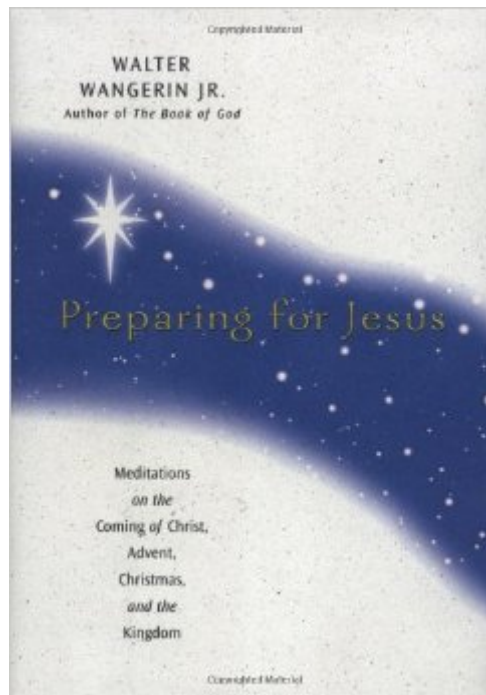


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# Preparing For Jesus: Meditations On The Coming Of Christ, Advent, Christmas And The Kingdom



## Synopsis

In *Preparing for Jesus*, best-selling author and master storyteller Walter Wangerin Jr. recreates verbal images of the events surrounding the Advent of Christ, offering a devotional journey into the heart of the Christmas season. Through rich detail and vivid images, these moving meditations make Christ's birth both intimate and immediate, allowing us to see Christmas from its original happening to its perennial recurrence in our hearts. *Preparing for Jesus* is sure to be a seasonal classic, treasured year after year.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I enjoyed using this little book during this past Advent and Christmas. Walter Wangerin Jr. has used his wonderful gift writing to give us a series of daily meditations that are a great help in focusing the mind, heart and imagination of the reader on the deepest significance of Christmas. We follow the events of the first Christmas from with scripture accompanied by short writings, poetry and prayer. Wangerin's writing varies between dramatization, exposition and application of the Christmas story to our lives. If you relax and let the author and the Holy Spirit have their way, the book will help you break through the confusion and frenzied cultural activity that often accompany Advent and touch the deeper meaning of the season. It doesn't drop you after Christmas Day but carries you through the 12 days of Christmas, gently releasing you at the beginning of Epiphany. It will leave you feeling like you've been there: at the Manger and help you go and live out the significance of Christ's coming to us in your own life. I highly recommend this book, I thought it was even more effective

than Wangerin's similar--and also very good--book for Lent and Easter, "Reliving the Passion".

This little book by Walter Wanegrin is a series of meditations on the coming of Christ, Advent, Christmas and the Kingdom. The entries are divided up by a Scripture reference, Wanegrin's writing, and then a prayer at the end of the section. Overall, I thought the book was interesting in its approach. For some characters in the Scriptures, Wanegrin's seems to want to get into their head, for others he looks historically at what it might have looked like in Jesus' time. What caught me by surprise in reading was the particular way Wanegrin drew us into the story of Jesus and let us see some details that we might have missed before. For instance, "But here in a child comes God, the light! And light in darkness is a frightening thing" (60). He earlier mentions our condition as (we should be that walking dead) and yet we dwell with God and with his Son. Wanegrin tenderly draws us to the profound truths of the gospel story in a way that is both unique and surprising. There is a beautiful section of writing in one part of this book on the shepherds. Wanegrin goes onto write that "...we run to the Son of God, who knows each of our names, and who will call us by our names, and whose very call will empower us to follow. From sorrow we run to joy. From hatreds we run to love. From antagonisms we run to peace. From sickness we run to the healer" (134-135). The section here is a window into what the shepherds diligent searching for the little baby Jesus might take us to. Each year we are confronted with a list of tasks and responsibilities too big to handle, and yet as Wanegrin indicates, we are called to come run to the Savior. There is rich sense of wonder here at the grace and mercy of Jesus. Wanegrin confronts both the fear of men and the shallow longings we run after when the feast of plenty is before us in Christ. Overall, this book was a good book on getting into the seasonal year of the church, but more importantly taking a closer look at the faith that matters. How? Wanegrin runs the terrain by getting into the story of the Bible, God's story and allowing us to see the beauty of the Savior. The devotional aspect of this book is very good in seeing how the pieces of the story fit into the pieces of the Christian life. Although this devotional is not heavy on the theology and history of the story of Jesus, we did get a profound sense of the mystery and grace of God in the arrival of his Son. Thanks to Zondervan for providing this review copy.

This book contains a few pages of Scripture-based meditation for each of the 25 days before Christmas ("Advent") plus similar meditations for each of the traditional "12 Days of Christmas" after Christmas. You will learn more than you expected, and it will be relevant to the true meaning of Christmas. The book is small, and somehow bridges scholarly research and deep thought with

relatively easy reading. Easily scaled down for family reading, it's an exceptional idea for a lasting family Christmas tradition. Highly recommended.

Preparing for Jesus by Walter Wangerin Jr. is an Advent devotional that takes us up to Christmas and the 12 days after. If I could, I'd buy one for each member of my congregation, family, and neighborhood. Walter Wangerin writes in a way that places the reader right there in the story. The feelings, thoughts, and reasons for the characters' actions in such vivid imagery, that you become part of the character, or you are placed directly in the scene as it happens. Such as Joseph helping Mary with the birth of Jesus. I highly recommend this meditation. Wangerin also wrote a devotional entitled: Reliving the Passion, which is equally as good, focusing more on those around Jesus, than Jesus himself. A bit of history, such as the Centurian who had a lot of men under him, and yet when bid to do something, he was counted on to get it done.

What a great book. If you read Wangerin's Easter book (Reliving the Passion) it is very similar in style and process. Suggested that you read a chapter daily during Advent. The chapters are SHORT and even I could muster the self discipline to read one a day, easily done during a cup of coffee in the morning or tv commercial in the evening. Be careful if you read this book. By the time Christmas comes you'll be so pumped about the birth of Jesus that every other gift you receive or give will seem like a disappointment. Excellent.

This year I wanted to be focused during the season as I went through the busy holidays. I had read Walter Wangerin's book for Easter, "Reliving The Passion", (which I HIGHLY recommend!), and so was pretty sure I would enjoy his preparations for Christmas. This book did NOT disappoint. Each day was insightful, relevant, had depth and was written in his usual, poetic style. I will read through it again next year!

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