

# Christmas conversations

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# INTRODUCTION

For most of us, Christmas is the busiest time of the year: shopping, baking, decorating, parties, travel, people, and gifts. They are all done at a fast and furious pace, lest you disappoint anyone around you. Don't get me wrong—all of that is fun. Well, at least, a little. Until it gets overwhelming, that is. And the expectations get out of hand. And then, Christmas can seem so empty, so overhyped, so long.

Has Christmas lost its punch? And why, year after year, do we settle for the same old stressed household, maxed-out credit cards, and cranky relatives we haven't seen since last year? Why do we live like that?

This may be the year to try something different. Are you ready for it?

Are you ready for a different conversation? How about one that is bigger and has a deeper purpose than you've considered before?

Then keep reading, and engage in the conversation. Enjoy the conversation about Christmas. Someone wants to talk with you. These reflections will challenge you to see Christmas for what it was intended to be. You will be introduced to a God who is active in the conversation, wanting to talk with you right now.

Ready for the challenge and conversation? Let's go....

DAY 1

## WHICH ONE DO I WANT?

*“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last.”*

John 15:16

So you walk into a coffee shop, maybe even your favorite one, and you're not quite sure what to get. Will it be a frappuccino, cappuccino, latte, skinny latte, grande mocha, house coffee? That's only the start. Then, you need to decide what size, what flavors to add, cream or no cream, and sugar or no sugar.

Are you overwhelmed yet?

Maybe not, because you are used to having a lot of choices. Choices are good, and choices make life exciting and full of variety. But sometimes it can be difficult to make any choice, much less the *right* choice.

A lot of people claim they have God right, and that they have Him all figured out. You might know some of them, and honestly question whether they have Him all figured out. What makes them right and not someone else?

Some days I'm in the mood for a cappuccino. Other days, a house coffee is great. My mood dictates what I'll buy.

If you have never heard about God, faith, or anything that even sounds religious, how do you figure this one out? What's the right choice? Is there a right choice? What if I don't even have a choice? Who cares anyway?

### **STRAIGHT TALK WITH GOD:**

Dear God, let me be honest with You right away. I like choices. But with all these choices, I also have a lot of questions. Everybody has a different opinion about You—who You are, what You've done, or even if You're really there. I want to know more. Sincerely, Me.

### **STIRRING IT UP:**

Ask someone else today, “What do you think of God?”

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Ryan Peterson, a teaching pastor and Director of Next Generation Ministries at St. John Lutheran Church in Ellisville, Missouri, developed these *Christmas Conversations* reflections. Ryan has been on staff at St. John for over five years, serving in different capacities along the way. He has a passion for communicating the love of Jesus and moving people towards a deeper relationship with Jesus that shapes their entire life. You can find Ryan on Facebook or his blog. You also might find him out riding his bike, running, or hanging out with his awesome wife, Kristy, and really cool son, Andrew.

For more information on St. John, go to [www.stjstl.net](http://www.stjstl.net).