



**A Daily Delivery  
of Advent Appetizers  
for Teens and Young Adults**





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From “in the beginning when God created an all-you-can-eat buffet restaurant,” to the baby laid in a feedbox, the fun, thoughtful devotions in this little booklet follow food through the Bible ... and stretch a metaphor to its breaking point! All to add a little “spice” to the celebration of Advent for teens and young adults. This book is sure to teach a little something on our journey to Bethlehem and the delivering Lord we find there!

# Hungry?

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

—Matthew 5:6

That's not a bad way to begin Advent.

No ... I mean it. Really. *Hungry* is a pretty good emotion ... or feeling ... or desire.

Although *hungry* isn't the way we usually put it. How about *yearning*? Or *searching*? Or *wanting*? Or *hoping*?

Yeah ... that's the word that you may hear in church: *Hoping*.

Not a bad word. But a bit ... well ... overused, don't you think?

This Advent let's use *hungry* instead. Let's own that word. Let's dive into that peculiar feeling. That hollowness in the tummy. That hole in the gut. Let's call *hope* what it is: HUNGER—a deep-seated desire that needs to be filled.



Jesus was laid in a manger, after all. A FEEDBOX. A place little lambs went to satisfy their hunger.

Do I have to point out the fact that WE'RE called Jesus' little lambs? Hungry and hoping?

Let's push the metaphor to the outer reaches of its limit and explore the hunger of the

season of Advent—the season of hungry hope.

And while we're dishing out plates to satisfy our Advent hunger, let's make it interesting. Let's be generous with the seasonings this season to make a truly appetizing Christmas!

# What Are You Hungry For?

*Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."*

*—John 6:35*

"So," she asked, "are you a salty or a sweet?"

"Huh?" came my reply.

"When you really need a snack," she said, "do you go for chips ... or ice cream?"

"Oh," I finally got it. "Definitely chips. You know, tortilla chips with salsa and queso. Potato chips and French onion dip. You know what I mean? Awesome!"

"Hmmm. I'm more of an ice cream person," she replied.

And so ended an early relationship.

What is it that gets your taste buds budding? That makes your salivary glands go crazy? What puts your car in cruise control toward the local diner, drive-in or dive?

Beyond food, though, what are you *hungry* for?

How about MEANING ... and TRUTH ... and ANSWERS ... and "Purpose"? How about BELONGING ... and LOVE ... and ETERNITY? Those are the things our God offers through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Spend some time today contemplating that question: What are you hungry for? What are you really looking for in life?

# Do You Deliver?

## Part One

*The LORD is gracious and merciful. He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.*

*—Psalm 111:4b-5*

It's not really a laugh-out-loud joke. Maybe just a raise-of-the-eyebrow joke. Hey, it may not even strike you as being funny at all.

But it makes me chuckle. Asking of the season of Advent, "Do you deliver?" I mean. Because ... well ... we're waiting for a baby to be born, right?

So on that level (baby ... labor and DELIVERY ... get it?) it is a cute line.

And on a completely different level, Advent is all about waiting for God to deliver US. Because we have a God who delivers!

God sends us everything we need, after all. And many of the things we want too: Food, family, friends, fun.

More importantly (and more to the point as we contemplate Advent), God's in the *deliverance* business. God has delivered his people from the waters of the flood (Noah) ... from the bonds of slavery (Moses) ... from sin and from death. And God will deliver us, at last, to heaven's gates and into eternal life.

For today think about that. God is in the delivery business. And this Advent we're going to be exploring how God goes about doing that business. We're going to be asking the question (of Advent and of God), "Do you deliver?" And I'm pretty sure you already know the answer.

What has God delivered to you? How has God delivered you?



# Carryout Isn't an Option!

*Make haste, O God, to deliver me! O LORD, make haste to help me!*

*—Psalm 70:1*

Yesterday we noodled with the funny question, “Do you deliver?”

Today the humor drains right out of that question as we explore the more serious side of it ...

... the DEADLY serious side of it.

This is what I mean: it is vitally important that Advent (and God) DOES deliver. We NEED what God has to offer us. We need God's delivery. We need God's deliverance.

How do I know that? Well ... for one thing, I drive by a graveyard each day on my way to work. And while I don't know a great deal about my own future, and while I know even less about statistics, the one thing I know for sure is that I'm going to end up in a graveyard just like that one someday. Everyone is. Because the one statistic I'm sure of is this one: the ratio of deaths to human lives is one to one.

What God offers—what God DELIVERS—is hope beyond the grave. God is fit to deliver to us nothing less than paradise itself. Forever.

It is not something we can get for ourselves. Pickup isn't an option. Carryout, in this case, does not exist. It has to be brought to us. We need it delivered.

The question “Do you deliver?” is more than important. It's more than vital. It's more than essential. It's more than serious. It's DEADLY serious.

Do you have daily (or weekly, or monthly, or yearly) reminders of your mortality? What are they?

# All You Can Eat

*And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.*

*—Genesis 1:29-31*

In the beginning God created ... a RESTAURANT.

And it was good. I mean REALLY good. From its hundred-percent organically grown produce, to its fine checkered linens, to its dress code (which was extremely lax).

And God said, "Let there be LIGHT!" And flames sprang to life on each table's beeswax candles. And crystal chandeliers sparkled. And beautiful wall sconces shimmered with the sort of indirect lighting you can only get if you hire one of those expensive interior decorators featured regularly on HGTV. And it was good.

And God said, "Let there be a BUFFET!" And BAM, there was a buffet—broad and expansive with rows of chafing dishes and with those fancy ice swans that sculptors carve with small electric chain saws. And it was very good!

And God said, "Let there be CUSTOMERS!" And God (the Maitre d') welcomed them into this perfect restaurant saying, "Eat! Eat your fill and then some! Fill your plates to overflowing, and then come get some more. And don't worry about the bill. Just bring it to the desk whenever you feel like it, and I'll sign off on it for you. Consider yourselves comped! You are my guests. I am your host!" And it was very good. Very, VERY good ...



# Dine-and-Dash

*So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

*—Genesis 3:6*

... and Eve leaned over to Adam and said, “Hey ... let’s dine-and-dash!”

And a sneaky little smile crept across Adam’s face.

And a mischievous twinkle sparkled in his eyes. And he said, “Yeah ... who does that Maitre d’ think he is, anyway—making us turn in this bill to be signed off on? If this is supposed to be free, why are there all these strings attached?”

“Exactly what I was thinking!” Eve whispered. “Who DOES that Maitre d’ think he is?”

And those two naughty, naughty customers snuck out of that restaurant. But as they crossed the threshold of the door a voice boomed behind them, “I’m your HOST. That’s who I am. And you were my GUESTS.”

And the door slammed behind those two. And they could hear the bolt slide shut. And a “Closed” sign turned over in the front window.

And it was very NOT good!



# ★ ADVENT ★ SEASONINGS

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