

December 1

Today we are starting a Christmas project. We will open a different present each day until Christmas to remind us of God's most precious gift—His son Jesus. Read John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” -John 3:16

Who has received this gift into their lives?

December 2- FOOD

Does food stay the same, even after a long time? No, it changes when it gets old. The Lord never does, though. He is always the same. Read Hebrews 13:8.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” -Hebrews 13:8

Why is it important for the Lord Jesus never to change?

December 3- HEART

Hearts remind us of love. We can and should love others. But did you know that God loves us even more??? Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.”

-1 Corinthians 13:4-7

How many things do we find about love after reading these verses?

December 4- SOAP

Jesus washed his disciples feet because he wanted to serve them. Even the Maker of all creation was humble enough to serve others. Read John 13:5-17

“After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?” Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.” “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.” “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!” Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.”¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.” -John 13:5-17

In what ways can you be a servant to others?

December 5- BREAD

Serve each person a piece of bread. While eating, read Matthew 4:1-11

“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.” -Matthew 4: 1-

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What can we do to resist temptation like Jesus did?

December 6- CANDLE

Light the candle. Read Matthew 5: 14-16.

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

-Matthew 5:14-16

Jesus told His followers not to hide their light. What did He mean by this? How can we be light to show Jesus to other people? (Sing “This Little Light of Mine”)

December 7- BIBLE

God gives us His word through the Bible. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” -2 Timothy 3:16-17

How does the Bible help us to live in a way that pleases God?

December 8- CLAY

Read Romans 12:1-2 and Isaiah 64:8

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” -Romans 12:1-2

“Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.” –Isaiah 64:8

How can we be molded into Christ’s image?

December 9- CROWN

“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12

December 10- TURTLE

Turtles can't move very fast. They have to be patient to get where they are going. God also is patient with us...even when we do things He doesn't like. Read 2 Peter 3:9.

“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” -2 Peter 3:9

In what ways can you be patient with others like God is patient with you?

December 11: DRUM

Once there was a boy who was the son of a shepherd. His family didn't have much money, and so they were not able to afford to buy the toys. The boy spent his time helping his father tend to the sheep in the pastures, and there was not much time for playing.

One day the boy went with his father to the market in town. As they were passing by stands where people sold their goods, the boy spotted a beautiful drum, with silver rings around it and a gleaming white top. He stared at it a long time because he wanted it very badly, but he didn't say anything because he knew that his family could not buy toys for him. His father paused, watching his son staring at the drum, and knew what he was thinking.

That night after the son had come in from the pastures helping with the sheep, he ate his supper and went up to get ready for bed. There on his bed sat the beautiful drum he had wanted so badly. His parents even let him bang on it a little bit before going to bed that night.

Starting the next day, and everyday thereafter, the little boy carried the drum with him and practiced on it as he went out to the pastures to help with the sheep. Both the sheep and shepherds grew accustomed to the drumming, and as the months and years passed, the boy became quite good at it. The shepherds looked forward to hearing his different cadences rolling down the hillside every morning. The boy carried his drum everywhere he went, and even slept with it beside him at night time.

One day a very poor family came looking for a place to stay. The young woman was pregnant and ready to have her baby any day. They needed shelter, but were not able to find any in the village below. So the boy's family allowed them to stay in their stable. The young woman and her husband were very nice to the young boy, and they were so poor that he felt he wanted to give them something special in return for their kindness, but he had nothing to give them. One cold night, the boy awoke to a bluish light shining in his window. He got up and looked outside, where he saw the stars shining more brightly than he had ever seen before. They were shining so brightly that you could see billions of them in the sky, and they seemed to be closer than usual. The pastures below

were lit up with the starlight so that you could see the sheep clearly even far away. It gave the boy a magical feeling, and he had to run outside to see better.

The shepherds watching the sheep were also gathered together looking up at the unusually bright starlight. As the boy was looking upward outside his house, he heard crying coming from the stable and saw the light of a lantern shining from within. He went to look inside, where he saw the mother and father holding a newborn baby close, trying to feed him his first meal. The boy suddenly knew what he wanted to give them.

He ran upstairs, got his drum, brought it down to the stable, and stepped inside. He said, "This drum is all I have that is mine, but I want to give it to your baby so that when he grows up, he can learn to play like I have." The woman smiled at him, and said, "I've heard you play your drum, and I enjoy it so much that I want you to keep your drum and share the gift you have for playing instead." The boy was very happy to hear that. He picked up his drum and began playing softly, so as not to frighten the baby.

December 12: PENNY

God gives us everything we have and He wants us to cheerfully give part of it back to Him. Read 2 Corinthians 9:7

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." -2 Corinthians 9:7
How does God want us to respond when we give to Him?

December 13: SALT

Salt is used to enhance the flavors in food. In the same way, God wants us to enhance the goodness in each person! Read Matthew 5:13.

Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage." –Matthew 5:13 (MSG)

What is one way that you can be the salt of the earth for Jesus?

December 14: SHEEP

Sheep follow their shepherd's voice just as we should listen to the voice of *our* Good Shepherd. Read John 10:14 & 27

“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me...My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” -John 10: 14 & 27

What things does Jesus tell us to do?

December 15: EYES

Look out the window. What do you see? Do you see trees? How about the bright blue sky? God made everything and His creation is beautiful!!! But even all of the beauty He has created on *this* earth can not be compared with what He has in store for us when we love and obey him. Read 1 Corinthians 2:9.

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.” -1 Corinthians 2:9 (NLT)

What is the most beautiful thing you have seen?

December 16: BOAT

Jesus performed MANY miracles. God gave him that ability! One of those miracles happened while he and his disciples were out on a boat.

“That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat.

There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!”

Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

December 17- SNOWFLAKE

Did you know that every single snowflake is *different*? There are no two snowflakes that are exactly the same! God made you different and unique as well. There is no one else like you! He had a plan for your life before you were even born. He knew what you would like and dislike and what you are going to be when you grew up. He loves you and created you to fulfill a special purpose! Read Jeremiah 1:5.

“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I set you apart.” -Jeremiah 1:5

How does it make you feel to know that God has a plan for your life?

December 18- EMPTY

“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”

So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus’ head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.)” –John 20:1-9

Were you surprised to find this present empty? So was Peter when he into Jesus’ tomb and found it empty. But He was born to die for our sins and then be resurrected from the dead. What does ‘resurrected’ mean? How does the fact that Jesus is alive effect our lives?

December 19: PERFUME

Smell the cotton ball that is sprayed with perfume. It smells good, doesn’t it? What Jesus did by dying for our sins “smelled” good to God. Read Ephesians 5:2

“And walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” -Ephesians 5:2

What nice thing did you do today that smells good to God?

December 20: HAPPY FACE

Is there something you can do to make God happy? Read Colossians 3:20.

“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.”

-Colossians 3:20

How can you be obedient to God and your parents today?

December 21: ROCK

Jesus is our cornerstone. Read Luke 6:47-49.

“As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.” –Luke 6:47-49

Sing “The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock.”

December 22: FRIEND

“For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” –Galatians 5:14

Who is your “neighbor” and how are we to love them?

December 23: GLOBE

Read Genesis 1:1 and Psalm 139:13-16

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” -Genesis 1:1

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” -Psalm 139:13-16

God made the earth and everything in it—including you. You are so very special to God...He had a plan for your life before you were even born! How does that make you feel?

December 24: ANGEL

“But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” -Luke 1: 30-33

December 25: MANGER

“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

**“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”**

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.” Luke 2: 1-20

The greatest gift we have ever been given was Jesus Christ—who was born in a manger and grew up to save us from our sins. Today let us celebrate the birth of our Savior!