

Make Christmas Count
Cultivate Your Soul

I. Introduction

- A. II Corinthians 4:16 (NAS) *Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.*

II. Ways to “Cultivate Your Soul/Inner Man”

- A. Bible reading
- B. Prayer
- C. Listening and responding to God’s promptings throughout the day
- D. Church attendance
- E. Small Group participation
- F. Serving in a ministry
- G. Sharing your faith with others

III. Cures for Our “Speed” Problem

- A. Awareness
- B. Give some extra “focus” to my soul during this season
1. Read the Christmas story in the Bible several times!
 2. Play worship music often.
 3. Stay in closer contact with family and friends.
 4. Prioritize church!

IV. The Story of the Lost Son

- A. Luke 15:11-19 (NLT) ¹¹To illustrate the point further, Jesus told them this story: “A man had two sons. ¹²The younger son told his father, ‘I want my share of your estate now, instead of waiting until you die.’ So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons. ¹³A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and took a trip to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money on wild living. ¹⁴About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. ¹⁵He persuaded a local farmer to hire him to feed his pigs. ¹⁶The boy became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything. ¹⁷When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired men have food enough to spare, and here I am, dying of hunger!’ ¹⁸I will go home to my father and say, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, ¹⁹and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired man.’”
- B. Luke 2:8-17 (NLT) ⁸That night some shepherds were in the fields outside the village, guarding their flocks of sheep. ⁹Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terribly frightened, ¹⁰but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! ¹¹The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David! ¹²And this is how you will recognize him: You will find a baby lying in a manger, wrapped snugly in strips of cloth!” ¹³Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God: ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favors.” ¹⁵When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, “Come on, let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this wonderful thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” ¹⁶They ran to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. ¹⁷Then the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child.

V. Conclusion