

It's the Most Stressful Time of the Year

This week I had to go work at our *Hibbett Sports* store in Danville. They have been without their normal manager for several weeks and have fallen behind on many things. I, along with a few others, was asked to go help them catch up. The first thing we did was set up our Thanksgiving/Black Friday sales.

Now that the manager is back, he and I were discussing a conversation I had with Erika's uncle Rick. Rick lived in the Danville area and would occasionally go in to the store when he needed new shoes. We were living in Arkansas still and he would always jokingly tell me (at least I hope so) next time he was in there he would get that same manager fired so we could move up to Illinois. The manager and I had a good laugh about it and kept on working.

Sadly, Rick passed away in May. This will be the first holiday season his widow, Denise will have without her husband.

The holidays are particularly stressful for many. For one, they are in the winter when it is cold and lonely. People's health is usually poorer, people don't get out as much, and it is darker longer. Second, Christmas overruns our lives. There is always lots of shopping and preparing to do with long lists to try and get everything done. Every night in December there seems to be another holiday party, Christmas pageant at school, or any other activities. When can you get things done?

Then there is the loneliness without loved ones. Whether it is the first season without or another of many, it is still hard. It is hard to do things alone when we are used to doing them with another. It can be hard without another income as well. Many times it can be cold because heat is hard to afford.

When it gets lonely and you feel like you are by yourself remember you are not alone. There are 3 others with you always. The Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit. You and God make four. If ever there is three others to be with, these are the three I would most preferably choose!

May we be less stressed this season. May we do our best to relieve the stress of others. May we always trust in God, Jesus, and His Holy Spirit!

--Alex Swango