



# FINDING “THE PRESENT” OF CHRISTMAS

## Setting

Classroom setting, whiteboard, Teacher at podium with white board; chairs or stools for students (all but one will remain empty, since only one student comes to class)

## Characters:

Narrator

Teacher

Sybil - the student

MIND (Imaginations/Logic/Reason) - nerdy, glasses (stack of books), pocket protector/pens highlighters

WILL (Desires/Lust/Flesh) - athletic, strong, confident and pushy, dressed in workout clothes, doing stretches/lunges, etc. when not engaged.

EMOTIONS (Fear/Anger/etc) - box of tissues, chocolates, over-dramatic, everything is life or death

SPIRIT - even temperament, not pushy or arrogant (with Bible and/or halo)

Uniform identical name tag for everyone, large for audience to see “MIND” “WILL” etc.

## Props

“syllabus”

Uniform identical name tag for everyone, large for audience to see “MIND” “WILL”

“EMOTIONS” “SPIRIT”

Emotions: Christmas box of tissues?

Clipboard for Will/Flesh

## Finding “the Present” of Christmas

**Narrator:** Welcome to a class being offered tonight by the Holy Institute of Deeper Learning. It's a refresher course offered only during the holidays. Holiday stress can hit all of us, and we need reminders to keep us on track.

Meet Sybil B. Fuddle (*she walks in and sits*). She is accompanied, as always, by her MIND (*Mind enters*), her WILL (*Will enters*), her EMOTIONS (*Emotions enters*) and her SPIRIT (*Spirit enters*).

While Sybil knows and follows the Lord, she is still susceptible to the pressures of holiday expectations. How will she handle Christmas this year? How will she face this year's challenges? Will she eat the first batch of Christmas fudge herself? Will she overspend and have January regrets? Will the year end with all the extended family still speaking?

**Teacher:** Well , it's a short attendance list. Sybil B. Fuddle

**All students:** (*together*) Here!

**Teacher:** (*stays enthusiastic*) Sybil, we meet again! And you're my only student again today! You must have really gotten a lot out of our last semester class. Glad you're back! Are you ready to get right into it?

**All:** Yes, ma'am!

**Teacher:** Here's your outline for today's class. As you can see, it is a condensed study: Christmas 101: Dispelling the Christmas Myths in the Midst of Commercial Chaos and Finding the True Meaning in the Holiday within the Scope of Eschatological Theology.

**All:** (*with confused head tilt (like a dog)*) Huh??

**Teacher:** Let me simplify. Basically, we're going to learn to navigate the holiday, not unnerved and unstrung, but wrapped in His calming presence. It's December 10--how are you doing so far, Sybil?

**Sybil:** As soon I saw the course catalog, I signed up as quickly as I could...does that answer your question? I've got so many things going on, activities planned, parties, guests, gifts to buy and wrap...I'm already overwhelmed! How can I get it all done and fit it all in?

**Mind:** Why does Christmas have to be so close to Thanksgiving, first of all? Why not spread out the holidays? It makes no sense anyway--December 25 is most likely not the real date of Jesus' birthday. Research has shown that Jesus was probably born in the spring. This isn't even logical, and we put ourselves through the ringer...for what?

**Emotions:** How can you say that, mija? Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year. It's not always easy, there's lots to do, and decisions to make about gifts. You remember how Tia Margaret totally left us out last year? Why should we get her a gift? It make me so sad...she hurt my feelings. I don't even want her around on Christmas Eve (*a little crying*).

**Will:** Hold on! (*pulls out clipboard*) I have my shopping list, and I'm ready to jingle my bells and hit the mall. So, is Aunt Margaret on the list or off the list? These are things I need to know. I have two available days to shop, and I'm already going to hit the crowds because you guys can't get your act together. Margaret or no Margaret? I've got a lot to do in a little time.

**Mind:** Why are we even going thru this hassle again? Do we really need another Chia Pet? There's just no accurate formula for successfully determining what to buy these people. So, what's the point? Do we continue to hand out presents just because we're expected to?

**Will and Emotions:** YES! (Si!)

**Will:** We want presents, so we need to give some out. That's the way it works!

**Emotions:** (*angry*) You don't want to see me if I don't get my pile of presents.

**Flesh:** Presents is why I do what I do, and do, and do...(*flashes clipboard around*)

**Spirit:** You're out of control, girl! We know presents and activities are not the true meaning of Christmas. We've made giving presents a part of the holiday, but we can't let it take over and control the holiday.

**Teacher:** Sybil?

**Sybil:** I guess the giving of presents is fraught with peril. It's hard to maneuver through all the pitfalls and expectations of the holiday culture and the shopping.

**Teacher:** You're absolutely right. And it's your lucky day Sybil, because I'm going to give you a quick grammar lesson right now. We relate Christmas to shopping and presents: P-R-E-S-E-N-T-S which is a reality of the holiday in America. However, I want you to look at Christmas from a different perspective. What if we make presence P-R-E-S-E-N-C-E, His presence, the focus of the holiday? How would that change what you do?

**Sybil:** Good question. Let me think for a second.

**Spirit:** That's it. We've been missing the point. And we know better than to put the emphasis on gifts. We've allowed ourself to get caught up in the world's concept of Christmas, and we've forgotten the true reason behind gift-giving, the Christmas dinners, the caroling, sending cards, and Christmas baking.

**Emotions:** I love every one of those things --they make the holiday feel all warm and cozy. We can't leave anything out.

**Flesh:** Cookies! - I forgot cookies! I need to make out my grocery list (*starts scribbling on the list*)!

**Mind:** You're right. The details aren't important. Our objective should be to keep Jesus as the main focus of all our holiday festivities. It just makes sense.

**Spirit:** “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” That’s the answer. It will all fall into place and be enjoyable if we purpose to seek Him first. Not only that, but “In His presence is fullness of joy!” Not only will the stress level go down, but the joy level will go UP!

**Teacher:** Sybil?

**Sybil:** How would I change things to keep His presence top priority? Well, we don’t have to give up the gifts or the wrapping or the dinners or the cookies or the cards. We just need to include Him in each of those things, not as an afterthought, but as our first priority. Our stress level will go down, and we’ll experience the joy of being in His presence.

**Teacher:** Good answer, Sybil. Now I remember how smart and intuitive you are. Now to put this into practice, why don’t you start the day during this holiday season, by giving your day to Him and asking Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit? When we do that, He is faithful to lead and guide us, and even help you make your to-do list. Let’s face it, these weeks ahead are going to be brutal. So we need the Holy Spirit and God’s peace to bring us through the chaos. Knowing He is by our side will make a world of difference. In fact, you may even find yourself enjoying all the commotion.

**Narrator:** Sybil is not alone in her struggles during the Christmas season. We all need the reminder that it is possible for us to actually enjoy Christmas in the midst of all its craziness. If we wrap ourselves in His presence, we won’t need fudge to comfort us; in His presence, our gift giving will put love over extravagance and trying to impress; in His presence, we can be a blessing to our families and handle difficult people with His grace. MERRY CHRISTMAS!!