

Promise
Signs of Christmas • Christmas Eve
Bryan Jones
December 23 and 24, 2025

Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- Thank God for the gift of Jesus Christ, the true meaning of Christmas.
- Pray for families, friends, and communities to experience joy, peace, and hope this season.
- Ask God to reveal His grace to those who feel far from Him this Christmas.

A. Introduction

Signs...

Our lives are filled with signs... a sign points us to something else.

How many of you are full of Christmas cheer? How many of you are a Ditto house? (show picture) All are welcome.

We have street signs that point us where to go. (show picture)

Leaves turn as a sign of an upcoming season. (show picture)

How many of you parents remember when you saw the sign that you were pregnant? When I found out... Steph came down and said she had some good news... and I thought she was going to say she had saved some money or had a great day... so I said, *That's great, babe. Can you move away from the TV? This is a great game...* and then she held up the pregnancy test and said, *Surprise!* ... and I didn't see it. I said, *'That's great, babe... way to go...* and then I saw it, and I was freaking out.

And for those of you who are kids or teenagers, you've been giving your parents signs on what to get you for Christmas...

And some of you have signs around your health, good or bad, and you're awaiting more information.

Some of you are looking for signs on whether you should stay in your job, date this person, or maybe move.

When we were asking God if He was calling us to come to Brookwood, I started praying for God to give us a sign. Now, how many of you sleep great? How many of you don't? I confess I don't sleep great. My wife, Steph, always has... but when we were interviewing, my mind was racing, trying to figure out if God was calling us here. So I asked God, *if you really want us here, give me an amazing night's sleep.* So I went to interview in this room over here (Pod I) for 5 hours, and my wife was in the room. And when we got done, I had a peace that washed over me that I never had before, and my wife was amped up. She kept talking, and it was like God had completely switched our spirits... and I got one of the best nights' sleep of my life. In hindsight, I should've asked for a week.

There are signs everywhere we look... but have you stopped for a moment and considered the signs that point to God?

And the fact that you are here might be a sign that you are looking, unless you were dragged here, and I'm thrilled you are here!

The shepherds in Luke 2 are told this...

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:11-12 (NIV)

I want to give you three signs that really point us to God in this Christmas season...

B. The three signs of Christmas

1. A longing for MORE.

(Luke 2:10. C/R: John10:10b)

(Cowboy's meme) I've shared this before. In 2005, Tom Brady, who by the world's standards seemed to have it all...money, relationships, and success. Many thought he had the perfect life... and an interviewer said, *You have to be loving life....*

Tom replied, *Why do I have three Super Bowl rings and still think there's something greater out there for me? I reached my goal, my dream life, but I think there's got to be more than this. I*

mean, this can't be what it's all cracked up to be. I mean, I've done it. I'm 27, and what else is there for me?

Now I don't know if Tom Brady has found what he was searching for, but I know what he was looking for...

See, this was a sign pointing towards God.

I love what the angels said about Jesus' arrival...

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you **good news** that will cause **great joy** for all the people.*

Luke 2:10 (NIV)

Did you notice that... **great joy**, other worldly joy. And where does it come from? The **good news**.

Do you know why it's called *good news*? It's good because it goes into bad places. It's news because it's true.

Jesus was really born. Jesus really lived. He really grew up. He really died. He really rose again. He really loves you, and He can really change your life.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

John 10:10b (NIV)

Bios - Body

Psyche - Soul

Zoe - Spirit (full of life/God life/other worldly life)

You can have a body that's healthy, you can even have a soul that worked through pain and problems... but full life comes from the Spirit of God.

We are all born with soul longings... and they can't be filled up in this world... only Jesus can do that...

Happiness comes from happenings... joy comes from Jesus...

For instance, for people whose lives are going really well, why does it still feel like something is missing? Shouldn't you be happier? Some of you think that if you fix this situation, you will be happy. But you can only have a full life with the Spirit.

“God made us to yearn- to always be hungry for something we can't get, to always be missing something we can't find, to be always disappointed with what we receive, to always have an insatiable emptiness that no thing can fill and an untamable restlessness that no discovery can still. Yearning itself is healthy- a kind of compass inside us, pointing us true north.”

- Mark Buchanan

A longing for more is a sign you are made for God.

2. A longing for HOME.

(John 17:15-16)

The New York Times released an article in 2024 called *A Nation of Homebodies...*

Since 2003, people have been spending more and more time each year at home instead of social activities, but then after COVID, people became even more filled with a “desire for home.”

We also have terms like “homesickness” when we are away from home... where does that come from?

It's a sign pointing us to Jesus.

Think about how much time we spend on home projects. When I first moved here, I spent the first year working during the day, then I would come home and do all sorts of home projects to get our home ready! And I would usually tell my wife, *Hey, this project will probably only take two days because I saw a video on YouTube*, and then two weeks later, I would say to her, *YouTube lied!*

But at Christmas, the idea of home is amplified... people are doing family gatherings and dinners...

It's a time centered around the home.

We have a longing for home... but I want you to understand something.

Jesus prays this in John 17.

“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.”

John 17:15-16 (NIV)

The longing for home is a sign pointing you to your ultimate home... and no matter how much you fix your Earthly home, you can't escape the truth that it's not your forever home.

You might not even know this, but the reason you long for Heaven is because you don't belong in this world.

When you feel out of place in this world- in your country or your community or even your home- don't be alarmed. Don't try to "fix" that feeling by adapting yourself to this world. Instead, allow your longing for heaven to guide you toward home.

- David Jeremiah

That's why in Hebrews we are called strangers and pilgrims. We are just passing through this world; it's not home.

But here's what's sobering to me... Jesus was home. He was in Heaven. He had everything in Heaven... so why come to this Earth? Why come to Earth as a baby? So many people get caught up in Him being born in a manger, which is unique, of course, but why even come here in the first place? Because there is one thing he didn't have in Heaven, and that's you.

He had glory, power, comfort, joy, life, and purpose. He had everything... but He didn't have you or me.

See, Jesus isn't the reason for the season. You are the reason for the season. You are the reason this baby came to Earth... He came to be with us, die for us, and make a way for us to go home!

3. A longing for RESCUE.

(Luke 2:11)

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."

Luke 2:11 (NIV)

The name of Jesus means to rescue or save. His name is what He does.

Let me ask you this: how many of you have ever been given a bad gift... you received it, and you were like, *What in the world?*

For instance... let's just say you went downstairs, ladies, on Christmas morning. ... and you see a gift, and it's from your husband... and you go, *Oh my goodness, he thought of me. I'm so moved...* and then you open it... and it's a gym membership and diet pills... Merry stinking Christmas.

Gifts can be offensive because sometimes the gift implies something about the person receiving it. And let me be clear, Christmas has to offend you before it can change you. It's an

indictment before it's a delight... You have sinned and are separated from God, so God sent a gift: Jesus, the Savior, because His name is what He does.

And think... nobody has talked worse to you than you... No one has been harder, meaner, or more negative than you.

Jesus is about salvation, not condemnation... and if you think He's just about condemnation, you will live in separation.

Fifty steps... Fifty paces is the distance a leper has to keep in the New Testament... Fifty steps of grace...

Christmas is a reminder that God isn't here to condemn. He's a dad wanting to bring His kids home! He didn't come to condemn you; he came to save you!

Some of you feel close to God... but a lot of people I know feel distant... they feel like God wouldn't accept them because of their mistakes... or they just aren't certain if they want God in their life.. like for instance, all these folks here thought, *I'm going to come to the service and just sit in the back...* and now there are thousands of people watching you so, *say Hello...*

But here's the truth...Christmas is about the nearness of God. It's an invasion of God into our lives... the most central promise. He's here... but why is He here? He's not here to bring condemnation ... He's here to save us and be with us.

How? Because in the middle of the Bible... there is another tree... a cross.... Jesus, this baby grew up! And Jesus climbed up on that tree. And He died for you... not to condemn you but to save you because we are in need of a rescue.

Think about it, the cross is a sign that points to God...

See, the greatest gift never went under a tree; it went up on a tree, and it set us free.

Maybe you are a regular in coming to church... maybe you don't normally come to church... maybe you're not normally in a church environment. The reason you are here for our Christmas Eve service is that God is giving you a sign.

Maybe this has been a difficult season, or maybe it's a great season, but your heart is divided. Maybe there has been pain or loss. God might be giving you a sign that 2026 is going to be different...

Respond to God.

Sing a song.

Peace with God- Thank Him.

Drifted- You can always come home. Pray for a return.

Bad experience with the church- Maybe God is giving a sign.

Maybe you've never surrendered your heart.

Give your life to Him.

Decided to follow Jesus.

Praise

Provision

Love

New Life

Salvation

Help

Reconcile

Connect church

Struggling

Prayer