

First Wednesday in Advent – 2024

Wednesday, 12/4 at 11 am & 7 pm



Intro
and
Days 12
& 11

Text: Matthew 10:1-4 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends: This is **Part 1** of a **6-Part** series on “**The 12 Days of Christmas.**” Listen to [Pentatonix](#) sing it...

This sermon: ✓ The purpose of Advent, ✓ the reason for **The 12 Days of Christmas**, ✓ the sixteenth-century danger of being a Roman Catholic, and ✓ the meaning of days 12 & 11.

1. **The Season of Advent:**

- a. Beginning: On the *fourth Sunday before Christmas*.
- b. Meaning: Coming – Jesus came to save us and will come again to take all believers to His Father’s house.
- c. Moods: **Advent** – *sorrow for sin*; **Christmas** – *forgiveness, peace, and joy*.
- d. Activities: ▶ Be sorry for our sins, ▶ prepare to celebrate Jesus’ birth, and ▶ be ready for His return.
- e. Materialistic: ▶ Decorating, ▶ shopping, and ▶ parties.

May this series cause us to make some Christ-centered changes in the ways each of us proceed through the Seasons of **Advent** and **Christmas**.

2. **The History Behind the 12 Days of Christmas:**

- a. Which 12 Days? In the Church Year (*Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, etc.*), the Season of Christmas has 12 days: **December 25** ➔ **January 5** (*Jan. 6 is the Day of the Epiphany, which begins the Season of Epiphany*).
- b. Celebrating Christmas: Long ago, people celebrated Christmas for all 12 days, *which included going to church on each of the 12 days!*
- c. The Origin and Purpose: Roman Catholic priests wrote ***The 12 Days of Christmas*** to disguise their teachings.
- d. Why was Disguising Necessary? **“Teaching the Catholic faith was outlawed in [1558]. [Queen Mary persecuted Protestants (1554-58). Then her sister, Elizabeth, persecuted Catholics (1558-1603).] Those who instructed their children in Catholicism could be drawn and quartered (which was a very horrible form of capital punishment). Thus, the church went underground. To hide the important and illegal elements of their teaching, clerics composed poems... [such as] ‘The Twelve Days of Christmas.’”**¹
- e. It was Easier Then Than Now: **“In ancient times... few people worked in the dead of winter.... So, devoting a dozen days to prayer, reflection, and attending church was not a huge undertaking. Yet with the coming of the Industrial Age and the regular year-round work schedules... the twelve days of Christmas became all but impossible for most people”** (Ibid., 164-165).

¹ Ace Collins, Stories Behind the Great Traditions of Christmas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, 163.

3. **The Order of This Series:** Rather than go from **1 to 12**; we will go from **12 to 1**, *arriving at 1 on **Christmas Day**, which is the first day of Christmas!*
4. **The Giver and Receivers:** The Giver, “**My True Love**,” is God the Father. The receivers are all who trust in Jesus.
5. **Day 12 – 12 Drummers Drumming:** *The 12 Points of Belief in the Apostles’ Creed*. It was thought *at one time* that each of the 12 apostles wrote one point of belief in the creed, *but that is unlikely*. The Old Roman Creed, *in written form by 180*, may have developed into the Apostles’ Creed. The earliest appearance of what we know as the Apostles’ Creed was written between 710 and 714.² *The Apostles’ Creed is a summary of the Bible. These are the 12 points of belief:*
 - 1) I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. // **Father** – Almighty, maker!
 - 2) And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; // **Son** – the Christ, named Jesus, who is our Lord!
 - 3) who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary; // **Mystery** – conception, virgin born!
 - 4) suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; // **Paid** – our eternal penalty!
 - 5) He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; // **Victory Tour** – hell and earth!
 - 6) He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; // **Ascended, Reigning!**
 - 7) From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. // **Coming** – to reveal each person’s destiny!

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apostles%27_Creed

- 8) I believe in the Holy Spirit; // **Third Person** – of the Holy Trinity and daily blessing us in countless ways!
- 9) the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; // **Believers** – the body of Christ, united together!
- 10) the forgiveness of sins; // **Received** through Jesus!
- 11) the resurrection of the body; // **When** Jesus returns!
- 12) and the life everlasting. Amen. // **Eternal** happiness!

6. **Day 11 – 11 Pipers Piping:** *The 11 Faithful Disciples*. The 12 and the authority they received: **Matthew 10:1-4** Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. ² Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called **Peter**, and **Andrew** his brother; and **James the son of Zebedee**, and **John** his brother; ³ **Philip** and **Bartholomew**; **Thomas** and **Matthew** the tax collector; **James the son of Alphaeus**, and **Thaddaeus**; ⁴ **Simon** the Zealot, and **Judas** Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him. // Sadly, Judas, *numbered among the 12*, betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

Join us next Wednesday to keep learning the song, growing in Jesus, and getting ready to celebrate His birth!

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, *our True Love*, **TY** for gifting us with this song, the Apostles' Creed, and the example of the 11 faithful apostles. *Keep us true to Your word and Your Son!*

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