

FAMILY ACTION PACK

Special Time—Volume 3

Christmas Edition

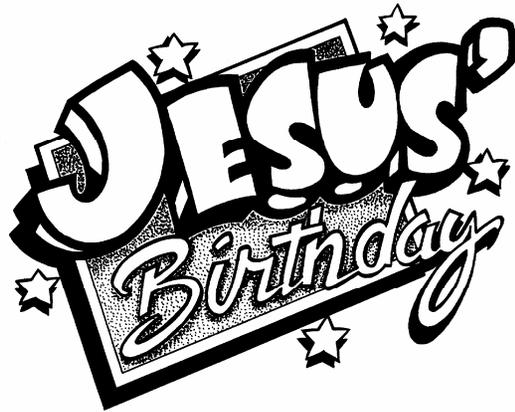


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Volume 3—Special Christmas Edition
By Kolby King

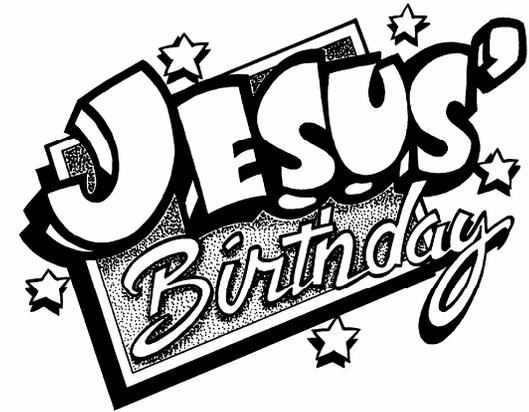
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A Christmas Wish

Reader's Digest reported in April of 2002 that a survey had been conducted among children where kids were asked to name the very best gift they could get for Christmas.

The overwhelming choice was:
"More time with mom and dad."



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The overwhelming choice was:
"More time with mom and dad."

Teaching Method

Children only remember 10% of what they hear, 20% of what they see, and 30% of what they hear and see. They are concrete learners, which means they retain 80 to 90% of what they do, touch, smell, taste, and help teach. This is the reason that *The Family Action Pack* contains a teaching style that will help your child to:

*Find it. Taste it. Touch it. Make it.
Know it. Grow it. See it. Show it.
Live it!*

Description

Each week contains one Special Time, one Food for Thought, and one Making Memories. At the end of the book there are three special sections that contain Fun Snow Activities, Christmas Traditions and Bedtime Stories. Each of these is described below:



Special Time—Set aside one night each week for a “special time” where you and your kids can have family fun together and learn valuable lessons from God’s Word. These sessions require items that can usually be found around any household. One session per week is included.



Food for Thought—These are family activities and spiritual lessons that involve traditional holiday foods. One session per week is included.

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Making Memories—These sections are designed to help you use the holiday season to participate in family activities that will produce memories for a lifetime. One activity per week is included.



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Let It Snow—Use these five special activities as learning lessons any time it snows this winter.



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Christmas Traditions—Build godly traditions into your holidays that will pass to future generations.



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Bedtime Stories—This section contains character-teaching stories that are much like those in the “It’s Raining Spaghetti” book but with a special holiday focus.



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How to Lead Your Child to Christ—Every parent needs to be ready to lead their child to Christ and this is a great method of presenting the Gospel on a child’s level.



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The Nine Commandments of the Special Time

Have Fun

These sessions are set up for you to have fun leading your family into the truths of the Bible. If you're not having fun, then your children won't either.

Be Positive

Maybe you've had a rough day and all you want to do is curl up in a cave and vegetate for a little while. Then just take a deep breath, take a few moments to relax, commit this time to the Lord, and then jump in with a positive attitude. After a few minutes, a special time with your family can change how you feel.

Be Willing

Your children will only go as far as you go, which means, if you only do the activity halfway, they'll only do it halfway too. Be willing to get down on the floor, to get inside the tent, to throw a pillow or make a paper airplane. They may not remember all the things you tell them, but you're making memories that will last a lifetime.

Don't Pull Out the Pulpit

Don't preach. This should be an interactive time where the whole family can talk and discuss.

Don't Bore

Most of these sessions are short, fast-paced and to the point. Don't drag them out. Length of time and spirituality are not one-in-the-same. So don't talk long and don't pray long.

Don't Rush

Even though these sessions are set up to be short, if your family is enjoying themselves, don't cut it off too soon. Don't be in a hurry to move on to whatever comes next in your life. And if it's that favorite TV show, just remember that God gave us DVRs for a reason...right?

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Don't Make it a Burden

These sessions have been written trying to use items that most people already have in their houses. Imagine a group walking through a house and saying, "Everyone has toilet paper. So how can we use toilet paper to teach kids about Jesus?" Now you have an idea how many of these activities developed! You don't have to prepare or study to lead these. Just open up the session and get started. It's as simple as that.

Listen Up

During these sessions you'll be asking your children a lot of questions. Listen closely and be careful not to cut them off, talk down to them or correct them in a manner that will make them hesitant to share in later sessions. Sometimes we jump to fix things without fully listening.

Keep it Up

Make a commitment, put it on your calendar, and stick to it. Let this become a favorite time of the week and a top priority. After all, what is more important than what you are about to do with your family?

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Week 1—Special Time

Taste Testers

You will need
A Blindfold

Two drinks or food items that you know your child likes.
One drink or food item that you figure your child will dislike.
Your Bible marked at Philippians 4:4.

Get Started

Send your children to another room while you find three drinks or food items, two that you know they like and at least one that you figure they won't like. For example, you might use chocolate milk, Pepsi, and prune or pickle juice. Then blindfold your children and bring them in one at a time to be a "Taste Tester." Give them the item they won't like last.

ASK—Did you get what you expected?

SAY—Sometimes in life we get what we expect, sometimes we don't. Bad things can even happen to good people, but listen to what the Bible says about what we should do when bad things happen.

Read Philippians 4:4 from your Bible.

ASK—When "bad" things happen, what can you do? (Make the choice to rejoice.)

ASK--Why do you think you can always rejoice? (Because God is faithful. He'll never let you down. He'll always keep His Word. You can trust Him, etc.)

ASK—What are some things our family can rejoice about? (Don't just list good things. Also list things that they might consider

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to be “bad.” For example, we can rejoice even though daddy lost his job. Why? Because we trust God and we know He won’t let us down.)

PRAY—And thank God that no matter what happens in our lives, because of who He is, we can make the choice to rejoice.



Family Prayer Requests

List prayer requests here:

NOTE: If your children want a further answer about why they can rejoice in the middle of difficult times, explain that sometimes we do wrong things and these bad choices bring “bad” things into our lives. But sometimes we do everything right and someone else does something wrong and we get hurt because of it. Even so, there’s nothing your children will ever do that is so bad that God can’t forgive them and there’s nothing so bad that can happen to them that God can’t turn it around to their good if they love Him and are walking with Him. (See Romans 8:28 for a great promise.)

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Week 1—Food for Thought

You will need

Egg Nog

Cups for each family member

A small object that you can throw (like a ball)

A Bible marked at 1 John 4:14

Get Started

Have each member of your family try a sip of Holiday Egg Nog. Some will like it. Others will probably hate it.

SAY—Whether or not you like Egg Nog is a matter of taste. There's no right or wrong answer, but in life, right will always be right and wrong will always be wrong.

ASK—Would you believe me if I said I can throw [the object] in the air and it won't fall back down?

Throw the object in the air.

ASK—Why did it come back? (A law called gravity that says what goes up must come down.)

ASK—A thousand years ago, if someone had thrown this up, what would have happened? (It would have fallen back down.)

ASK—A thousand years from now, if someone threw this up, what would happen? (It would fall back down.)

SAY—God's law of gravity will never change. In the same way, what is right today was right when God made the world and will be right until the end of time. What's wrong today has always been

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wrong and will always be wrong. Right and wrong will NEVER change.

ASK—*What is something else that will never change?* (God will never change. That there is only one way to heaven will never change, etc. These aren't matters of opinion. They have always been true and they will always be true.)

KEY—So if anyone ever tells you that right and wrong are a matter of opinion—like whether or not you like Egg Nog—just realize that they're wrong. Then take the opportunity to tell them about the Savior of the world.

Read 1 John 4:14 from your Bible.

PRAY—Thank God for loving us so much that He sent and Savior.

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Week 1—Making Memories

Adopt a Family

Call the church office and make plans to adopt all or part of a needy family. (Or if money is an issue, you can even commit to getting one item.) Then allow your children to play an active part in deciding what to get the family. Let them be there when you buy it. Give them the chance to help pay for it but don't make them pay for it, and let them go with you when you deliver then items to the church.

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Week 2—Special Time

Toothpaste Squeeze

You will need
1 tube of toothpaste
1 plate
A Bible marked at Isaiah 9:6

Get Started

Gather your family around. Then squeeze out a good amount of toothpaste on a plate.

ASK—Do you think you can get it all back inside the tube?

Give each family member a chance to try.

(Some may try scooping it back in; Some may ask for scissors to cut it open and put it back. Just tell them no if you don't want them to ruin the toothpaste tube; still others may want to lick all the toothpaste off the plate and use their mouth to put it back in. This is actually quite funny although if they push too hard, toothpaste will begin to come out of their nose—This really happened once!)

ASK—Is it possible to get all the toothpaste back inside?
(No.)

SAY—The toothpaste is kind of like your words. Once something comes out of your mouth you can't take it back. So if you don't mean it, or you don't plan to follow through with it, don't say it. Every word you say should be as trustworthy as a promise.

ASK—Did God ever make promises? (Yes, the Bible is full of promises for you.)

ASK—Can you name a promise that God made? (Nothing can separate you from His love; He will never leave you; That you're going to heaven once you've given your life to Jesus; etc.)

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SAY—God also promised that a Savior would be born.

Read Isaiah 9:6 from your Bible.

SAY—This is a promise God made about 700 years before Jesus was born. God always does what He says, and we should do the same.

PRAY—Thank God for Jesus and how wonderful He is. Thank God for always keeping His promises.



Family Prayer Requests
List prayer requests here:

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Week 2—Food for Thought

You will need
1 small fruit cake
A Bible marked at John 3:16

Get Started

Provide a bite of fruit cake to each member of your family.

SAY—Just like the Egg Nog, fruit cake is a matter of taste. Some people love it, but some people think it tastes disgusting.

ASK—***What else can you think of that is disgusting?*** (Toilet water, Sumo wrestler sweat, body odor, etc.)

ASK—***Do you think lying is disgusting?***

ASK—***What about cheating? Or stealing? Or saying bad words?***

SAY—Sin is anything wrong you do and all sin is disgusting to God. Everything sin has and gives is the opposite of God.

ASK—***How would you describe God?***

SAY—Sin is the opposite of God. God is love—Sin creates hate; God gives peace—Sin destroys peace; God leads you to do right—Sin makes you a slave to doing wrong; God takes care of you—Sin will always hurt you. But God loves you so much, that even though we've all done wrong things, He sent Jesus to die to make a way to take your sins away. That's what Christmas is all about.

Read John 3:16 from your Bible.

See if your child can say this verse. If not, begin saying it with them every night. This is an important verse for every student to know and understand.

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Week 2—Making Memories

Salt Dough Ornaments

Use the following recipe to create your own salt dough ornaments.

Mix two cups of flour, one cup of salt and one cup of water. Roll the dough out. Use cookie cutters to create shapes. You can also cut out circles and have your children put their handprints inside. Be sure to poke a small hole at the top from which it will hang. Then bake your creations at 350 degrees for 30 minutes for every $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of thickness. After they cool, paint them, add a string loop through the hole and add them to your tree.

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Week 3—Special Time Gift Wrapped

You will need
1 roll of toilet paper
A Bible marked at Luke 2:11-12

Get Started

Wrap your children from head to toe in toilet paper (Or you can use wrapping paper.) (*NOTE:* Be careful that they don't fall over and are unable to catch themselves.) Keep them wrapped while you continue with the following.

ASK—How does it feel to be wrapped up like a gift?

SAY—Since you're wrapped up like a toilet-papered, Christmas gift, I want you to know that you are a special gift from God to us and we love you and are proud of you.

*On the count of three, have them break free as fast as they can.
Put the toilet paper aside.*

ASK—Do you know how the greatest gift in the world was wrapped?

SAY—Listen to what the Bible says and let's find out.

Read Luke 2:11-12 from your Bible.

ANSWER—The greatest gift in the world was wrapped in cloths and laid in a manger. Jesus is the greatest gift of all.

ASK—Do you know what the name Jesus means?

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ASK—Do you know what the name Jesus means?

SAY—“Jesus” means “He saves,” and that’s why Jesus came, to become the Savior of the world by taking the punishment for all the wrong things we would ever do so that we could be forgiven and have a way to go to heaven.

PRAY—Thank Jesus for being our Savior.



Family Prayer Requests

List prayer requests here:

After you're done, feel free to have a toilet paper fight or time your family to see who can pick up the most squares of toilet paper the fastest. Always have fun and even enjoy the clean-up!

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Week 3—Food for Thought

You will need

A special treat that everyone will enjoy
A Bible marked at James 4:13-14

Get Started

Let your family eat a special treat. For example, you could cook a batch of cookies or go to Braum's for Hot Fudge Sundaes. Then without telling anyone, time how long it takes them to eat the treat.

ASK—Who can guess how long it took us to eat? (Tell them who is the closest to the correct time.)

SAY—That was a good treat, but there's no way it could last forever.

ASK—Can you tell me something that lasts forever?

SAY—Listen to what the Bible says in James 4:13-14 about something that *DOESN'T* last forever.

Read James 4:13-14 from your Bible.

ASK—What did the Bible say doesn't last forever? (Your life.)

ASK—What did it compare your life to? (A vapor.)

If it is cold, take your family outside and point out the vapors as they breathe.

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ASK—What did it compare your life to? (A vapor.)

If it is cold, take your family outside and point out the vapors as they breathe.

SAY—In the same way that the vapor is here one second and gone the next, our lives are like that too. Life here on earth is short and we all need a Savior. That's the reason Jesus came, to make a way to forgive our sins so that we can have a new life—one that would go beyond this world to heaven to be with God forever.

PRAY—Thank Jesus for making a way to heaven so that those who give their lives to Him can live with Him forever.

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Week 3—Making Memories The Walmart Experience

Give each family member \$5.00. Then draw names out of a bowl to see who will buy gifts for whom. Then go to Walmart and split into different groups. Your job is to find a gift within the money you have to buy for the person whose name you drew, but you only have 30 minutes to shop. While you're shopping, be careful to avoid the other group. When you're finished go home, have each person take turns closing their eyes and feeling the object to see if they can guess what it is.

This is a very fun and memorable activity and there are many lessons that can be taught through it.

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

NOTE: Some people increase the amount to \$10. This makes the game easier but \$5 (plus tax) is usually sufficient.

Week 3—Making Memories The Walmart Experience

Give each family member \$5.00. Then draw names out of a bowl to see who will buy gifts for whom. Then go to Walmart and split into different groups. Your job is to find a gift within the money you have to buy for the person whose name you drew, but you only have 30 minutes to shop. While you're shopping, be careful to avoid the other group. When you're finished go home, have each person take turns closing their eyes and feeling the object to see if they can guess what it is.

This is a very fun and memorable activity and there are many lessons that can be taught through it.

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

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Week 4—Special Time Ice Cube Melt

You will need

An ice cube or a small ice sickle for each child
A Bible marked at Luke 22:39-44

Get Started

Give each family member an ice cube and race to see who can melt theirs the fastest by holding it in their hand.

ASK—Did you ever feel like giving up?

SAY—I'm going to read a story to you out of the Bible about a time when Jesus didn't give up.

Read Luke 22:39-44 from your Bible.

ASK—When Jesus said “cup” what do you think He was talking about?

SAY—He was referring to all the pain and suffering He would have to endure to pay the price for our sins. Even though He was born to be the Savior of the world and even though He was perfect, it still didn't make it easy for Him to take the punishment for everybody's wrongdoings. But this is how much He loves you—That he suffered and died to make a way to forgive your sins and to make a way for you to go to heaven.

PRAY—Thank Jesus for being the Savior of the world.

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Family Prayer Requests
List prayer requests here:



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Week 4—Food for Thought

You will need
Instant Hot Chocolate
Cups
Small Marshmallows
Hot Water (but not too hot)
A Bible marked at John 3:16

Get Started

Help each member of your family make a cup of hot chocolate. Then, once it's mixed, ask them if they can separate out the chocolate from the water.

SAY—Just like the chocolate and the water can't be separated because they have been joined together, when you give your life to Jesus, you are joined to Him and nothing can separate you from His love.

Read Romans 8:38-39 from your Bible.

ASK—What can separate you from the love of Christ?
(Nothing—not even you. After all, you are a “created thing”)

SAY—Once you've given your life to Christ, nothing can separate you from Him.

Read John 10:28-29 from your Bible.

Put a small marshmallow in your hand and make a fist. Ask if anyone thinks they can pull it out. Let them take turns trying. Even let them use two hands or join in together. The only way for them to get it out is to be stronger than you.

ASK—Is anyone stronger than God? (No.)

SAY—Then no one is able to pull you out of His hands and He will never let go of you. He loves you and will always keep you in His hands.

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Week 4—Making Memories

Ginger Bread House

Buy a Ginger Bread House kit from a local store such as Walmart or Hobby Lobby. Then gather the family around and have fun. Remember the goal is not to have a perfect-looking house; the goal is the quality time you are spending with your kids. Then when you are finished read and discuss *Matthew 7:24-27*, about the foolish man who built his house on the sand and about how your kids can be wise and build on the Rock.

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Week 5—Special Time

“Snowball” Fight

You will need

1 Bag of Large Marshmallows
A Bible marked at 1 Corinthians 10:13

Get Started

Have an inside “snowball” fight using large marshmallow. You may want to outline certain boundaries, such as not going in bedrooms, etc. Or, if you desire, you can play all over the house. You can even play a hide-and-seek version. Have fun and don’t worry about marshmallows going everywhere. Messes last a little while; memories last a lifetime. After your game, gather your family around and continue with the following:

ASK—Did anybody get hit by a marshmallow they didn’t see coming?

SAY—In life sometimes you get hit by a temptation you didn’t see coming.

ASK—What is an example of temptation? (Being tempted to cheat on a test, etc.)

ASK—Is it wrong to be tempted? (No. Temptation is not wrong, but if you give into the temptation, that’s sin. Jesus was tempted, but He overcame it.)

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 from your Bible.

SAY—God always makes a way for you to escape from temptation. So the next time you’re being tempted, talk to Jesus and ask Him for the strength to do what’s right. Then let your love for Jesus overcome the temptation because those who love Jesus obey Him.

PRAY—Thank God for always making a way to escape from temptation.

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Family Prayer Requests

List prayer requests here:

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Week 5—Food for Thought

You will need
1 bag of Large Marshmallows
A candle
A Bible marked at 2 Corinthians 5:17

Get Started

Take turns roasting marshmallows over a candle. This can be safely done inside, but be sure to tell your children never to do this unless you are with them. Also, if you put the marshmallow on a fork to hold it over the flame, don't immediately stick it into your mouth.

Instead, scrape it onto a plate and use a separate utensil with which to eat it.

ASK—How did the marshmallow change when it was over the fire? (It looked different. It even tasted different. It got hot, etc.)

SAY—Just like the flame brought a change to the marshmallows, Jesus can bring a change to anyone who is willing to give their lives to Him.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 from your Bible.

SAY—It doesn't matter how good or bad a person is or what they look like or what mistakes they've made, Jesus is willing to save anyone who comes to Him. Jesus can even change the heart of the meanest person in the world if that person is willing to accept Him as Lord and Savior.

PRAY—Pray for someone you know whom you think doesn't know Jesus.

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Week 5—Making Memories Old Toy Giveaway

Since Christmas usually brings in a whole new supply of toys, see if there are any toys with which your children don't plan on playing. Tell them about kids who don't have the things they have and that their old toys could bless another child because it would be "new" to him. However, don't make your children give away old toys. Let them volunteer to do it and if they don't want to, it's okay. It's not a reflection on their heart. Just tell them that as they get older, they will begin to realize that when they are through with something, it can be a great blessing to others, even after Christmas. Once you have collected the giveaway items, donate them to a ministry or organization that will put them to good use.

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Special Edition

Let it Snow!

Use these five special activities as learning lessons any time it snows this winter.

Make a Snow Angel

Read Luke 2:26-35. Discuss how Mary must have felt when the angel appeared; How she must have felt carrying God's Son; How Joseph, to whom she was engaged, must have felt.

You can also read about the angel appearing to him in Matthew 1:20-21. Why did the angel say the baby should be named Jesus?

Make a Snowman

Just like you made the snowman the size and shape, with the eyes and ears (of lack thereof) that you wanted, God made you the way He wanted. He built you the way you are for a reason and He has special plans for your life.

Read John 1:12 to find out part of God's special plan for you.

Follow in the Footprints

Take turns making tracks through the snow and see if everyone else can follow in the leader's footprints. Then discuss what it means to follow Jesus. When you follow someone, you step where they step, do what they do—To follow Jesus means to be like Jesus. What does it mean to be like Jesus? What does the Bible say in Matthew 5:48 about being like God?

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Dirty Snow (As it melts)

Get some dirty snow (or slush) from along the street or out of a parking lot. Take it home and see if your children can clean it up. Their challenge is to make it “white as snow” again. It’s impossible. Then read Isaiah 1:18 to find out what can take a person’s sins away and make them “whiter than snow.” (The answer: This verse looks forward to the salvation Jesus would bring.)

Almost Gone (As it melts)

Going. Going. Almost gone. Look up James 4:13-14 to find out what else doesn’t last forever. How can a person live forever? Will Jesus’ love last forever? Find out in Romans 8:38-39.

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Special Edition

Christmas Traditions

Any Christmas tradition is great as long as it is rooted in Christ. In our family our desire has been to create godly traditions that will center the day around Jesus and can pass that focus to future generations. Here's how we celebrate:

Christmas Eve

Make a "Happy Birthday" Cake for Jesus.

Prepare bags with oats and silver, red, green and gold glitter for the Christmas Eve poem. (The poem is on the following page.)

Attend a Christmas Eve Service.

After sunset read the Christmas Eve poem on the following page.

Christmas Morning

Wake up before the kids.

Light a fire and put on some Christmas music.

Eat a good breakfast.

Get your favorite drink—i.e., hot chocolate, egg nog, etc.

Read the Christmas Story from Luke 2:1-20.

Pray and give God praise.

Open gifts and remind your children that Jesus is the greatest gift of all.

Christmas Lunch

Sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus.

For lunch dessert, eat the "Happy Birthday, Jesus" Cake

Important Note: My family is sometimes asked what role we let Santa play in Christmas. We tell our kids that Santa is a fun story. So, yes, we watch "Rudolph" and have some Santa ornaments, but we always tell our kids that it's just pretend and not real and that Christmas is all about Jesus. This is just our conviction about how we desire to raise the children God has entrusted to us. If you would like to know more about why we hold this opinion, please feel free to ask.

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Christmas Eve Poem

We will soon celebrate the Savior's birth,
Who became a man and came to earth.
But now that it is the night before,
Take this bag and go out your door.

The darkness you will see, represents our sin,
like a sickness that blinds the eyes of men,
And makes them feel worthless and low,
As if God did not love them so.

The oats in the bag represent your cares,
The questions you have and the burdens you bear.
Each little grain is another part,
For you to cast on a great God's heart.

The flakes of silver stand for the gifts that wise men brought,
When long ago a Savior they sought.

The flakes of red stand for that moment in history,
When Jesus gave His blood for you and me.

The flakes of green represent the new life you find,
When you takes Jesus as your Savior, and leave your sins behind.

The flakes of gold stand for Heaven above,
Where you can live forever, with a God of love.

As you cast these oats to the wind,
Cast your cares on your Best Friend.
Confusion and grief,
Joy and relief,
Anger and fear,
The loss of someone dear,
Good times and bad,
And thoughts that are sad.
Glad news and peace,
And hurts that won't cease.
Take them all,
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And throw them up,
In the air.

Toss them now up on your lawn,
And the birds will eat them at the break of dawn,
Then open your eyes and you will see,
If God cares for birds,
How much more does he care for me.

*The Bible says, "Cast your cares on Him, for He cares for you." 1
Peter 5:7*

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Holiday Bedtime Stories

My Own Stockings

There's no Christmas tree,
But a real tree for me,
Straight out of the ground,
Is how it's got to be.

And no fake stockings,
Do I use.

I use my own socks,
That's what I choose.

They come right off my feet,
Right out of my shoe,
One for me,
And one for you.

So I hung them up,
And went to bed,
But when I woke up,
I saw instead,
That my socks smelled bad,
I shook my head,
Because I had,
A tree that was dead.



Thinking Things Through

Like in the story, sometimes we do things without considering the results of our actions. But a godly person will not only consider whether what he is doing is right or wrong, but also how it will affect others. Will it help and encourage them in their walk with Jesus or could it trip them up? Will it bring glory to God? Listen to what the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

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Little Jack Spree

Little Jack Spree,
Lived on a Christmas tree,
And late at night,
He'd turn on the lights,
So that he could see.

Then he'd hide,
And he'd slide,
Down the trim,
From limb to limb,
That's Little Jack Spree, you see.

But late one day,
While Jack did play,
He heard a sudden knocking,
And fell into a stocking,
And couldn't get free, you see.

He did pull and tug,
But he was stuck so snug,
And though he wiggled about,
He couldn't get out,
Poor Jack Spree, I see.

Then he did something very unwise,
He shouted and screamed and gave loud cries,
And in panic he lost his wits,
And threw twelve different kinds of fits.
Little Jack Spree lost control, you see.

In terror, he just couldn't say no,
And the more he struggled the deeper he'd go,
Finally he sank in candy to his chin.
And he thought at last that this was the end.
Poor Jack Spree no more would be, you see.

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Poor Jack Spree no more would be, you see.

Then he recalled what to do,
When something happens that really scares you.
On God you can cast all your care,
Because the Lord is always standing right there.
Then he said, "I will not fear,
Though I think the end is finally here,
Because I know the Lord is near."

He kept saying this as he would think.
Then a thought hit him: This sock doesn't stink.
It's bad enough to be stuck in there,
Without a nasty smell filling the air.
And though he wasn't free,
He became thankful, you see.
Even in the bad you can still thank the Lord,
Because that's what it says in His Holy Word.

Then something changed in Little Jack Spree,
The thankfulness stole the fear from he,
And slowly he did struggle and slowly he did climb,
Because he now felt a peace on his mind.

At last he came out,
And he declared with a shout,
"Even in bad you can still find the good!"
Little Jack Spree understood, you see.

Then he climbed up real far,
As high as the shining star,
And he said a thankful prayer,
That God is always there,
And we need not ever fear,
Because He's always near.

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Calmness

Someone can be calm and have peace in the middle of hard or frightening situations when their trust is fixed on Christ. The Bible says in Philippians 4:6-7, “Do not be anxious (worry) about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”



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Little Jack Spree and a Gift for Me

Let me tell you the tale,
Of Little Jack Spree,
Who lived on top,
Of a Christmas tree.

He'd wait all year,
For Christmas, you know,
And watch as the gifts,
Appeared below.

Then he'd climb down,
Every night,
And spy out the tags,
Beneath the tree light.

Then he'd come back up,
Feeling real low,
'Cause he looked but didn't,
Find his name below.

"It's just not right.
It's just not fair,
That my name,
Is not there."

"There are gifts,
For Betty, Bailey, and Bo.
Presents for Jimmy,
And Uncle Joe."

"But none for me!
None for me!
It's just not fair,
Don't you see?"

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None for me!
It's just not fair,
Don't you see?"

“So I’ll take them all,
All there be,
Both big and small,
Just for me.”

So on Christmas Eve,
He climbed down,
And on his face,
Was an evil frown.

And into the presents,
He did tear,
Without any thought,
Of love or care.

“They’re all for me!
All for me!
Can’t you see?
Can’t you see?”

He unwrapped balls and bats,
And fuzzy, pink slippers.
He opened cards and candies,
And chocolate milk sippers.

Then he found clothing,
And doolies for their hair.
He even unwrapped,
Some polka dot underwear.

He found combs and brushes,
And a new pair of boots,
Toys and trinkets,
And all sorts of fruits.

But when all was done,
And all was through,
He looked at the gifts,
And suddenly felt blue.

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But when all was done,
And all was through,
He looked at the gifts,
And suddenly felt blue.

Gifts are not fun,
If no one's there,
To laugh and smile,
And really care

That's when he realized,
That's when he knew,
There was only one thing,
That he could do.

Re-wrap each gift,
And put it in place,
Then wait to see,
The smile on each face.

So that's what he did,
It took him all night,
But the last one was finished,
Before the first light.

Then Jack Spree watched,
From far up above,
And saw the family share,
The gifts of their love.

Then he knew that Christmas,
Was about more than a gift,
What are presents without love,
To share it with?

Christmas is about love,
The love of one Man,
Who was God in a body,
Who came with a plan.

To die on a cross,
To save you and me,
That's why Christmas without Jesus,
Is empty, you see.

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He's the reason we share,
He's the reason we love,
Because God sent His Son,
From heaven above.



Greed

Sometimes when gifts are involved, we are more concerned about ourselves than anyone else, but listen to what Jesus said in the Bible in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This Christmas, don't just think about yourself, but remember that Christmas is about Jesus and how He became the greatest gift of all. Then share His love with others.

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My Gift to You

Do you want to know,
My gift for you?
Then close your eyes,
That's what you must do.

What do you see?
Now tell me true,
"Nothing," you say,
Well, that's my gift to you.



Every Good Gift

The Bible says in James 1:17, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

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T'was the Night Before Christmas

T'was the night before Christmas,
And all through the home,
We could hear the loud snoring,
Of Uncle Jerome.

The family had come,
From real far and real near,
To share with us,
Their Christmas cheer.

I laid awake,
On top of my bed,
Thinking of presents,
Stacked as high as my head.

When to where,
Should my weary mind go,
But to toys and treats,
And Christmas snow.

When what should my wandering thoughts,
Finally see,
But lots of presents,
And all for me.

Above the loud snoring,
That kept pace with the time,
Came one word—
Mine! Mine! Mine!

Then my dreams drifted,
Back to a time long ago,
When a Savior was born,
Who loved me so.

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Then above the noise,
Of the loud snores,
One word came to me—
Yours! Yours! Yours!

That's when it struck me,
And I knew it was true,
That Christmas isn't about gifts,
But it's all about YOU—
And whether you know,
The God of love,
Who sent His Son,
From heaven above.

With these thoughts,
I fell asleep until light,
Wishing that everyone,
Knew my Jesus tonight.



Sharing Christ

The best gift you can share with a friend is the Good News of Jesus, and sharing Christ begins by realizing that not everyone knows Him. Who do you know who might not know the Lord?

The Bible says in John 1:12, "Yet to all who received him [Jesus], to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

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Egg Nog

Give me egg nog,
Every day,
Pour me a glass,
Please I say.

Would you like some?
“Yes,” my friend said.
Then he licked his lips,
And nodded his head.

He drank it all down,
The whole big cup.
Then my friend turned green.
Then he threw up!



Right and Wrong

Whether or not you like Egg Nog is a matter of taste. There's no right or wrong opinion, but in life, right will always be right and wrong will always be wrong.

What is right today was right when God made the world and will be right until the end of time. What's wrong today has always been wrong and will always be wrong. Right and wrong will NEVER change. So if anyone tells you that it's just a matter of opinion, you'll know they're wrong.

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A Gift for Mom

No money.
That's what I had,
And no gift for my mom,
And no gift for my dad.

Since sad is how,
This made me feel,
I gave my mom,
A banana peel.

I didn't mean,
For it to trip her.
I just thought she'd like,
A brand new slipper.



The Greatest Gift of All

Some gifts may seem better than others but one thing remains true: Jesus is the greatest gift of all. The Bible says in 1 John 4:14, "And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world."

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The Jingle Bell

“Eat everything in your bowl,”
That’s what my mom said,
Just before a jingle bell fell,
And hit me in the head.

Plop! It went in my bowl.
But my mom said to eat it all.
So now I kind of jingle,
When I’m walking down the hall.



Don’t Be Crazy

Why would anybody eat a jingle bell? That’s crazy, but sometimes we do unwise things too. Why would anybody disobey Jesus? Think about it. When someone sins, it causes hurt and pain and grief and never brings anything good. So why would anyone want to do bad things? So take this challenge: Love Jesus and do what’s right.

The Bible says in John 14:23, “Jesus replied, ‘If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. May Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.’”

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A Gift for Dad

I gave my dad a wallet,
And put a bill inside.
A good gift,
Please don't call it.
The bill, you see,
Was for the wallet.



The Free Gift

Nobody gets a gift and then has to pay for it. Gifts are free—just like God's gift of salvation. You can't earn it or pay for it. Jesus paid it all when He died and rose again. The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

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The Eating Dog

We strung popcorn,
Around the Christmas tree,
And I suppose my dog,
Was hungry, as you will see.

He ate the popcorn,
Then he ate a limb,
The he ate the whole thing,
Before we found him.

Now he stands in the corner,
Decorated with a wreath.
We put a star on his head,
And our presents underneath.



Created with Purpose

Do you think a dog would make a good Christmas tree? Of course not. Dogs were created to run and bark, not to stand in a corner with a star on top. Trees, however, can't run and bark, can they? They have an entirely different purpose. And then there's you...God made you for a reason also—a special plan that's just for you and no one else in the world and fulfill

God's calling for your life. It's just for you because you are one-of-a-kind.

The Bible says in Psalm 139:14, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well."

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A Skunk for Christmas

I want a skunk for Christmas,
In a bright, red box.
I don't want brand new underwear.
I don't brand new socks.

I don't want fuzzy pajamas,
I don't want bunny slippers,
I don't want hats and mittens,
Or a jacket with lots of zippers.

"I want a skunk!"
I did yell.
"With a big, white stripe,
Down his tail."

"Where would you keep him?"
My mom said,
"Surely not in the kitchen.
Surely not in your bed."

"I'll keep him in *your* bedroom."
I said very proudly.
"What about the smell?"
She responded rather loudly.

Her question made me think,
Then I thought that I might quit.
But still I responded strongly,
"The skunk will get used to it."

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What Belongs

There's a reason none of your friends have pet skunks. They don't belong. There are other things that don't belong in your life too. Sin doesn't belong in your life. God didn't create you to do bad things. He made you to know Him and to love Him and to walk with Him all the days of your life. The Bible says in Micah 6:8, "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."



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