

# Insight for the Issues

Prov. 4:23

# NEXT STEPS

Prov. 4:23 **Keep thy heart** with all diligence; for **out of it are the issues of life.**

*“Preparing for Christmas”*



In preparing for Christmas, a believer should at least have an idea about the prophecies foretelling the First Advent of the Messiah, and then, developing a mindset as to how it should affect actions during the Christmas season.

## I. ENCOURAGED BY THE PROFUNDITY OF PROPHECY

Rom. 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were **written for our learning**, that we **through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope**.



How many prophecies are there in the Old Testament that were fulfilled by Jesus? Scholars differ in their answers, generally ranging from about 200 to 400.

J. Barton Payne in his *Encyclopedia of Bible Prophecy*, gives a list of 191 prophecies that he deems as having a "personal reference to Christ."

Another scholar, Alfred Edersheim, concluded that there at least 456 passages in the Old Testament that Jewish Rabbis historically have interpreted as being about the Messiah.

<http://www.about-jesus.org/complete-chart-prophecies-jesus.htm>



Mathematically speaking, the odds of anyone fulfilling this amount of prophecy are staggering. Mathematicians put it this way:

1 person fulfilling 8 prophecies: 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000;

1 person fulfilling 48 prophecies: 1 chance in 10 to the 157<sup>th</sup> power;

1 person fulfilling 300+ prophecies: Only Jesus!

<https://www1.cbn.com/biblestudy/biblical-prophecies-fulfilled-by-jesus>

It is the magnificent detail of these prophecies that mark the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Only God could foreknow and accomplish all that was written about the Christ. This historical accuracy and reliability, sets the Bible apart from any other book or record.

In one website, I found 37 pages of prophecies fulfilled regarding the First Advent

<https://www.practicaprophetica.com/prophecies-of-christs-first-advent/>



On another, I found 66 prophecies from which I listed 40 that are included in the handout.

<http://www.about-jesus.org/complete-chart-prophecies-jesus.htm>

- ❖ Having knowledge of the prophecies should encourage and strengthen our faith.
- ❖ But faith without works is dead!

Jas. 2:15 If **a brother or sister** be naked, and destitute of daily food,  
16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; **notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit?**

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

- ❖ In preparing us for Christmas, how can confidence in the prophecies motivate us in a practical way?



## II. ENGAGING IN THE PRECIOUSNESS OF PRACTICALITY

### A. Confidence as Motivation to Implement Concern

- ❖ If the Word of God is true, believers must implement loving concern for others.

Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to **remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.**

Prov. 19:17 **He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD;** and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Eph. 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, **that he may have to give to him that needeth.**



## B. Charity as Means to Immitate Christ

- ❖ Confidence that the prophecies are true should motivate believers to engage in other principles that are a reflection of Christ.

Luke 24:19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, **Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word** before God and all the people:

Col. 3:17 And **whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.



- ❖ Actions verify one's faith.
- ❖ A simple act of kindness is more valuable than any expensive price tag.
- ❖ Thoughtfulness expressed is PRICELESS!
- ❖ The love of Christ within a believer will be manifested outwardly toward others, especially, brothers and sisters in Christ.

Gal. 6:10 **As we have therefore opportunity**, let us do good unto all *men*, **especially unto them who are of the household of faith.**

- ❖ The Christmas season is a wonderful opportunity for us to show others the love of Christ!



## Conclusion

1 Jn. 3:16 **Hereby perceive we the love of God**, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives **for the brethren**.

17 But **whoso hath this world's good**, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, **how dwelleth the love of God in him?**

18 My little children, **let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.**

- ❖ The perception of God's love is expressed in deed and in truth.