

American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 www.americandecency.org
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart December 2024

Advent: From Loss to Victory



The Advent season, December 1st through the 25th, has been one of my favorite times of the year since learning about it a decade ago. The Providence of God, working out His plan to glorify His name through the sending of His Son, of Whom the prophets foretold is my favorite theme in scripture.

But December 1, 2023, the first day of the Advent season last year, was the worst day of my life, and it will forever change the way I experience the Advent season.

I woke in the early hours of the morning to sounds of distress from my wife, and the nightmare of every pregnant couple became our experience as our tiny little son was stillborn to my wife in her 18th week of pregnancy.

That evening, we buried our son in a little home-made casket quickly assembled by my skilled brother-in-law in our backyard.

We spent the next few weeks in a season of only slightly controlled chaos leaning on family, feeding on the outpouring of encouragement and love both from those close to us and from those from whom we never would have expected it, trying to help each other and our older children to process the loss of what we were all so excited for.

“He got to go straight to live with Jesus,” we told them. He didn’t have to go through the hard stuff in life that we all will.

It was that truth, and the truth of Romans 8:28, that “...for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose,” that echoed in my head in the following weeks and months.

Someday, God will use our experience to encour-

age someone else who’s struggling to trust in His goodness in a difficult moment of their life. Really, that’s the reason I’m writing this now, perhaps now is that time for someone reading this.

Within just a few weeks of the passing of our little guy, whom we posthumously named Kuyper, we were celebrating our family Christmas, and rather than turn to Luke to read the Christmas story, or to the Old Testament to read the prophecies of Christ’s coming as we’ve done in the past, this time we turned to 1 Corinthians 15:25-26 and read, “For *he must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*”

The real reason for Christmas can be easily lost in sentimentalism: Hallmark movies, Coca-Cola Santas, Currier and Ives prints, Jingle Bells, and the Grinch.

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*“This is war like you
ain't seen.
This winter's long, it's
cold and mean.
With handdog hearts we
stood condemned,
But the tide turns now at
Bethlehem.*

*This is war and born to-
night,
The Word as flesh, the
Lord of Light,
The Son of God, the low-
born king;*

*Who demons fear, of
whom angels sing.*

*This is war on sin and
death;*

*The dark will take its
final breath.*

*It shakes the earth, con-
founds all plans;*

*The mystery of God as
man.”*

If you are missing some-
one this Christmas sea-
son, and maybe it's even
preventing you from cele-
brating the holiday, re-
member this: our greatest
enemy which separates us
from our loved ones is
Jesus' enemy too, and He
will not rest until He has
crushed that enemy.

We celebrate Christmas
because Christ came to
conquer sin and death.
That's the reason for the
season.

The story of my family's
loss of Kuyper isn't over.
Psalm 30:5 says, *“Weep-
ing may tarry for the
night, but joy comes with
the morning,”* and on Oc-
tober 1st, 2024, Jaelle Joy
was born to our family.

While she can't fill the
hole that Kuyper left in
our lives, she certainly
does bring comfort and
joy.

Our Advents from here
on out will begin with the
memory of the loss of our
baby boy, and end in the
celebration of the birth of
Baby Jesus, Whose birth,
perfect life, and sacrifice
leads us to ask with the
Apostle Paul, *“Death is
swallowed up in victory.
O death, where is your
victory? O death, where
is your sting?*

*“The sting of death is sin;
and the strength of sin is
the law. But thanks be to
God, which giveth us the
victory through our Lord
Jesus Christ.*

*“Therefore, my beloved
brothers, be steadfast, im-
movable, always abound-
ing in the work of the
Lord, knowing that in the
Lord your labor is not in
vain.”* (1 Corinthians
15:55-58)

Christmas story is to read
of a little baby boy born
in poverty to a single
mother who went on to
save the world. And when
boiled down to those ele-
ments, the Christmas
story can resound with
anyone in our time, Chris-
tian or not.

But that story, without the
context of the rest of the
Bible, doesn't explain
why Christmas is so im-
portant to Christians. We
celebrate Christmas be-
cause Jesus came here for
a reason, and that reason
was made painfully clear
to me on December 1,
2023.

Most Christmas carols
don't cover it, but one
singer who is the front
man for an Alternative
Rock band, Dustin Kens-
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