

TOOLS FOR PARENTS



The Perfect Christmas Gift

QUESTIONS FOR CUBS

NOTE TO PARENTS/TEACHERS:

The goal of this questions-and-answers section is to initiate interaction between you and your kids. Please do not just read the questions and answers to your kids. These answers are given for you at an adult level to think about and to process. Once that is accomplished, you can then translate them into appropriate answers for your kids.

LESSON

Christmas is about Jesus

KEY VERSE

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isa. 9:6 NIV)

EAR CHECK (STORY COMPREHENSION)

Q: What did C.J. hope to get for Christmas?

A: *A canoe*

Q: Where did Mayor Boggs get the city’s Christmas decorations?

A: *Frontera*

Q: What did Mr. and Mrs. Bradbury call the mysterious disease that they experienced when they were young?

A: *The Rigors*

Q: What did C.J. think Mr. Bradbury gave him to make it the best Christmas ever?

A: *Gold*

Q: What did The Club do for the town?

A: *They built a manger scene*

HEART CHECK (SPIRITUAL APPLICATION)

Q: C.J. didn’t get any presents on Christmas day. How could this have been a blessing in disguise?

A: *Anything that God gives us is a blessing. But it may not always be a shiny, new toy or a thrilling, happy event. If they draw us closer to God, even tough times can be a blessing. In fact, in the Bible tough times often occur just before a great blessing is given (Ps. 30).*



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Q: Can something God meant as a blessing be ruined or wasted by us?

A: Yes; it happens all the time. If C.J. had just gotten angry and become bitter, he would have missed the blessing altogether. Because he was finally humble and allowed his heart to be open, the whole town was blessed as well. As we strive to become more like Christ, we will find it increasingly easier to look for and find God's blessings even in the midst of trials and disappointments.

“I” CHECK (PERSONAL APPLICATION)

1. The giving and receiving of presents at Christmastime is a nice tradition. What other traditions does your family have at Christmas? Does your family recognize that Jesus is the reason for Christmas? What do you do to honour Jesus at this special time?
2. Because Christmas is such a wonderful time of year, it is easy to forget its true meaning. What can you do this year to help yourself remember that Christmas is about Jesus? You might choose to write out this lesson's key verse (Isa. 9:6) on several slips of paper and place them on your Christmas tree and in other places you'll see them often. Every time you see the verse, thank God for the gift of His Son, Jesus—the real reason we celebrate Christmas!
3. Read Luke 2 or have someone read it to you. Then, draw a picture of a manger scene. What do you think Baby Jesus, Mary, and Joseph looked like surrounded by animals in the stable?

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

This was the first of our four Paws & Tales Christmas episodes. It is hard to grow up in North American culture and not be confused about Christmas. Sometimes even to Christians, the true meaning of Christmas is not clear. In this episode I wanted The Club and specifically C.J. to see what Christmas would look like with all of the “stuff” stripped away. It was heart wrenching for C.J., and yet it was a great blessing for him as well. I see the pattern of his experience repeated over and over again. God wants to give us a great blessing, but our hands are full of junk. Sometimes the junk is pretty good junk. It may be pretty, fun, and give us lots of good feelings, but compared to what God wants to give us, it is junk. And we have to let it go.

Blessings are interesting. Occasionally they are surprises we didn't have the imagination to ask God for. Sometimes blessings are gifts that we get, but they can also be people or possessions that God takes away. C.J. did not ask God for a clear and personal understanding of the birth of our Saviour. He thought he had Christmas figured out. It was fun, joyful, and full of family and friends. In his heart, he would never want Christmas to be any other way. However, God wanted to give C.J. a great blessing that he didn't even want.

Though I am better at it than I used to be, I have not yet learned to recognize that if God takes something away from me, He has a good reason for it. My first reaction is often to become outraged, feel betrayed, and shake my fist at God. My wise friends, on the other hand, sit up and look around to see God's will. They calmly sense that change is needed, and they do not want to miss out on anything God wants to bring them. C.J. fell somewhere in between. He had a fit of pity at first, but he was then tender-hearted enough to look for and see what God had for him. Because he was wise enough to embrace this gift of understanding that he didn't ask for or want, the whole town was blessed. That is often the way God works. If a blessing is received with a grateful heart, it can spread like the seeds of a dandelion.

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Paws & Tales