

# 5 Ways to Pray in December



December is filled with Christmas cheer, peace on earth, and good will to men. That's what our Christmas carols tell us, and that is what we can always hope for. Jesus came to earth to be those things, and when He returns, they will all be fully realized. Beyond hoping, let's put some **prayer** power to work in our world, as we see things in life that often seem contradictory to what we are singing about. Keep reading for five ways you can focus your prayers this month.

**1. Advent.** November 30 – December 24, 2014. Instead of being swept away by the tidal wave of decorating, shopping, baking, and wrapping beginning on December 1, let's take the time to first prepare our hearts for Christmas. That is the whole purpose of Advent. You may not realize it, but according to the Christian calendar, the Christmas season doesn't even begin until December 25, and it lasts through the Epiphany on January 6. The days in December prior to that are considered to be the season of Advent. While I enjoy all the Christmas activity, I've found that when I focus on the meaning behind

the rush of what I'm doing, it makes this month a special, holy time.

Jesus' birth is not just an event in history but it gives meaning and purpose to each of our lives today.



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Jesus' birth is not just an event in history but it gives meaning and purpose to each of our lives today. The following resource may help you focus on Advent this year:

**Resources:**

Advent Podcast

In Reverence gorgeous music by David Tolk combined with stunning seasonal Christian art of J. Kirk Richards. This alone will put you in a worshipful frame of mind.

**Verse:** "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14

**Prayer:** Lord, we ask that You quiet our hearts amidst the busyness of this month. May we hear Your call to each one of us to slow down and make room in our hearts for You. May we feel the longing and expectation of waiting for the answer to years of prayers from those who lived thousands of years before us. And may we echo their prayers, O Come, O Come Emmanuel. Amen.

**2. World AIDS Day.** December 1, 2014. The first case of Aids was reported in the United States in June 1981. According to the CDC, today there are more than 1,000,000 people in the United States living with HIV infection. The devastation from AIDS is particularly felt in Africa. According to AVERT, in

2009, there were almost 15,000,000 orphans in sub-Saharan Africa due to AIDS . This is where I would like to focus our prayers today. In Africa, children are raising children because there are simply no adults left in families.

**Resource:**

Samaritan's Purse Orphans' Care

**Verse:** "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." James 1:27

**Prayer:** Lord, our hearts ache for the children who have been left as orphans because of AIDS. We ask for protection and help for them. May the church rise up to care for these young ones who are struggling on their own to care for themselves and younger siblings. May they be comforted and loved and may all their needs be supplied. Amen.

**3. Ferguson, Missouri.** News stories abound about Ferguson, Missouri, and the Michael Brown case. This occurrence has only served to prove how racially divided America still is. There are many ways to pray for this concern. We can pray for comfort and healing for Michael Brown's family. We can pray for Darren Wilson and his family. We can pray that the protestors will stop destroying property. We can pray for the business owners whose livelihood has been threatened because of the destruction and looting. We can pray for the truth to be told and accepted. We can pray for healing between different races. We can pray for any racism to be exposed and eradicated. We can pray for the protection of police officers who put their lives on the line every day. We can pray for good relationships between officers and the communities they serve.

**Resource:**

Here is one way to help:  
<http://www.gofundme.com/queensroyaltouch>

And here is a wonderful feel-good story from Ferguson:  
<http://www.gofundme.com/nataliescakesmore>

**Verse:** “But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!” Amos 5: 24

**Prayer:** Lord, the needs and hurts run deep here. We pray for the Holy Spirit to hover above Ferguson and cover the city with your peace and protection. We pray for justice to be served. We ask for your healing balm upon Michael’s family. We pray for Officer Wilson and his family. We pray that looting, violence, and destruction will stop and that lasting change will begin. We pray for understanding and grace between different races and that You will heal the ugly wound of racism in our land. Amen.

**4. Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.** Sunday, December 7, 2014. On this day we remember those who were injured or lost their lives on the attack on Pearl Harbor in Hawaii during World War II. I’d like to use this opportunity to reflect upon the sacrifice that so many soldiers gave so that we could continue to live in freedom. It’s not often enough that we think about the men and women who were never able to pursue their future plans. And it’s not often enough that we think about those families who were forever changed because of the loss of their loved one(s). Let’s pray for healing of all kinds.

**Resources:**

<http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/pearl-harbor>

WWII Enemies Find Forgiveness, Friendship

**Verse:** “And through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in

mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him." Colossians 2:20-22

**Prayer:** Lord, today we stop to remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice of their lives so that others could live in freedom. May we never take this for granted. We pray for the families of these men and women that have been inalterably changed because of their loss. Where there is lingering animosity, we pray for peace and reconciliation. We ask that those who are existing in bitterness would be set free. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**5. Christmas.** Christmas Day will be here sooner than we realize and hopefully our hearts will be ready with our Advent preparation. May we recapture the miracle of what our Savior's birth actually means. Help us to see it, hear it, smell it, and feel it the way the shepherds and wise men did at their first look at the baby Jesus.

**Resource:**

Silent night video done by Mary's son and his band:

Christmas and Advent Roundup

**Scripture:** "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

**Prayer:** We thank you and praise you, God, for the magnificent gift of your Son, our Savior Jesus. He is the one gift who is never the wrong size. He won't break, wear out, or fall out of style. Our hearts are full today with His gift. Help us to remember that He is one gift who is meant to be shared. Amen.

Thank you for praying with us through the month of December. Please leave any of your prayers, thoughts, or comments below.

Pray on!

*Jane*

Merry Christmas!

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