

Connections

December 2025

Blessing of Not Seeing by Megan Hill, The Gospel Coalition

Read

Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29)

Reflect

The Advent story is filled with people who got to see Jesus face-to-face. Mary and Joseph, of course, were the first to set eyes on God in human flesh, to hold his hands, to kiss his feet. They were quickly joined by others. The shepherds arrived next: "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see," they told one another (Luke 2:15). Simeon also saw the child—even held him in his arms (Luke 2:28). Anna saw him (Luke 2:36–38). The wise men saw him (Matt. 2:10–11). And those initial visitors were just a small fraction of the multitudes who would soon come to sit at the incarnate Savior's feet.

I confess to feeling a little jealous.

I'd like to see Jesus too. I'd like to gaze on his face—to learn the contour of his chin and the color of his eyes. I'd like to hear his voice with physical ears. I'd like to touch his hands and worship at his feet. Thankfully, today's verse speaks to everyone born too late to be at either the manger or the tomb. We haven't seen our Savior face-to-face. But Jesus says we are blessed.

We are those of whom Peter says, "Though you have not seen him, you love him" (1 Pet. 1:8), and who Paul says "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). While the crowds in Jesus's earthly lifetime often sought him for the dazzle of a miracle or the spectacle of a sign, we seek our unseen Savior by faith—a faith that could only come from his Spirit. If we haven't seen and yet still believe, we can have confidence that he lives with us and is at work in us (cf. John 14:17). Truly, we are blessed.

The manger is empty, and the tomb is empty too. Ultimately, it would be foolish to look for Christ in either of those places. Instead, we turn the eyes of faith heavenward, "[seeking] the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1). Do we want to see Jesus? We must seek him where he is. We approach him in worship, we seek him in prayer, and we gaze on him in his Word. We may not have made it to Bethlehem on that starry night, but Christ is nevertheless



present with us by his Word and Spirit—particularly in the gathering of his church.

We may not have touched his swaddling cloths or heard his newborn cries, but we have everything we need to experience him. His sensible signs are bread and wine, his voice resounds from a pulpit and a page, his eyes and ears and hands are on display in the weekly assembly of his beloved body.

And one day, just as he ascended, he will return. Writing from his lonely exile on Patmos, John encourages our hearts: "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him" (Rev. 1:7).

"Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20).

Respond

Would you like to see Jesus? In what ways is walking by faith a blessing? How do you experience Christ by faith?

Rejoice

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by, We shall see him, but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high; When like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.

– Cecil Frances Alexander, "Once in Royal David's City"

Merry Christmas

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6

Christmas Caroling Outreach

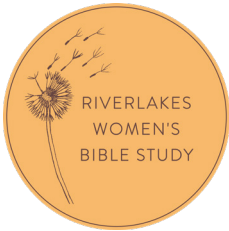


Saturday, December 13 at 8:00am
Meet in RCC North Parking Lot
Spread some Christmas cheer as we sing Christmas carols for our friends at a local assisted living facility. We'll meet at the RCC North Parking Lot at 8:00am and make our way from there. Bring Christmas colored clothes, Santa hats, and your lovely singing voices. All ages and abilities welcome!

Christmas Eve Services



December 24
2:00pm and 4:00pm
Join us as we celebrate Christ's birth then stay after (or come early) to enjoy homemade Christmas goodies between the services. We invite you to join us for worship as an entire family. Childcare will be provided for children aged 3 and under.



Women's Bible Study

Draw close to the Lord and other women, find support and grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ in a small group environment. You may choose Thursday mornings or Tuesday evenings for fellowship, discussion, prayer, and encouragement. Join us as we walk through the books of 1 & 2 Corinthians. A children's program is available for both morning and evening groups.

RiverLakes Women – Tuesday PM

Education Bldg. – Room 210/212
Tuesdays @ 6:00 -8:00 pm
Contact: Women's Office 589-9733
Registration Fee: \$25
Childcare provided

RiverLakes Women – Thursday AM

Community Center
Thursdays @ 9:30am-11:30am
Contact: Women's Office 589-9733
Registration Fee: \$25
Childcare provided

Christmas Fest



Saturday, December 20
11:00am - 2:00pm
Riverview Assembly of God Church
(315 May St., 93308)
We are throwing a special Christmas event to reach our neighbors in Oildale. This event will feature lunch, goods and gifts, live music, bounce houses, and carnival style booths and games. If you would like to help make this event happen, contact the church office.

Christmas Missionary Offering



It's our tradition at RCC to raise additional support for our missionaries at Christmas. It's our way of thanking and encouraging them for their faithful service. Please prayerfully consider your support. Payments can be made online (designate a specific missionary in the "notes" field) or by check with "Christmas Missionary Offering" in the memo. A list of our endorsed and supported missionaries can be found at the Next Steps Center or on our website.