

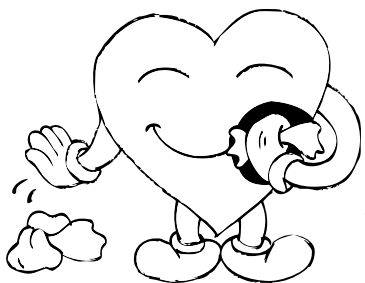
let every heart prepare him room

You've heard the lyrics before...

Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let Earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room.

Familiar right? In fact you've probably heard this Christmas song so many times that you can instantly sing along anytime you hear it. Well, one afternoon as I was decorating my Christmas tree, God used this song to minister to my heart. He used the analogy of cleaning house to teach me about preparing my heart. In the same way that we prepare our house when we're expecting a special visitor, we must look to prepare our hearts for Jesus this Christmas season. With that in mind, let's get to cleaning & preparing, shall we?

We'll start with a few "heart preparation" questions...

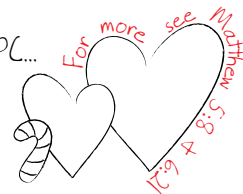


- How have you prepared your heart for Jesus this Christmas season?
- How have you prepared your home & family for Jesus this Christmas season?
- What areas do you need to clean out to "prepare Him room"?

Check out our Heartman! He's preparing his heart by cleaning out anything that keeps him from receiving the true gift of Christmas.

Why do we need to keep our hearts clean? Part of the answer can be found in Ephesians 3:17a AMPC...

"May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts!"



Wow, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords desires to dwell in our hearts! To put it lightly, Jesus is the most important "houseguest" we'll ever receive. Are we keeping the home of our hearts ready for Him?

Let's stand in awe of Him for a few moments, shall we? Read Isaiah 9:6 AMPC below...

**"For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given...
...His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father [of Eternity], Prince of Peace."**

How has Jesus shown Himself faithful in the following positions & roles in your life? Write your answers below.

Wonderful Counselor

Mighty God

Everlasting Father

Prince of Peace



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Great! Let's continue on with the "clearing house + preparing our hearts" analogy. Typically when we get our house ready (in the natural) for houseguests, we'll do things like rearrange furniture, throw out our old stuff and decorate with new decor. Let's look at each one of these preparations from a spiritual perspective.



Natural: Rearrange furniture

Spiritual: Rearrange priorities

Reflect on the past week.
What have you spent your time on?
Any priorities that need rearranging?

Part of preparing our hearts is having proper priorities. Let's look at what God says our priorities need to be...

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Matthew 6:33 NKJV

What is God telling us in Matthew 6:33? _____

What parts of your life need rearranging in order to live out Matthew 6:33? _____

Imagination } Close your eyes and see yourself sitting intimately with the Father. You feel the warmth from His loving presence. He wraps you in His arms and you lovingly whisper, "I seek you first Lord." Break!



Natural: Throw out your old stuff

Spiritual: Throw out your old ways

"...since you have put off the old man with his deeds."
Colossians 3:9 NKJV

As we continue to prepare our hearts, here's what God has to say about throwing things out...

"...let us strip off and throw aside every encumbrance (unnecessary weight) and that sin which so readily (deftly & cleverly) clings to and entangles us..." Hebrews 12:1 AMPC

Ask Holy Spirit if there any unnecessary weights - things like depression, worry, fear, greed, pride or anger - that you need to throw aside + clean out this Christmas season (see Ephesians 4:31). Sit quietly, listen for the answers and then cast your care on the Lord (1 Peter 5:7). Thank you Holy Spirit for leading us into all truth as we prepare our hearts.



Natural: Decorate with new decor

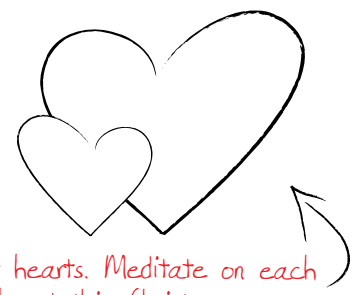
Spiritual: Decorate with God's decor

"...and have put on the new man..."
Colossians 3:10a NKJV

Now that we've thrown out our old ways, here's the new decor God gives us...

"...put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another and forgiving one another...put on love."

Colossians 3:12-14a NKJV



This is the beautiful "decor" which will welcome Jesus as He abides in our hearts. Meditate on each attribute and then decorate the above heart with those that will adorn your heart this Christmas season as you welcome Jesus and prepare Him room. Joy to the world, indeed. Let's close in prayer...

Heavenly Father we come to you in the beautiful name of Jesus. We thank you for this time together. We ask Holy Spirit that you would continue to lead us even deeper into preparing our hearts into a beautiful home where You, O Lord Jesus, may abide. We love you. Amen.

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