

"Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection." – Winston Churchill. With each passing year, I find myself resonating with this quote more and more. The Christmas season is filled with nostalgia, but in order to reflect one must slow down. As we all know for most people this Christmas season will move by too fast with too many commitments making the act of reflecting an afterthought.

For many pastors it isn't much different. Pastoring in this season between Thanksgiving and Christmas usually moves at a blistering pace. Here are a few things that may be worth remembering while you pastor in this season:

Remember that someone is going through this holiday season for the first time without a loved one. Take a moment and review the people in your congregation who have lost a loved one and send them a card or let them know you're praying for them. They may never speak up or self-identify, but it will be very impactful.

Remember that Jesus' birth is just as much for you as it is for your congregation. Take time to prayerfully reflect on the incarnation and be refreshed in this season. Be sure Christmas is more than trees, cookies, and lights.

Remember that many in your congregation are going to do a special year end gift. Many congregations have a bump in giving during December. Leverage the habit of year-end giving by shepherding people in the way of Biblical stewardship.

UPDATE ON CHURCH PLANTING: To begin the Advent season I had the opportunity to preach at Pastor James Perry's church in Marion, IA. It was a delight to be able to exposit God's Word in Isaiah 9:1-7. The main take away for this season is that we celebrate the first advent as we anticipate the second advent. Our question to reflect on was if our hope was in the relief or the reliever. If you ever need pulpit supply please feel free to reach me at gerad.hall@gmail.com.

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