

Preparing for Christmas—The Matthew 6:6 Way

Only the mother may pass.

Behind the door of Jayme's room (still hers in our hearts, even though she has a man and a mortgage now) lie growing mounds of Christmas treasures. Nondescript paper grocery sacks carry only a name on the outside but hand-picked stocking stuffers on the inside.

On the floor in the closet are a few folded, college-ruled papers that hold my nice list. (Not a naughty in the whole lot.) After my covert ops into town, I slip stealthily into the gift room and disperse the latest gifts.

Cross them off the list.

This is a work I do alone every December—poring over the names and the wish lists, stashing surprises and organizing delightful gifts we only splurge on once a year.

But that is only one of my two secret Christmas rooms.

The other is a place I slip into by myself as well, but in this room, the names are on note cards tucked into a plain paper mache box. So many names, and this Christmas I am poring over each one with secret prayer.

Sick people. Friends making decisions. Lost souls for whom I am fighting. Missionaries. Church family. Impossible requests that I'm just sure God is going to take care of quite nicely. Mental struggles. Emotional turmoil. Brothers in Christ overseas. Children. Parents. Grieving hearts. Empty pocketbooks. Hearts that need growing.

For all the time I spend on my knees in front of paper sacks, doling out sweet treats and wish-list fulfillment, I spend a

much longer, more precious time on my knees in front of the Father.

Praying for this one and that one. Attending to the details of so many hearts and lives.

Jesus says:

But you, when you pray, enter your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly (Matt. 6:6).

Go into your room, mothers.

Go into your room during the Christmas season, and do the secret work of tending to names. This is a meaningful, lasting, world-altering gift you give. {eoa}

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