

JESUS AND TIME

HOW DID JESUS MODEL TIME SPENT HERE ON EARTH?

DEC 2018 | MELANIE MOKGATLA

Time: A commodity that has no bias. We can't hoard it. It's not stored in a savings account. Every person is only given 24 hours per day. Time, like manna in the Old Testament, is given and consumed daily.

At Christmastime, many people have leave and get excited about time with family (and good food). But have we stopped to consider how Jesus would spend this time? It is easy to give in to the pressures of modern Christmas culture, but let's reflect on how Jesus spent his time and let this inspire our celebrations this season.

ALONE

Jesus spent lots of time alone. This is great news for introverts who struggle with Christmas party overload. Jesus was intimately connected with his Father. He desired to spend time alone with God, found it crucial to life on earth, and made it a priority. Take courage, Christmas doesn't have to be a rushed experience this year. Rest and take a breath, allowing God to fill you up and pour into your weary spaces.

Ask the spirit to burn a passion for The Word and prayer in your heart this Christmas.

ONE-ON-ONE

Jesus was strategic about having one-on-one conversations. I can't help but think this made people feel special, heard and seen. Jesus would have been the model of "Sawubona" in our South African culture! What I love about Jesus' example is that he didn't seem inconvenienced by these interactions but rather sought them out. I think of the Woman at the Well (John 4)– we know that encounter was his perfect timing and a cross-cultural interaction that changed her view of 'religion.' Or what about the Rich Young Ruler (Mark 10) that ran up to Jesus while he was on a journey out of

town; Jesus stopped and took time to challenge this man's thinking – not a popular conversation but Jesus had the boldness to speak truth and challenge the selfishness in this man's attachment to possessions. Both of these encounters are challenging to think through during this season.

How can we intentionally seek out conversations during Christmas festivities?
How can we be intentional in slowing down and see those who need a listening ear, encouragement, or a challenge?

WITH CROWDS

Jesus was often seen at parties. His first miracle was at a celebration (John 2, water into wine). Like in our culture, parties were a family affair. Jesus' culture held lots of feasts and traditions of gathering over meals and celebrating faith-based occasions. I think of Jesus reclining at the table with his disciples or going to Mary and Martha's for a hangout. Let's imagine our December gatherings being more about resting in good company and celebrating Jesus, and less about décor and consumption. Make your table longer; invite someone new to your party, and bless others.

How will you make your time with crowds full of joy and intentional invitations?

As you reflect on how to spend your time this Christmas, think about these three ways Jesus modelled life here on earth. Take moments alone with the Father, seek out intentional individual chats, and gather with crowds purposefully in celebration and generosity. This reflection isn't just for Christmas but has the opportunity to carry over into the new year as a lifestyle of spending time like Jesus did. Savour that manna - your 24 hours in a day – and use it wisely, making the best use of your time.



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