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# Five Quick Tips for Planning Christmas

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Christmas is supposed to be the most wonderful time of year. But often as a Pastor or Church Staff member, it can feel more like chaos than calm.

*By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail.*  
– Benjamin Franklin

On average, Pastors spend 10 ½ hours preparing each message. It is an arduous journey, especially when the sermon topic is exactly the same year over year. By preparing in advance, you ensure that one of the biggest boulders on your plate is finished so you can focus on your team and your congregation.

Planning isn't just about good ideas or fail-safes, it's good stewardship. If a church is planning more than 3 months in advance, they are way more likely to be a growing church.

*The plans of the diligent lead to profit.*  
– Proverbs 21:5

## **5 Key Principles to Planning Christmas Services**

While it's not the easiest of seasons for Church Leaders, there are 5 key principles to making this season not only less exhausting but also more effective.

**1. Start talking about Christmas earlier than you're used to.**

The music industry is releasing music about 2 weeks earlier than usual because they know people are ready for it. Start talking about Christmas in October in your church.

**2. Prepare your sermon series at least a month in advance.**

This takes a lot of mental energy, and is often the bottleneck for things like series design and invite cards.

**3. Plan for online and in-person and recognize that these may be two different programs.**

In this case, you might not just want to stream an in-person service; you might want to create content exclusively for an online audience.

**4. Narrow your asks.**

Really understand what you're asking people to do, and make sure you aren't spreading your CTA's (Call To Action's) too thin. Consider the constraint of two CTA's; a CTA for a church member and a CTA for a non-church member.

**5. Make Christmas more about your community and less about your church.**

How can you tell your city about the Christmas Story? Provide invitational resources through Facebook posts, invite cards, and online events.

***Free Resource for Planning Christmas***

We're going to dive deeper into these ideas and help you create a complete Christmas plan in a free training on September 30. Join more than 1,000 other pastors already registered and [sign up here](#).

On the training, we're going to talk about...

- How to communicate to your community
- How to prepare for guests, whether in-person or online

- What you should focus on and what you should let go of
- How to encourage your people to invite and spread the word