwriters: Noel Regney and Gloria Shayne

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Matthew 24:6-7

The origin of “Do You Hear What I Hear?” may be surprising. It seems like a song that was written hundreds of years ago, but it wasn’t. It was written in the 1960’s when there was a serious threat of nuclear war. Noel Regney, one of the songwriters, had fought in World War II and was then living in a world on the brink of disaster.

That kind of world may seem pretty familiar to many of us. We may not be under the threat of nuclear war where we live, but some of us are. Daily, headlines in the news talk about war, famine, natural disasters, and a world filled with hate and sorrow. We see in today’s reading, Jesus said these things would happen, but it’s still scary and overwhelming at times.

Thankfully, He also gave us this promise in John 16:33

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” NIV

When the world feels like a dark and cold place, all it takes is one whisper to ignite the hope that comes from Jesus. As you listen to this song, let it remind you that something as small as the cold wind can be a reminder of the power of God who is full of goodness and light, even in the darkness of night.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “Do You hear what I Hear?” By Cece Winans youtu.be/FE8-gUjAgl8 and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

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Thursday, December 6

Away in a Manger

Songwriters: Lyrics: unknown, Music: J. E. Clark

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read John 1:29

The carol “Away in a Manger” reminds us of where Jesus was born. It paints a sweet picture of baby Jesus, but why was Jesus born in a manger away from anything remotely comfortable?

We may never know the full reason why Jesus was born in a manger, but the story is more fascinating than it seems at first glance. The Bible is full of symbolism, and the birth of Jesus is no exception.

Just outside the city Bethlehem was Migdal Eder, which means Tower of the Flock. The flock it refers to is the flock of sheep raised there. They weren’t sheep raised for their wool to make cozy mittens. At that time, the only way to atone for sin was by offering a sacrifice. These particular lambs were likely used for Passover sacrifice.

The manger Christ was born in may have been a lambing cave. Jesus, the Lamb of God born to take away the sins of the world once and for all, was born in the same place where lambs, who were sacrificed for sin, were born. The hay He laid upon was the same hay grown for the Passover lambs. The shepherds who saw Him first were the shepherds who knew what it was like to raise a perfect lamb for the sole purpose of death for others’ sins.

Jesus was born in a place where life was born and carefully nurtured for the purpose of death, which was exactly why Jesus was born. His birth was a glimpse of what was to come.

Is there something in your life that seems to make no sense? Perhaps, God is at work and sees a much bigger picture. The next time you think you’re far away from where you’re supposed to be, ask God to show you what is special about this place in your life. It may be more significant than you think.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “Away in a Manger” by Seventh Day Slumber, youtu.be/TsSWjNhbK0E and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

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Friday, December 7

In the Bleak Midwinter

Songwriters: Christina Rossetti and Gustav Holst

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Isaiah 60:1-2

When our circumstances look bleak, it can feel as if we’re walking around in a cold, harsh, frozen land. Sometimes it feels as if nothing can break through thaw the cold place where we find ourselves. Today’s carol, “In the Bleak Midwinter” reminds us there is someone who can break through even the coldest and harshest of circumstances.

Winter is a time when sunlight is scarce. Darkness comes early. Jesus came to bring light to the winter of our souls. His love can melt even the coldest of hearts. Christmas is during the winter in the Northern Hemisphere. Perhaps, it serves as a reminder that even when things look bleak and cold, God’s promises will be fulfilled.

God does ask one thing of us. Even when we feel poor in spirit and think we have nothing left to give, we do have a precious gift we can bring to Jesus. He asks for our hearts. We can make the choice to keep our hearts guarded by ice as hard as a diamond or give it to Him and allow Jesus to bring His healing warmth and light.

Remember, even the bleakest of winters are no match for the Light of the World.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “In the Bleak Midwinter” by Sheila Walsh, youtu.be/p0PzP6Iccq8 and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Saturday, December 8

Coventry Carol

Songwriters: Lyrics: Robert Croo, Music: Unknown

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Matthew 2:12-18

“Coventry Carol” is a haunting lullaby telling a painful part surrounding of Jesus’s birth.

When king Herod heard about the birth of a new king from the Magi, he was both terrified and enraged. He didn’t know who this baby was, but he didn’t want anyone to usurp his throne. In a dream, the Magi were warned to not tell Herod where Jesus was, so when they left, they took a different route home, avoiding Herod. When Herod realized he was outwitted, he was even more enraged. Based on the timeframe of when the Magi said the star they followed appeared, Herod knew this baby king was likely 2 years of age or younger.

Joseph was warned by an angel in to flee with Mary and baby Jesus, but that didn’t stop something horrific from happening. Since Herod didn’t know which child was the king the Magi were searching for, every male child age two and under was killed.

The second verse of “Coventry Carol” is both haunting and beautiful.

“O sisters, too, how may we do, For to preserve this day; This poor Youngling for whom we sing,
By, by, lully, lullay.”

We need each other. If we’ve accepted Jesus as our Savior, then we’re sisters in Christ. This song tells of women who were grieving, but they grieved together. Today, we have the opportunity to bring God’s comfort others in their pain.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV

While we often think about peace and joy during the holidays season, many people are hurting. Do you know someone who is hurting this holiday season? Reach out to her. Call her, send a text, or invite her for coffee. Let her know you’re not there to spread holiday cheer but to listen to her or cry with her. If you’re the one who is hurting, ask God to show you a sister with whom you can share your pain. Remember, grief doesn’t have an expiration date. Holidays can often be a reminder of who or what we’ve lost.

God is the God of all comfort. You have permission to cry. You have permission to hurt. You have permission to be angry. When you let those feelings out, then God can comfort you.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “Coventry Carol” by Eden’s Bridge, youtu.be/4QYcMpG9l6k and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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What stood out to you the most this week?

Journal, draw, write a poem, or write a prayer about it below.

The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Sunday, December 9

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Songwriter: Charles Wesley

Devotional written by Heather Golden Horton

Read Luke 4:17-21

Much of the world eagerly awaited the one who was said to bring liberty and help to the poor and oppressed. Their hearts continued to cry out something similar to the song “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” even after He had arrived. Jesus was the very embodiment of the things that the prophet Isaiah foretold, yet still widely unrecognized by eyes that anticipated deliverance to be brought by a kingly warrior rather than this Prince of Peace born in a stable.

Even today, in the moments when our hearts fall captive to anxious thoughts or we find ourselves chained to familiar disobedient choices, we often fail to recognize that Jesus came to speak freedom over that chaos. Jesus came to transform us, and to allow us to choose life, light, and peace. When tense times become a constant lifestyle, we must choose to be conscious that our Savior, Jesus, came to loosen the chains of our bondage if we choose to trust Him and lift our gaze from the mess that we have created.

Perhaps the greatest celebration of Christ this Christmas, is walking boldly in the freedom He came to bring. We can choose today to allow His peace to penetrate our hearts. We can walk away from toxic choices that have gripped us tightly and experience in a fresh way the liberty Jesus came to provide. We can remind ourselves of all that Jesus came to give us and the promise of all that awaits us because He came. In this season of candlelight and carols, we can quietly breathe in His rest and let His Spirit bring a turning of our hearts back to the truth of Jesus. Jesus has come, and we have no need to wait to experience deliverance and eternal liberty.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” by Chris Tomlin and Christy Nockels, youtu.be/WWj9sDXIT0A and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

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Monday, December 10

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Songwriters: Lyrics: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow,

Music: John Baptiste Calkin

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Micah 5

Even in the middle of joyous Christmas celebrations, sometimes, the weight of the evil around us feels heavy. Perhaps that’s why so many people like Christmas, provides an escape, even if for just a day. Sometimes, it feels as if the joyous music of Christmas is almost mocking us. Peace on earth and goodwill towards other people seem far away.

“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” was written based on Micah 5:5, part of today’s reading:

“And he will be our peace when the Assyrians invade our land and march through our fortresses. We will raise against them seven shepherds, even eight commanders,” NIV

Assyria was an enemy of the nation Israel. It looked as if Israel would be destroyed. We often feel that way when we look at the world around us. It seems as if the world is falling apart and we wonder if God really cares.

As you read the whole chapter of Micah 5, you see the full promise God made to Israel. The “he” who is referred to in verse 5, is Jesus. It’s easy to think of Jesus as a tiny, powerless baby at Christmastime, but He’s so much more. He is all powerful.

Yes, evil does surround us, but so does the presence of Jesus. God promised a baby boy would be born in Bethlehem. If God fulfilled that part of the prophesy, won’t he fulfill it all? One day evil will be banished once and for all, but until then let the bells you here at Christmastime and throughout the year be a reminder that the presence of God is with you now.

Because a tiny baby was born, we can have peace today and hope for the future that will not disappoint us.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” by 7eventh Day Down, youtu.be/04MLDUXrHM and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda
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Tuesday, December 11

What Child Is This

Songwriter: William Chatterton Dix

Devotional written by Danielle Nicole

Read 2 Corinthians 5:21

“What child is this who laid to rest on Mary’s lap is sleeping?” Who is this child that has come to earth, and how has He changed our lives?

Christ is unlike anyone else who has ever walked this earth. He is the only one who can forgive our sins, love us in the way He does, and make a way for us to be with Him one day in heaven.

There has never been another person on this earth worth our complete praise. No one else has ever had the ability to forgive us like He can. He is the only one who has walked this earth completely sinless. Through Him we have eternal life. It’s because of His perfect life here on earth that we can have the close relationship with Jesus that we have.

He is different from anyone else. There’s no way we can replace Him. There’s no other way for us to get into heaven, or to even find someone who could change our lives in such a dramatic way as He has.

So, when you sing or listen to the lyrics of “What Child Is This”, don’t lose the meaning of the song. Remember who Christ really is and how your life different because of Him.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “What Child is This” by Chris Tomlin feat. All Sons & Daughters, youtu.be/GjroBA13WW8 and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Wednesday, December 12

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

Songwriters: Lyrics: Henry van Dyke, Music: Ludwig van Beethoven

Devotional written by Diane Marie

Read Psalm 68:3

Joy! Even just saying the word out loud seems to put a little lift in your spirits. (Try it!) It's not a word we often hear in secular society outside of the holidays, but for Christians it should be one word that defines our very lives.

We are called to be not just happy, but joyful! A woman who is righteous before God should always have joy in her heart. You might be thinking, I'm far from righteous, but remember, when we accept Jesus, He cleanses us from our sin and His righteousness becomes our own. That's certainly something to be joyful about!

Christ truly is the God of glory and the Lord of love. When we open our hearts to Him, He takes away our sin, our sadness, and our doubt. Our hearts are filled with the light of Christ. How can we not sing "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" to Him?

Look around you; all of creation speaks of his glory. He made it all, and He made you. No matter who you are, what you've done, and even what you are going to do, He loves you! The God of the universe loves YOU! Take a minute to ponder all of this, and then celebrate this beautiful season with a joyful, joyful heart!

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Joyful, Joyful" by Seth & Nirva, youtu.be/SoOQ7r08nJA and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Diane Marie

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Thursday, December 13

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Songwriters: Rector Phillips Brooks and Lewis Redner

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Hebrews 12:1-3

In a deep dreamless sleep, that's how the song "O Little Town of Bethlehem" describes the people in Bethlehem. They're completely unaware of what is silently going on all around them. If they just looked up, they would see the brilliance of God's glory shining. Instead, they're asleep, missing a life changing miracle.

How often are we like that? We walk around as if we're asleep. We allow our hopes and dreams to die because our world feels too dark and heavy. Out of apathy or sheer exhaustion, we forget to look up. The thought of looking for hope and not finding any seems too much to bear. Lifting our heads up seems like pointless work.

What if it's a not pointless? What if there is real hope and we're missing it because we choose not to fix our gaze on the one who came and lived among us to bring hope into our lives?

When we turn our focus to Jesus, it doesn't take away our problems, but it changes us. When we focus on Jesus and His love for us, fears are silenced, doubts fade away, broken hearts are mended, and hope is restored.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "O Little Town of Bethlehem" by Rebecca St. James, youtu.be/IdYGOgmbZ40 and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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Friday, December 14

Mary Did You Know?

Songwriters: Lyrics: Mark Lowry Music: Buddy Greene

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Luke 1:26-38

When we say yes to something God asks to do, rarely do we know every step along the way. Often, even the end result is different than what we expected. "Mary did You Know?" reminds us that's true for all of us.

We don't know how much Mary knew about the life of Jesus. In Luke 1, we see Mary was told a few things about Jesus, but we don't know if she knew more. Her response to just a brief description of who Jesus would be was:

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her." Like 1:38 NIV

How many of us are willing to say that? Are we willing to not know the details before we commit to something that seems beyond our understanding? Even if we do say yes, we often question if God knows what He's doing if things become difficult.

Jesus traveled and ministered to many people, but shortly after His birth, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus had to flee for His safety. Jesus walked on water, but He often had to slip away into the crowds to avoid being stoned to death. Jesus even raised the dead, but He was put to death.

Mary said yes, and the baby boy she gave birth to was raised back to life three days after He was killed. He was, and is, the Savior for everyone, including her.

While we don't always know what will happen when we choose to say yes to what God asks us to do, we can be sure it will always be different than what we imagine. It may have difficult moments, but it will also be better than our wildest dreams.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Mary did You Know?" by Danny Gokey, youtu.be/2zybbNvK25Y and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Saturday, December 15

O Holy Night

Songwriters: Lyrics: Placide Cappeau de Roquemaure,

Music: Adolphe Charles Adams

Devotional written by Danielle Nicole

Read John 3:16

The night Christ was born truly changed everything. It gave the world a reason to rejoice. After waiting for the Lord to come for so long, He was finally here. In the song “O Holy Night” we declare how Jesus’s birth brought a new hope to our sinful world.

While Christ was on earth, He taught us how to love others and about His peace. He is the very reason we can live in the freedom we do today. This song should be a reminder to us of how this night changed our lives forever. God loved us so much He sent His only son to earth to save us. He broke our chains to sin by giving His life for us.

This is the truth that we can always hold to no matter what season we are walking through in our lives. It doesn’t just have to be Christmas for us to be thankful to God for sending Jesus to earth. While we may only sing and listen to this Christmas carol for one part of the year, we can carry the meaning into every season of our lives.

Daily Challenge

Listen to “O Holy Night” by Kari Jobe, youtu.be/0hP83Bd18RE and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today’s song means to you.

Written by Danielle Nicole

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What stood out to you the most this week?

Journal, draw, write a poem, or write a prayer about it below.

The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Sunday, December 16

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Songwriters: Lyrics: Edmund Hamilton Sears

Music: Richard Storrs Willis

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Psalm 121

Some days, taking one more breath can feel overwhelming. It's as if life is as dark as midnight. Other times, it's not that life feels so overwhelming. It just feels monotonous. The never changing circumstances hang over us like nighttime.

On a cold, dark night the last thing shepherds likely expected to see was angels filling the sky proclaiming the birth of Jesus. Today's carol, "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" talks about how the angels came to earth to proclaim the message of Jesus's birth.

Think about that for a minute. God didn't make the shepherds go somewhere special to hear His message for them. They didn't have to go to the temple for a service or even sit and recite a perfect prayer. He sent the angels to them.

Sometimes, we think we need to do something special to hear from God. We look for Him by listening to a certain speaker at a conference or by reading a specific book. Those things can nourish our souls, but they're not the only ways God speaks to us.

We don't need to add one more thing to our already overwhelmed lives to be refreshed. We just need to sit in God's presence and rest. We can read our Bibles, put on some worship music, or even sit in silence and asking God to speak to us. The same God who sent angels to proclaim Jesus's birth, wants to speak to us today.

Just as the angels came to the shepherds, God comes to you. His love surrounds you every minute of every day. When it feels as if you're living in the dark of midnight, look up, and let your Heavenly Father calm your worried heart and renew your weary spirit.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" by Kutless, youtu.be/gS3xx4Oj5ac and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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Monday, December 17

Sweet Little Jesus Boy

Songwriter: Robert MacGimsey

Devotional written by Christine Perry

Read Isaiah 53

In a world of selfies, self-love, and the pursuit of the happiness, this song can cause us to reconsider our intentions and how we live.

"Sweet Little Jesus Boy we didn't know who you were." Jesus came in a way that wasn't a recognizable entrance for a King. He didn't summon servants, demand a red carpet, or arrive in style. He came humbly and lived as a servant.

Have you heard of pastors not telling strangers they are pastors because many people have preconceived notions about who they are? When Jesus came to earth, He knew many people had preconceived notions about the Messiah's coming. Yet, He still came in such a normal, human, and relatable way. It's so counter-cultural to not announce who we are and what we do. It's counter-self to choose a backseat at the holiday dinner table knowing we might have amazing things to share. But, I wonder how sweet it would be to God's heart if we decided to continually serve others through putting ourselves and even the things we might want to talk about second to someone else.

This holiday season let's make our goal to serve first and choose second. As the famous, but unattributed, quote says, "Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words."

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Sweet Little Jesus Boy" by Natalie Grant, youtu.be/mz-uxBYGDxU and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Christine Perry

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Tuesday, December 18

Silent Night

Songwriters: Joseph Mohr and Franz Xaver Gruber

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Isaiah 26:3

Sometimes, all we can hear is noise, especially in our own hearts and minds. Often, we lay down to sleep at night and we start off thinking about how warm the blankets feels only to end up remembering everything from the cat clawing our favorite dress, creating a long snag, and the chewing gum we stepped in but forgot to clean off our favorite pair of shoes. Everything from small worries like those to big ones like how bills will be paid and our relationships race through our minds.

In those noisy, mind racing moments it often seems as if God is silent. It feels like one long, noisy, yet silent night. In the moments, when we can't easily hear God, we must look for God.

A baby born in a manger wasn't exactly what many people thought of when they pictured the coming of the Messiah. A king would be born in a palace. The announcement would be made with loud fanfare and great celebration. There was no fanfare from trumpets, but there were angels singing in the sky. There was no giant celebration to see, but a brilliant star lit up the sky. There was no official proclamation to important dignitaries, but humble shepherds bowed and worshipped the Lord at His birth.

God often shows up in ways we don't imagine. When we make it a habit to pause and look for Him in every situation, we'll find our hearts and minds quiet and become still. When we keep our focus on God and worship Him, He promises us peace and strength. We can lay down at night and truly sleep in heavenly peace.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Silent Night" by Casting Crowns.

youtu.be/4AD9Bo9b36g and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Wednesday, December 19

Little Drummer Boy

Songwriters: Lyrics: Katherine K. Davis and Henry Onorati,

Music: Harry Simeone

Devotional written by Christine Perry

Read 1 Peter 4:10

Have you ever felt insignificant? As if your gifts and abilities weren't enough? Have you ever not tried because your attempt would be so minuscule?

If we are being honest, we have all been there at one time or another, but, the amazing thing is that when we give God the little things that we have He can use it. In fact, He can also multiply it.

Look at the boy who had the five loaves and two fish. God multiplied it to feed five thousand! (Matthew 14:13-21)

Do you have the gift of writing? God could use it to mend hearts. Do you have the gift of music? God could use it to encourage people whose hope has faded. Do you have the ability to make crafts? God could use that to be reminders for people that God's love never runs out. Your gift may seem minuscule to you, but to a God who breathe the stars into place can use your gifts and talents to further his kingdom in ways you never thought possible.

So, whatever your "drum" may be, allow God to use it just like the boy in "Little Drummer Boy". It will bring joy to His heart seeing you use what He's given to you. So, this Christmas season, use the gifts God's given you to bless Him and bless others.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Little Drummer Boy" by Mercy Me, youtu.be/Qb2VLOhHpNU and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Christine Perry

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Thursday, December 20

Angels We Have Heard on High

Songwriter: Unknown

Devotional written by Danielle Nicole

Read Psalm 34:1-3

It's not always easy to praise God in the difficult seasons, but when we take a moment to see all He has done, it may become a little easier. This time of year is a good reminder to us of all God is. We are reminded of how we are so loved by Him that He sent Jesus to save us and how even in the rough times, He knows our hearts and our pain. These are pretty valid reasons to praise Him, even here.

Though maybe this holiday season things aren't as joyous as you wish, you can still find the ability to praise Him. Even the angels and shepherds were praising His name when Christ was born. You don't need to be in the best season to lift your praises to our King.

Allow yourself to look away from your problems in this time and look around for all the places He is displaying His glory. Take time during this season to praise Him for all He has done and all He is going to do.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Angels We have Heard on High" by Sarah Reeves, <https://youtu.be/FhuHgvOfQRY> and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written Danielle Nicole

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Friday, December 21

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Songwriters: Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, and

Frederick Mendelssohn. Adapted by William H. Cummings

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Exodus 3:14

What do you need right now? Is it peace, joy, hope, someone to rescue you, or something else? Whatever you need right now, Jesus says He is "I Am."

Today's reading tells us "God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'" NIV

What does "I Am" mean? When you carefully listen to the lyrics of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," you get a glimpse of who Jesus is. He says:

I am Peace.

I am Mercy.

I am Reconciliation between you and God.

I am Emmanuel, God with you.

I am Light.

I am Life.

I am Salvation.

I am Healing

I am whatever you need.

Jesus says to you: "I Am." Stop trying to fix things on your own. Let Him be whatever it is you need. It's the reason the angels sang of His glory. It's why He was born.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" by For King and Country, youtu.be/bRaGbjW-9Nc and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Saturday, December 22

How Great Our Joy

Songwriter: Theodore Baker

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Luke 2:8-18

Sometimes it can be hard to let go and celebrate. We're afraid to celebrate because we're afraid to lose the joy we have, or we're afraid of what others may think of us.

When the shepherds were spending another cold night outside, angels suddenly appeared. Once they understood what they were told they couldn't contain their joy! They ran to meet the baby boy and share the good news with others. What if they hadn't? What if they didn't believe the crazy scene that just unfolded? It was impossible to ignore that many angels filling the night sky, but they had to make a choice to listen to their bizarre message. Were they so overcome with joy that they ran immediately, or was there at least one who, in between gasping for air as he ran, wondered if this was all a dream and they would forever be known as the Bethlehem shepherds who pretended to see things in the sky?

They followed the angels' instructions, and they were rewarded by being the first ones to see newborn baby Jesus. Then they went off, with their uncontainable joy, and told others Jesus had come. Even then, it probably sounded crazy to some people. They were saying Jesus was born in their manger and angels told them. Nothing like that had ever happened before. Yet, their joy in what God had done was so intense they couldn't contain themselves. This was something everyone needed to know.

Don't be afraid to share your joy. Joy is a gift from God. Their joy wasn't based on other people's opinions. It was based in knowing who Jesus was. You have the same chance today to know who Jesus is, and when you know who Jesus is, your joy will be secure and unshakable, even when you share it with skeptics. The more you worship Him and get to know Him, the greater your joy will be. You won't be able to contain it. Some days it may be an uncontrollable smile while you're waiting in line at a store. Other times, it may be quiet reassurance and strength.

Nehemiah 8:10 tells us: the joy of the Lord is your strength. NIV

God's joy is your strength, so don't be afraid to let go and celebrate.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "How Great Our Joy" by Point of Grace, youtu.be/SWa3XKuS92o and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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What stood out to you the most this week?

Journal, draw, write a poem, or write a prayer about it below.

The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Sunday, December 23

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Songwriter: John Francis Wade

Devotional written by Heather Golden Horton

Read John 6:37-40

The beauty of the Christmas season is wrapped up in the story of Jesus and His mission. The message did not stop at Christ's manger birth. The essence of the story of Jesus is the clear invitation from God to come. Come, be part of His plan. All are invited to come and join in the adoration and worship of Jesus, bringer of forever life. This open invitation echoes to come to Christ with guaranteed acceptance, for those who would choose to embrace this Jesus through faith.

The call to come to Jesus still wafts through cityscapes, tiny homes, workplaces, and down church aisles today. The urging to come join the celebration is bigger than any single moment and extends far beyond Christmastime. People worldwide are still being called to come experience the gift that is Jesus and His promise to never send them away. An invitation of this magnitude from a mighty God inspires outrageous, joyful worship from grateful hearts coming to Jesus.

This Christmas, we each will be called anew to come and adore our Saviour. As we turn our hearts to worship Him, will our hearts fully focus our praise on the beautiful One who came especially to bring us life and reconciliation? As we hear the familiar carol "O Come All Ye Faithful" play, will we join the angels in heaven who sang of His birth as we robustly sing with joy of His beauty and power? Will we hear the urging to bow our hearts before this Son of God, who changed our story into a story of eternal hope and life?

We are being invited today. What will we do with His invitation?

Daily Challenge

Listen to "O Come, All Ye Faithful" by Britt Nicole, youtu.be/EfnWnacuBiY and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Heather Golden Horton

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Monday, December 24

The First Noel

Songwriter: Unknown

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Luke 2:8-20

One of the things we learn when we read about the birth of Jesus is everyone is welcome. "The First Noel" reminds us poor shepherds, who probably smelled like sheep after being in the field all night, were the first to hear the angels' announcement of Jesus's birth. They worshipped Jesus with what they had, a humble manger to keep Him warm and hearts filled with adoration.

At the same time, wealthy Wise Men traveled a great distance to worship Jesus. They were welcomed just the same. Their expensive gifts were part of their worship. They gave what they had to honor the newborn King.

Jesus accepts our pure worship no matter how we express it. He honors the donation to a food pantry given in love just as much as He does the humble prayer of thanks said over a meal provided by someone else.

Tonight, as you think about Jesus's birth and what it must've been like that night, remember when Jesus was born, it wasn't in His own home or even His own town. Mary and Joseph accepted the gifts of warm straw just as readily as they did gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Starting with His first breath on earth, Jesus accepted the precious heartfelt gifts of others. Later, Jesus would give His life for the salvation of everyone. Some of those same shepherds who were at His birth were likely still alive when Jesus died.

Don't be afraid to give, and don't be afraid to receive. Most of all, worship with all your heart. Jesus accepts your pure worship and gives you Himself.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "The First Noel" by David Crowder Band, youtu.be/snI7kWitFOM and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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Tuesday, December 25

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Songwriter: James Montgomery

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Psalm 96

Today we celebrate the day people waited thousands of years to see: the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ! Today's carol, "Angels from the Realms of Glory, isn't just an account of what happened at Jesus's birth. It's a call to worship. It tells us about the worship that happened at his birth and continues today.

We worship Jesus because of His great mercy. We worship Him for His forgiveness of our sins. We worship Him for His mighty power. It's not just us who worship Him, all of creation worships Jesus. Even the trees sing for joy in their own way.

Today, whether you find yourself surrounded by family or friends or you find yourself alone, make time to worship Jesus. He sees you. He knows what's weighing on your heart. He knows what you're worried about and what makes you smile. He came to this earth for you. Let Jesus fill your heart with His love and joy as you worship Him. He was born because He loves you.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Angels from the Realms of Glory" by Steven Curtis Chapman, youtu.be/XCfFP9-tt3o and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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Merry Christmas
From The Binder Co. Devotionals

The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Wednesday, December 26

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

Songwriter Unknown

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Ephesians 1:13-23

It's easy to look around us and feel overwhelmed. Sometimes it feels as if evil is winning and Satan's power is too strong to overcome. "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" is a reminder of the power we have in Jesus.

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is alive in you, if you've made Jesus your Savior and Lord. At Christmastime we often think of Jesus as a tiny baby. He did come as a tiny baby, but He is an all-powerful warrior, stronger than anything, including Satan's power.

Even when we feel powerless, we're not because Jesus lives in us. On the darkest days, his power is the hope we cling to that brings us comfort when we're scared and joy when we're broken.

Lay down your worries in exchange for His power and find rest in Him.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" by Tenth Ave North feat. Sara Reeves youtu.be/fUZZfafMQ0Y and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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Thursday, December 27

Mary's Little Boy Child

Songwriter: Jester Hairston

Devotional by Emily Furda

Read 1 John 5:11-13

When we think about Christmas, it's easy to focus on a tiny newborn baby. Our focus is fixed on stories of angels, shepherds, and Mary giving birth to a baby boy in a manger. We often forget the tiny baby came to give us eternal life.

The birth of Jesus was just the beginning, and the song "Mary's Little Boy Child" is a reminder for us about the purpose behind His birth. Jesus came to this world so that anyone who accepted Him as her Savior and Lord could have eternal life. Christmas Day isn't just about the birth of Jesus. It's also about the sacrifice He made. He chose to be born as a baby and live in this dark world, so we could have eternal life.

Think about that for a moment. Who would choose to be born in a manger? Who would choose to leave the perfection of heaven and live in a broken world? Who would choose to be born into a physical body that experienced pain knowing He would die by crucifixion, a humiliating and torturous death?

Jesus chose that life. Jesus chose to forsake everything in heaven for you. He chose to be born so He could die and rise from the dead, so everyone could have eternal life, including you.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Mary's Little Boy Child" by Mandisa, youtu.be/YZMJ7x35aHI and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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Friday, December 28

O Come O Come Emmanuel

Songwriter: Unknown

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Habakkuk 3

What do you do when the financial strain never seems to end? What do you do when all you seem to do is argue with your family? What do you do when you pray for healing, but it never comes? Those are the times when we most want to give up and have a tendency to stop clinging God, but those are the times we need to trust and hope in God more than ever.

Habakkuk 1 is a prayer and a declaration of faith. He starts by remembering all the things God has done in the past and asks God to do them again. Then, he makes a bold proclamation of just how much he trusts God. He's saying no matter how bleak things look, he will still worship God. He knows his hope in God is not in vain.

Emmanuel means "God with us", and it's one of the names Jesus is called in Matthew 1:23. "O Come O Come Emmanuel" is a prayer asking God to come and rescue us. It's also a declaration, a reminder of God's promise to be with us. He shall come to us no matter how horrific our circumstances. Just like Habakkuk's bold declaration, it also reminds us to rejoice as we wait for God to move in our lives.

If God can fulfill the promise of Jesus being born, isn't he capable of fulfilling every promise He makes to us? Knowing His promises will always come to pass is the hope we need to keep trusting Him. He is trustworthy.

Emmanuel shall come to you.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "O Come O Come Emmanuel" by Rebecca St. James, youtu.be/dCknM3X3YFA and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Saturday, December 29

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Songwriter: African-American Spiritual, compiled by John Wesley Work, Jr.

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Matthew 5:14-16

Have you ever had something so exciting and so important to share that you couldn't contain yourself? Maybe you were so overcome with emotion you couldn't even speak, but the joy on your face told everyone around you something amazing happened.

When we have Jesus in our hearts, it shows. There's something different about the way we go about our days. We have hope, peace, and joy even when it doesn't make sense. Others notice there is something different, even if they can't exactly tell what it is. It's something so precious and so amazing that we can't keep it to ourselves. Sometimes we will tell people what this "something different" is. Other times, it's simply by living out what we've learned as we continue to seek Jesus every day.

Today's carol tells us to "Go tell it on the Mountain." When something is on a mountain, it can be seen from far away. Today's scripture reminds us of that. It's impossible to hide something on top of a mountain.

When you see Christmas lights, ones up high on rooftops or tall trees stand out against the dark night sky. The light inside you from Jesus stands out against the darkness in this world. So, go shine. Share His light for all to see.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Go Tell it on the Mountain" Morgan Harper Nichols, youtu.be/XQWB24ypn88 and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

Written by Emily Furda

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What stood out to you the most this week?

Journal, draw, write a poem, or write a prayer about it below.

The Binder Co Devotionals December 2018: The Songs of Christmas

Sunday, December 30

We Three Kings

Songwriter: John Henry Hopkins Jr.

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Matthew 2:1-12

Not much is known about the magi, or wise men, who came to worship Jesus. Their only description is they were wise men who traveled from the east. They knew the star they saw meant a king was born. Because they listened when God spoke to them in a way they would understand, they were willing to travel a great distance sacrificing time and a great deal of money for the gifts they gave Jesus. To others around them, it may have seemed a bit crazy.

Sometimes, you know God is speaking to us. We can't really explain it. It's just a deep knowing in our spirit, but it may seem odd. He may be asking us to do something different than we planned. We may have what seems like the perfect job, but we know God is telling us to switch companies, taking a job with a lower salary. Maybe our friends are leaving for college, but we know God is telling us to stay in our hometown and take classes online or work full time.

When the wise men arrived in Israel, they made one, understandable, assumption. They assumed a king would be born in a palace. So, they went straight to Herod's palace. The exact opposite of where Jesus was. Thankfully, the star was still there. God was still guiding them. When they found the baby Jesus, the worshipped Him.

Even when we decide to follow God's plan, we can still get sidetracked just like they did. We follow it almost to the end, then take over as if we know better than God. We look for something obvious. Often, God isn't leading us to the most obvious of places. The good news is, even when we go off track, He's there to lead us back to His path for our lives.

When the wise men followed God's plan, they came face to face with someone much more important than an earthly king. They saw God Himself in human flesh. When we choose to follow God's plan, we too will always find something better than we imagined.

Daily Challenge

Listen to "We Three Kings" Tenth Avenue North feat. Britt Nicole, youtu.be/rE_whUfj26E and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

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Monday, December 31

Children Go Where I Send Thee

Songwriter: African-American Spiritual

Devotional written by Emily Furda

Read Acts 1:8

As we near the end of this Christmas season and reflect on the birth of Jesus, we need to remember it's not the end of the story. Jesus's birth is just the beginning of His miracle filled life on earth.

For approximately 33 years Jesus walked this earth. He showed love to those who others thought were unlovable. He taught the masses about the ways of God. He performed more miracles than can be counted, including His own resurrection from the dead.

The last thing Jesus said to His disciples before He ascended to heaven was:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8 NIV

The story didn't end when He physically left the earth. When we accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit lives in us. Just as Jesus told His disciples to be His witnesses on earth, He tells us the same thing. We are to be His witnesses on earth.

For some being His witness may include traveling to a foreign country, but for most of us, it's in what we do every day. The kindness and love we show at Christmastime is the same kindness and love we can show every day to others. Take time to hold the door for a stranger. Encourage a friend who seem sad. Give a gift to someone without a special reason. When we share the love of Jesus with others, we're sharing Him with them. The gift He gave us of His presence is one we can give others.

How we share who Jesus will be as unique as we are, but that's exactly why Jesus needs us all to be His witnesses.

Today he says to us: "Children, Go Where I Send Thee".

Daily Challenge

Listen to "Children Go Where I Send Thee" Mandisa, youtu.be/-Jx52BzPFR1 and draw, dance, write a prayer, write the song in your own words, write a poem, make a craft, or something personal about what today's song means to you.

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What stood out to you the most this month?

Journal, draw, write a poem, or write a prayer about it below.