

Celebration of Life

At this time of the year when our thoughts are about the birth of Jesus Christ, we may feel differently than at other seasons. Some feel the stress of Christmas while others feel the joy. Some feel the isolation and loneliness while others enjoy the festive celebrations with family, friends, and coworkers.

Whatever is your mindset this Christmas season, know that Jesus came for you. In truth, you were on His mind in eternity, and it is for you that He was born. Though we see the traditions of Christmas vary from families, cultures, or nationalities, the purpose of His birth is yet the same. This celebration of eternal life came as Mary gave birth to a perfect son, to be the perfect lamb of God for us. His birth was announced in glorious celebration as the angels cried out, "Glory to God in the highest!" They were witnessing the most profound miracle they had ever seen. This God that they had worshiped for an eternity was now a sweet little man child. Never before had they ever seen such a sight – and what a sight to behold!

But let me tell you about you. You may not have been born into a family that celebrated your birth or heard the angels rejoicing over you, but none the less, Jesus celebrates your life. I can hear him saying, "I know the plans that I have for that precious little man child" or "I know the plans I have for this sweet little girl." Truly Jesus was excited to celebrate your life when you were born. Maybe He even said, "Glory to God in the highest! I am so glad they are born! I can hardly wait to walk and talk with them!"

But then you may think, "Why would He celebrate me? I'm a nobody. Why would He want to walk with me after I have messed up so bad?" The reality is that He already knew all about you before you were born. In Jeremiah 1:5 God said that before Jeremiah was formed in his mother's womb, God already knew him and had a plan for him. So, know that part of God's plan was, and is, to redeem you, to buy you back from the devil's captivity because He knew you would need it. Your mess has never deterred God, He still wants you no matter what. He can and will correct anything as you walk and talk with Him. He loves you and wants to show you how He celebrates your life.

Never entertain the thoughts that you are worthless. God does not make worthless people. Your actions may not have had worth but *with* Jesus your actions can be changed. He has made you for Himself and wants you no matter what mistakes you've made or troubles you've caused. God wants you in His image and in His likeness, so He delights in changing every aspect of your life. You are a treasure in the making.

Dear Jesus,

You love them so much. But sadly, many of them cannot feel it because they have not been celebrated. They may feel left out, alone, and unworthy of any love. Because of this void, they have sought the world's ways looking for love or for someone that would celebrate them, but the devil's devices have always failed them. I pray that they will know that you have purposely created them, designed a perfect plan for them, and do celebrate their life. May they feel how much you care and how excited you are to celebrate them. They may be a diamond in the rough, but you see them as a great treasure.

Jesus in this season of celebrating your birth, may they know that you celebrate their birth as well. May their ears hear you proclaiming over them, "Glory to God in the highest for they are born!" May they feel your glorious light pouring over them changing their sorrows into joys. And may they know they are indeed a valuable treasure to you because you chose to make them one of a kind and they are irreplaceable.

We love you Jesus and are so glad that you were born to redeem us all from our sins and show us your glorious light in the earth and for all eternity! We are forever yours! Amen!

Dr. Nina Gardner

International Ministries, Inc.