

OFFERING HOPE THROUGH SERVING AND SHARING

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*

Isaiah 9:6 (KJV)

❖ Those at the first Christmas, SERVED and SHARED:

1. Mary saw SERVICE as her HIGHEST CALLING to the Lord.

*"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.*

Luke 1:38 (NIV)

2. Joseph chose SERVICE over his FAMILY NAME and REPUTATION.

*But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."*

Matthew 1:20 (NIV)

3. The SHEPHERDS left praising God and SHARING what they SAW.

*When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them... The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

Luke 2:17-18, 20 (NIV)

4. The WISE MEN came and SHARED the BEST they had.

*On coming to the house, they saw the child with His mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.*

Matthew 2:11 (NIV)

❖ How we can SERVE this Christmas:

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

Philippians 2:5-7 (NIV)

1. We can SERVE the LESS FORTUNATE during this Christmas season.

*"In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

Acts 20:35 (NIV)

2. We can SERVE the HURTING during this time of year.  
*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*  
2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV)

3. We can SERVE those who God brings into our SPHERE of INFLUENCE.  
*"As you look around right now, wouldn't you say that in about four months it will be time to harvest? Well, I'm telling you to open your eyes and take a good look at what's right in front of you. These fields are ripe. It's harvest time!"*  
John 4:35 (MSG)

❖ How we can SHARE this Christmas:

*For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"*

Romans 10:13-15 (NIV)

1. We can SHARE through PRAYER.  
*... pray continually...*

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV)

2. We can SHARE through GIVING.  
*But just as you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us--see that you also excel in this grace of giving.*  
2 Corinthians 8:7 (NIV)

3. We can SHARE through TELLING our STORY.  
*Through thick and thin, keep your hearts at attention, in adoration before Christ, your Master. Be ready to speak up and tell anyone who asks why you're living the way you are, and always with the utmost courtesy.*  
1 Peter 3:15 (MSG)