

<p> <p>Today marks the beginning of the Advent Season. ♦The significance of this season (as in all things) varies from person to person and perhaps from denomination to denomination. ♦But truly, how each of us prepare for something speaks volumes of how much we treasure and cherish that something. ♦That of course, is our meaning when we use the phrase ♦Advent Season.♦ ♦We speak of a time of preparation.</p> <p>Christmas (in our culture, at least) can♦t just sneak up on anyone ♦ it♦s impossible. ♦Unless of course, if you♦re just waking up from a coma, then maybe? ♦It♦s ingrained within each of us as small children how to recognize the signs that the ♦season of getting♦ is fast approaching. My training began with a great little invention called the Sears wish book. ♦This amazing catalog was filled with pages and pages of every toy known to mankind! ♦It was our generation♦s internet.</p> <p>Maturing in my faith though, has changed the way I see Christmas, therefore, changing the way I prepare for this special time as well. ♦One of the tools I use in that preparation is the concept of the Advent Season. ♦I strive to meditate upon or dwell on each symbol or ideal of the Advent Season and consider how they have impacted my life:</p> <p>♦ The unique hope we have in Christ</p> <p>♦ The love shown by the Creator to His fallen and rebellious creation</p> <p>♦ The joy that now resides within our hearts because of the presence of Jesus Christ</p> <p>♦ And finally, the peace that this living Presence brings</p> <p>Each of these deepen in significance as I understand them a bit more. ♦They help me to keep things sorted, and in a somewhat proper perspective.</p> <p>I go crazy this time of year, I know, but in a good way . . . and hopefully in a Christ-honoring way. ♦How is it that you prepare in honoring your King♦s birth? ♦How do you celebrate the giving of the ♦perfect Gift♦ for yourself and this entire world?</p> <p>How you prepare for something can be a strong indication of how significant that something is to you.</p> <p>Teach me Your way, O Lord.</p> <p>♦</p> <p>♦ Dale</p> </p>