

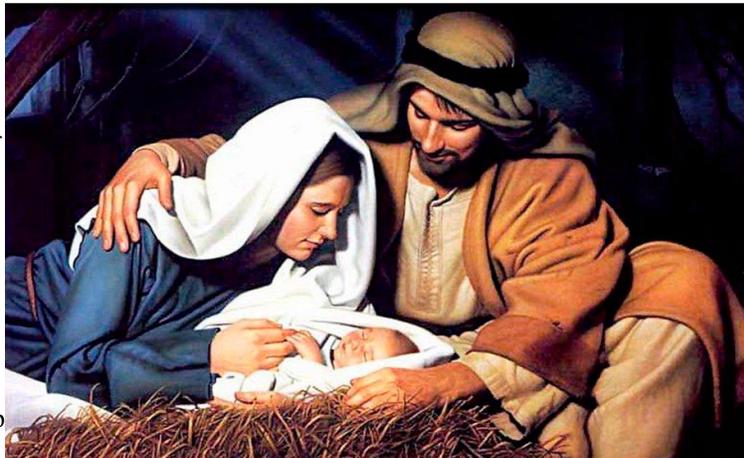


Perhaps-Today NEWS

Perhaps Today Ministries

Joseph and Mary Facing Adversity: What Can We Learn?

Let's look at the traditional Christmas story of Jesus' birth. We think of a little baby, angels, starry nights, and that's what we see on our Christmas cards. It's a soft, warm story but did you ever think about the trials and actual scenarios behind the birth of Jesus?



Mary had to convince her fiancé that she had not been with another man and to keep her as his wife. They had to journey 8,355 miles on a donkey while she was 9 months pregnant. With nowhere to stay, she goes into labor. Mary had no hospital staff and no sterile environment. Our King was born in the smelliest, dirtiest, and humblest of beginnings. They were bringing a King into the world, but they were not wealthy. They had no 401K and no Gerber Baby Plan in place. Later, they were warned by God of danger and were uprooted. They headed out again, this time to a foreign land, because of an evil King who was looking to kill their son. They pressed on because they believed in the promises even when they didn't see them.

How would we do in this day-and-age in similar circumstances? Could we believe in the promises when everything looks smelly and dirty, threatening and perilous?

The Bible tells us a little about adversity in Romans 5:2-5.

We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. (Romans 5:3-5, NLT)

It is a step-by-step process. When we go through tribulations, the first step is to persevere (press through, and push forward). Some people get stuck right there and lose their joy; but, as we choose to persevere, we develop character. Someone with character is someone we trust. We see them operating in truth and they have proved themselves. Character produces hope. Hoping for something is not to be confused with wishing for something. When we wish for something, there is a possibility of never seeing it. The definition of the Greek word for hope is: anticipation, expectation, confidence to expect. Hope, here, means expecting that things are going to happen.

When we go through tribulations, we are on a journey towards hope and we are refined in the process. We serve a King who knows about suffering. So, let's persevere, build character, and hope in a future of promises to be fulfilled. Let's be as Mary and Joseph were that starry night many years ago. Let's persevere even though we may not see how it's going to turn out. Let's show our good character and watch it blossom into a true and sure faith, and let's be filled with hope and expectation this Christmas season!!

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Perhaps Today
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Christian Spiritual Counseling

where you can make a change

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Gifts For Christmas: Mercy and Grace

Grace: the unearned forgiveness and forgetting of wrongs committed.

Mercy: the granting of total absolution of payment or retribution for ones sins.

Mercy and grace are terms that are not used often today. God has graciously provided these gifts to us as his children even though our human bent is one in which we will never be perfect under the standard of holiness that God presents. Jesus Christ died in our place because of our sins to forever redeem those who accept His gift.

Having received grace and mercy, it is now our standard. We are also called to grant grace and mercy often in our daily lives. People hurt us and wrong us often at work, sporting events, family life, etc. How we handle those people and situations is a direct sign of our relationship with Jesus Christ, our Lord, Savior, and Redeemer.

C.R. Strahan said, "Forgiveness has nothing to do with absolving a criminal of his crime. It has everything to do with relieving oneself of the burden of being a victim – letting go of the pain and transforming oneself from victim to survivor."

This quote points to the fact that forgiveness is not only the standard by which we should live as human beings but it's also about protecting ourselves from the cancer that grows in us when we hold bitterness in our heart towards someone who has hurt us. Do yourself a favor this Christmas: examine your heart and life and let go of any bitterness that holds you prisoner. Allow God to work in your heart and life to let go of it all.

"The willingness to forgive is a sign of spiritual and emotional maturity. It is one of the great virtues to which we all should aspire. Imagine a world filled with individuals willing both to apologize and to accept an apology. Is there any problem that could not be solved among people who possessed the humility and largeness of spirit and soul to do either – or both – when needed?" Gordon B. Hinckley.

During this holiest of seasons, think about these gifts and remember this holiday to practice grace and mercy. Here at Perhaps Today Ministries we'd like to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and we are praying for peace on earth and good will to men!!

Your Family At Christmas

The word "family" means something different to everyone, and often causes different emotions. The Holy Family depicted in the Bible, with Joseph – the father, Mary – the mother, and Jesus – the child, is God's idea of the perfect family. Unfortunately, not everyone has the benefit of the ideal "perfect" family.

The good news for everyone is that we are children of a loving Heavenly Father. We have brothers and sisters all over the world and around us every day who love us and desire to share with us the good and the bad that we experience in life. We don't have to remain saddened in the memories of unhealthy earthly families, or feel robbed of an earthly family, when we can live with hope and peace in a family dynamic that our Heavenly Father has provided for us.

In Romans 8:16 Paul tells us, "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." In Ephesians 1:5 Paul also tells us, "In love he predestined us to be

adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--". Christmas provided a son and a Savior to the world which brought us all into kinship with the Father in heaven. We have every reason to celebrate this Christmas season – for the family our Heavenly Father provided to each person here on earth and, as believers, for the day when we will fellowship with Him in heaven.

Brad Henry said, "Families are the compass that guides us. They are the inspiration to reach great heights, and our comfort when we occasionally falter." So, whether you have an earthly family that fills that purpose for you or whether you have to rely on your spiritual family to attain that assurance, God is there to provide you with the family you need.

If you need help understanding this spiritual concept of family, or are having trouble working through troubling situations in your family, PTM can help you! Give us a call and let's make a change!



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Perhaps-Today...
 you can make a change:

*Merry
 Christmas
 &
 Happy
 New Year!*



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Charitable Gifting - 'Tis the Season

It's that time of year when you hear the Salvation Army bells ringing and people are planning their end-of-year giving strategies. There are many great places to choose from and Perhaps Today Ministries is one of them. We are a 501 © 3, non-profit, tax-deductible organization fully recognized by the IRS. (You wouldn't believe the how many organizations appear to be charities and are not qualified or recognized as charities by the IRS.) We offer Christian Spiritual Counseling by donation and also have a benevolence fund for clients who are disadvantaged, hurting or in great need. You can be assured you are giving to a ministry that is local and helping people right here in your own communities who have been victims of difficult situations often not of their

own making. They come to PTM for help and wisdom and they get it at whatever they choose to donate back into the ministry. This is a much needed service because many people cannot afford the very high prices of good counseling and very few places offer Christian counseling where the counselor meets you where you are spiritually. Here at PTM we are proud to offer both; affordable counseling and Spiritual guidance at your level!

Please consider a gift of any amount this charitable season and take advantage of the tax-deduction opportunity this December. All donations must be received by December 31, 2014 to be used on your 2014 tax returns. A gift of \$100 can help someone for a month!

Final Fundraiser News

The statistics from the Fall Fundraiser in October are impressive! The total donations received were \$3,377. The funds will be used to help Perhaps Today Ministries provide Christian Spiritual counseling to the community, (asking only for donations from clients), and to assist clients financially that are disadvantaged, hurting or in great need in the community.



The evening late in October was pleasant and the turnout for the event was well attended. They had over 100 people in attendance with five speakers throughout the evening sharing many experiences and connections with Perhaps Today Ministries. One of the most touching was Christina Moon who spoke on how the counselor Cheryl Ciambotti had, over the years, helped her to find balance and serenity in difficult situations and how she was able to learn to change herself; and how not to focus on the addicts in her life. The CEO and Founder, Pastor Cheryl Ciambotti spoke on "The Many Facets of PTM". They learned about her heart for ministry, the many hours

she donates to PTM and the self-sacrificing she does to give to so many. Also, she spoke on the various ways PTM gives to the community. She also reported that in the last year the ministry has helped twice as many people as it had in all the previous years combined.

The food was excellent and the silent auction was a big success. Many people walked away with some real bargains having under bid the value of the item and winning out against all other bidders. There were a few items that were in high demand such as an indoor plant, facials and a crock pot, to name a few. Patrons also enjoyed hearing the Master of Ceremonies pick winning numbers for the beautiful gourd centerpieces given away during the evening. There was a chance game for other smaller prizes as well, that some said was very exciting!

Perhaps Today Ministries looks forward to having another Fall Fundraiser and Silent Auction at the same location next year. The facility was beautiful and it has enough room for more people in the community to attend this very exciting and profitable event for years to come.

