



Week 1 - December 2025

Own the
Ordinary
A Christmas Devotional

Zach Fontaine

Week 1 - December 2025

Own the
Ordinary
A Christmas Devotional

Zach Fontaine

Looking to share the devotional?
Digital copies are available at *Christmas.springschurch.com*.

The Night Shift

*“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.”
Luke 2:8*

Think about what the shepherds were doing when heaven broke through.

They weren't praying.

They weren't fasting.

They weren't in a worship service.

They were working the night shift.

These weren't the religious elite. They were the overlooked, men whose testimony wasn't even admissible in court because society considered them unreliable. They were ritually unclean most of the time, unable to participate in regular temple worship. They were doing the kind of work nobody celebrates, the kind of job you take when you don't have better options.

And yet, they were the first to hear the greatest announcement in human history. Here's what this teaches us: God doesn't choose people based on their resume. He doesn't wait for you to become impressive or important or spiritually qualified. He chooses the available. He chooses the faithful. He chooses the people who are simply showing up, doing their work, living their lives.

You might feel overlooked right now. You might feel like you're in the wrong place, doing work that doesn't matter, living a life that's too ordinary for God to notice. Maybe you're working a job that feels beneath your calling. Maybe you're in a season where you feel invisible, where your contributions go unnoticed, where you wonder if what you're doing even matters.

But the shepherds teach us something different: Your ordinary faithfulness positions you for extraordinary encounters with God. God didn't bypass the shepherds because they were unimpressive. He chose them because they were there. They were available. They were faithful in the small, unseen work of watching sheep in the dark. And that was enough.

The same is true for you. Your availability matters more than your ability. Your faithfulness in the ordinary matters more than your position in the hierarchy. God sees you. He knows where you are. And He's not waiting for you to become someone else before He meets you. He's ready to meet you right where you are, right now, in the middle of your ordinary.

TRY THIS Today

At some point today when you're doing something ordinary (your commute, a work task, household chores), pause for just ten seconds. Take a breath.

Say out loud or in your heart:

*"God, You're with me here.
I'm available to You in this moment."*

Then pay attention.
Not for lightning bolts or goosebumps, but for something subtler: a sense of peace, companionship, or just a quiet awareness that you're not alone. You're training yourself to recognize what's already true. God sees you, and your ordinary work matters to Him.

God Changed His Address

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 1:14

That phrase “made his dwelling” is easy to read past, but it’s one of the most profound statements in all of Scripture. In the original Greek, it literally means “tabernacled” or “pitched his tent.” John is making a direct connection to the Old Testament tabernacle, the place where God’s presence dwelt among the Israelites.

For fifteen hundred years, if you wanted to meet with God, you knew where to go. The tabernacle. Later, the temple. God’s presence had a specific address. It was localized, restricted, confined to sacred spaces. You had to go there. You had to bring the right sacrifice. You had to go through the proper channels. But in the incarnation, everything changed. God didn’t just visit earth. He relocated. He moved His presence from a building to a person. From the temple to Jesus. From sacred spaces to human flesh.

And here’s what that means for you: God’s presence is no longer confined to a location. It’s not in a building. It’s not restricted to “holy” places or “spiritual” moments. Through Jesus, through Holy Spirit living in you, God’s presence now goes wherever you go.

Think about what this means practically. When you wake up in the morning, God is there. When you're stuck in traffic, God is there. When you're having a difficult conversation at work, God is there. When you're doing laundry or paying bills or sitting in a waiting room, God is there. Not because those places are inherently sacred, but because His presence inhabits you.

Your kitchen table is holy ground. Your car during your commute is a sanctuary. Your workplace is a temple. Not because those places are special in themselves, but because God's presence inhabits you.

This is the revolution of Christmas: God moved from the temple to the neighbourhood. From the sacred space to the ordinary place. From there to here. From then to now. And once you see this, you can never unsee it. Every place becomes sacred. Every moment becomes an opportunity to encounter God.

TRY THIS Today

Choose one place you go regularly that feels completely "un-spiritual." Maybe your car, your office, or even the grocery store. The next time you're there, pause and look around with fresh eyes. Say quietly:

*"God, You've pitched Your tent here.
This place is sacred because You're here
with me."*

Notice how it feels to see that ordinary space differently. You're learning to recognize that there's no separation between sacred and secular anymore. Everywhere you go is holy ground because God's presence goes with you.

Learning to Hear

“See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.”

Malachi 4:5-6

*“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes,
He will guide you into all the truth.”*

John 16:13

Four hundred years. That's how long it had been since God had spoken through a prophet. Four centuries of silence. That was a unique moment in history, a pause between the old covenant and the new, before Holy Spirit would come to dwell in God's people.

But here's what changed everything: Pentecost. When Jesus ascended, He sent Holy Spirit to live in us. And that means God is no longer silent. He's always speaking, always guiding, always leading through His Spirit in you.

So when you feel like you can't hear God, when it seems like heaven is quiet, here's the truth: God isn't silent. You might be too busy to hear Him. You might be too distracted to recognize His voice. You might be listening for Him in the wrong places or in the wrong ways. But He's speaking.

Jesus promised that Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth. That's present tense. Ongoing. Continuous. The Spirit is always at work, always communicating, always leading. The question isn't "Why isn't God speaking?"

The question is “Why am I not hearing?”

Think about it like this: Your phone is always receiving signals, but if you’re in airplane mode or the volume is off, you won’t hear it ring. God is always transmitting. The issue is our reception.

Maybe you’re too busy. Maybe you’re too distracted by noise and notifications and the chaos of life. Maybe you’ve been looking for God to speak in dramatic ways and you’re missing His still, small voice in the ordinary moments. Maybe you’re so focused on what you want to hear that you’re not listening for what He’s actually saying.

The shepherds weren’t straining to hear from heaven. They were simply present, available, doing their work. And when the angel spoke, they heard it clearly because they were paying attention to the moment they were in. God is speaking. Holy Spirit is guiding. The question is: Are you creating space to hear?

TRY THIS Today

Find five minutes of complete quiet today. No phone, no music, no distractions.
Sit in silence and say:

*“Holy Spirit, You’re always speaking.
Help me hear You.”*

Then just listen. Don’t fill the silence with your own words. Pay attention to what comes to mind, what Scripture surfaces, what gentle nudges you feel. You’re not trying to make God speak. You’re creating space to hear what He’s already saying. Practice tuning in to the voice that’s always there.

Why God Chose the Ordinary

“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!”

Philippians 2:5-8

Here’s one of the most profound questions in all of Scripture: Why did God choose the ordinary?

Think about it. Jesus didn’t have to come as a baby born in a stable. He could have arrived in spectacular fashion, descending from heaven in glory, commanding immediate attention and respect. He could have been born in a palace, raised among royalty, positioned for maximum influence from day one. But He didn’t.

Paul tells us that Jesus “made himself nothing.” The Greek word is *ekenosen*, which literally means “emptied himself.” Jesus, who existed in the very nature of God, who had all the glory and power of heaven at His disposal, chose to empty Himself of those privileges. He took on “the very nature of a servant.” He was “made in human likeness.”

This wasn’t God visiting humanity. This was God becoming human. Fully human. With all the limitations, vulnerabilities, and ordinariness that comes with it. But why? Why would God choose this path?

Because the incarnation wasn't just about showing up. It was about identification. Jesus didn't come to stand above us and command us. He came to stand beside us and understand us. He chose the ordinary because that's where we live. He chose humility because that's what we need.

When Jesus "made himself nothing," He was demonstrating something revolutionary about the kingdom of God: It doesn't operate through power and spectacle. It operates through humility and service. It doesn't advance through force. It advances through love.

The shepherds received the announcement of the King's birth not because they were important, but because the King Himself had chosen to be unimportant. He chose their world. He chose their reality. He chose the ordinary.

And in doing so, He sanctified it. He made it holy. He showed us that God's greatest work doesn't happen in the spotlight. It happens in the stable. In the carpenter's shop. In the ordinary, humble, everyday moments of life.

This is the posture of Christ: choosing to empty yourself, choosing humility over recognition, choosing service over status, choosing the ordinary over the spectacular.

TRY THIS Today

Today, look for one opportunity to imitate Christ's posture of humility. Maybe it's choosing to serve someone when you'd rather be served. Maybe it's taking the lower position instead of seeking recognition. Maybe it's doing something ordinary and unseen that no one will notice or applaud.

As you do it, say quietly:
*"Jesus, You chose this path.
Help me follow You in it."*

You're learning that the way up in God's kingdom is down. The way to greatness is through humility. The way to glory is through the ordinary.

The Kingdom Grows Small

“He told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.’ He told them still another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.’” Matthew 13:31-33

Jesus had a fascinating way of teaching about the kingdom of God. He didn't use images of armies or empires or spectacular displays of power. He used mustard seeds and yeast. The smallest seed. The hidden ingredient.

Both parables teach us the same truth: God's kingdom advances in ordinary, hidden ways. The mustard seed is tiny. Almost insignificant. You could lose it in the palm of your hand. But when it's planted, it grows into something substantial. Not overnight. Not with fanfare. Slowly, quietly, steadily. Until one day, it's a tree large enough for birds to nest in.

The yeast is even more hidden. You can't see it working. You mix it into the dough and it disappears. But it's active. It's spreading. It's transforming the entire batch from the inside out. Not through force, but through presence. This is how God's kingdom works. Not through spectacular events that everyone notices, but through small, ordinary acts of faithfulness that most people miss.

A conversation where you speak truth in love. A moment of patience when you want to react in anger. A choice to forgive when you have every right to hold a grudge. A decision to serve when no one's watching. A prayer whispered in the middle of your workday. A small act of generosity. A word of encouragement.

These feel insignificant. They feel ordinary. They feel like they don't matter in the grand scheme of things. But they're mustard seeds. They're yeast. They're the way God's kingdom advances.

The shepherds witnessed the birth of the King in the most ordinary circumstances imaginable. A baby in a manger. No armies. No fanfare. Just a small, vulnerable child in an unremarkable town. And that small beginning changed the entire world.

God's kingdom doesn't grow through spectacle. It grows through faithfulness in small things. Through ordinary obedience. Through hidden acts of love that no one sees but God.

Don't despise the small things. Don't overlook the ordinary moments. That's where the kingdom is advancing. That's where transformation happens. Small seeds. Hidden yeast. Ordinary faithfulness.

TRY THIS Today

Today, look for one small, ordinary way you can advance God's kingdom.

Maybe it's a kind word to someone who's struggling. Maybe it's choosing patience in a frustrating moment.

Maybe it's a small act of generosity no one will know about.

Don't wait for the big opportunity. Plant a mustard seed. Mix in some yeast. Do the small, ordinary thing God puts in front of you. You're learning that God's kingdom doesn't just advance through spectacular moments. It advances through faithful obedience in ordinary ones.

From Scattered to Gathered

“And let us consider how we may spur one another

on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:24-25

“I rejoiced with those who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD.’” Psalm 122:1

All week, you’ve been learning to recognize God’s presence in your ordinary life. In your work, your commute, your chaos, your everyday moments. You’ve been practicing awareness of Him in the scattered rhythms of Monday through Saturday.

But here’s what’s beautiful: All of that prepares you for what happens tomorrow.

The writer of Hebrews tells us not to give up meeting together. Why? Because there’s something powerful, something irreplaceable, something essential about the gathered church that we can’t experience in the scattered church. When we gather for corporate worship, we’re not just showing up out of obligation. We’re coming together as the body of Christ to do something we can’t do alone. We spur one another on. We encourage one another. We remind each other of truths we forget when we’re scattered throughout the week.

The Psalmist says, “I rejoiced with those who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the LORD.’” There’s joy in gathering. There’s strength in corporate worship. There’s power in unified praise.

But here's the connection to this week: When you've spent Monday through Saturday learning to see God in your ordinary moments, you come to Sunday worship with different eyes. You're not coming to "find" God because you've been walking with Him all week. You're coming to celebrate what you've already been experiencing. You're coming to worship corporately what you've been worshipping individually.

The scattered church and the gathered church aren't separate. They're connected. Your Monday through Saturday faithfulness prepares your heart for Sunday worship. And Sunday worship strengthens you for Monday through Saturday faithfulness.

The shepherds didn't keep their encounter with God to themselves. Luke tells us they went and told everyone what they had seen and heard. They gathered others. They shared the good news. They brought people together around what God had done.

Tomorrow, when you gather with your church family, you're continuing what the shepherds started. You're coming together to celebrate that God is with us in the ordinary. You're joining your voice with others who have been walking with God all week. You're being reminded that you're not alone in this journey.

TRY THIS **Today**

As you prepare for church tomorrow, take a few minutes to reflect on this week. Where did you see God in your ordinary moments?

What did you learn about His presence?

Write down one or two things you want to thank God for when you gather with your church family tomorrow.

Come to worship not as someone hoping to find God, but as someone who has been walking with Him all week and is ready to celebrate that with others. You're learning that the scattered church and the gathered church both matter. And when you're faithful in both, your faith comes alive in ways you never imagined.

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

*“But Mary treasured up all these things
and pondered them in her heart.”*

Luke 2:19

As we close out this first week, I want you to do what Mary did: treasure up what you’ve been learning and ponder it in your heart.

This week, we’ve been unpacking one revolutionary truth: God moved His presence from holy places to ordinary places. He chose the field over the temple. He chose the shepherds over the priests. He chose the ordinary over the religious. And that changes everything.

It changes how you see your work. It’s not separate from your spiritual life; it’s sacred ground.

It changes how you see your struggles. God isn’t waiting for them to be over; He’s with you in the middle of them.

It changes how you see your December. It’s not too chaotic for God; it’s exactly where He wants to meet you.

But here’s what I want you to know: We’re just getting started.

I hope you can join us at church today, because we’re going to go even deeper into this truth. I can’t wait to share with you what we’re going to discover together. Jesus didn’t just visit ordinary life. He lived it. For thirty years.

He worked with His hands. He dealt with difficult customers. He experienced financial pressure. He knew what it was like to be misunderstood by His family. He lived in a small town where people didn't think much of Him. He experienced everything you experience.

And that means something profound: He doesn't just show up in your ordinary. He understands it. He's been there. He knows what it's like. Think about what that means. When you're exhausted from work, Jesus knows that feeling. He worked long days in a carpenter shop. When you're frustrated with family dynamics, Jesus knows that feeling. His own brothers didn't believe in Him. When you feel overlooked or underestimated, Jesus knows that feeling. People dismissed Him because of where He came from.

He doesn't just accompany you in your ordinary life. He identifies with it. He gets it. He's been there.

So as you head into this next week, carry this truth with you: God is with you in the ordinary. And today, we'll discover that He doesn't just accompany you there. He identifies with you there. He knows what it's like. And that changes everything.

TRY THIS Today

Take five minutes today to reflect on this past week. Where did you notice God's presence in an ordinary moment? Write it down or tell someone about it. Then, as you look ahead to this coming week, identify one ordinary situation where you need to remember that Jesus doesn't just show up. He understands.

Maybe it's a difficult work situation, a family tension, or a place where you feel overlooked. Say to Him:
"Jesus, You've been here. You know what this is like. Help me see You in this."

You're learning to treasure these truths and let them change how you live.



springschurch.com