

These Spiritual Steps Will Help You Move Beyond 'Single at Christmas'

Christmas is only a day away—and you're alone. Well, not really alone—not totally. But you're single. There's no one to kiss on Christmas Eve, no one to share a hot chocolate with in front of the fire, no one to walk with hand-in-hand through the snow. Being single at Christmas is just not cool.

I know what that's like. There were many Christmases when I was a young woman where I longed to have someone to truly share the holiday with. The popular portrayals of Christmas as a time for family only made my single status more painful. And now that I'm single again since my husband died, the holidays make being alone even more challenging.

And yet I'm not sad this year. Oh yes, there are big parts of me that miss my husband! But my mood is not dark. I've learned how to deal with the holiday blues and to make Christmas a special time, even as a single person.

Here are a few steps you can take right now that will make "single at Christmas" a meaningful time.

1. Focus on becoming.

It's only in a Hallmark movie that you get a "boyfriend for Christmas." If that's the gift God blesses you with, awesome. But it's much more likely that His gift to you this Christmas will be the chance to move forward in becoming—being—the person He created you to be.

Whether or not you desire a relationship and marriage, becoming the person God needs you to be is the only way to make the next season of your life possible. Take the

opportunity this Christmas to focus on *becoming* more than always *doing*. Embrace the hardships you are experiencing, bring them into God's presence and invite Him to use them to change you, shape you and mature you.

Consider what will nourish you this holiday season. Play the Christmas music. Put up the decorations. Light the candles. Drink the hot chocolate. Whatever is meaningful to you, do it! Even if you're alone.

2. Raise your sights.

Navel-gazing on your own disappointments or problems will make you depressed. Leverage a part of your holiday season for the benefit of others. I gathered a group of ladies in my home for a Christmas celebration recently. The majority of them are single and lonely. Blessing them for an evening lifted my own spirits!

Think about what you do have to share. There is always someone more lonely or in need than you are. Give of yourself in some generous way, and you will be blessed.

Take some Christmas goodies to someone who lives alone. Bring a few other singles together for an evening of conversation and joy. Invite someone for a meal who would never be able to invite you back. Give one or two or several anonymous gifts to those who don't have a family to share with. Come up with your own way to share, but just do it!

3. "Go there" with Jesus.

Christmas is about the birth of a baby, *the* baby. Invite Him to be born in you anew this Christmas season. There is almost certainly some place in your heart where you need Him to do some work. Some betrayal, abuse, disappointment, rejection, lack, frustration, painful memory, hurt, something. Invite Jesus to "go there" with you.

When the angel announced the coming of Jesus, he said, “they shall call his name Immanuel ... God with us” (Matt. 1:23, ESV).

He is *with* you in your singleness, in whatever places you are wounded and need healing. Take some quiet moments, intentionally, during this Christmas season to invite Jesus to be *with* you in those places where you so much need Him.

May the Christ-child be born in your heart again this Christmas.

Your Turn: How much has your mental focus been on yourself? In what ways are you going to use this Christmas season to raise your sights beyond busyness to becoming, blessing others and being with Jesus? Leave a comment below. {eoa}

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