



Monday Motivation #20 Finding The Treasure Amid The Tinsel

Every Christmas, I have expectations of how Christmas will be. I want the Southern Living tree, the Chip and Joanna decorated house, the Martha Stewart perfect treats, and foil wrapped presents with beautiful handmade bows. I stress over finding the perfect gift for those I love and getting everything done on time. Seriously, I want the Hallmark movie Christmas!

Do you have expectations for Christmas? A beautifully decorated tree, perfectly wrapped presents, greeting cards mailed before December 1st, and a family that all gets along? We all have expectations for Christmas and we all make preparations, but quite often Christmas doesn't turn out exactly how we expect or want it to be. Our expectations, preparations, and busyness lead to frustration and disappointment and we fail to experience and enjoy the reason for Christmas. When that happens, we've allowed the wrappings of Christmas to cover the real gift of Christmas.

But we can learn from a woman in the Bible named Anna. Anna was a part of the faithful Jewish remnant that eagerly looked for their Messiah. Anna was waiting for Christmas but she wasn't scurrying around decorating shopping, and baking. Anna spent her days devoting herself to worship - as scripture says worshipping "night and day, fasting and praying". Because Anna spent her time in worship, she recognized the real meaning of Christmas



when it arrived.

Anna recognized Jesus, the perfect gift. He was the **treasure amid the tinsel**. He was the long-awaited Messiah. The first Christmas present. The perfect gift for everyone who believes. By worshipping, Anna had made heart preparations and she wasn't disappointed because the **right preparation of the heart leads to right expectations**. Because her



heart was prepared, Anna expected and found the Expected One.

How are we spending our days in preparation for Christmas? What are our expectations? What if we prepare like Anna did and prioritize worship? Would we have different expectations of the Christmas season? Would our hearts be rightly prepared? I think if we did, we would find the real treasure amid the tinsel.

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Luke 2:36-38 New International Version (NIV)

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.


Matthew 1:21 New International Version (NIV)

²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”



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