



Bringing the “Wonder” into Christmas Again By Karen Sue Nyquist



As children, many of us felt like Christmas was wonderful! It was so full of excitement! The gifts, decorations, music, food, and family gatherings, they all seemed so special. Now we are grown up and our lives have become so busy. Do we still feel that wonder? That excitement? Where did the “wonder” go?

1. **Adult Responsibilities at Christmas Time**

As adults, we have so many responsibilities, worries. There’s money issues, how will we buy gifts and still pay bills. There’s time issues, how will we do all the Christmas activities in addition to what we are already doing? There could be emotional issues, how can we celebrate Christmas without a loved one who has passed or ignore bad memories that may come back to haunt us during this time? Each of our life experiences have been so different.

2. **Growing Up in Non-Christian Families with or without Christmas Celebrations**

Some of us grew up in non-Christian families who didn’t really understand the real meaning of Christmas. If we celebrated it at all, it was a secular holiday of decorations, Santa Claus, Frosty the Snowman, parties, gifts, and eating with friends and family. Have you decided to celebrate this way again? **Can our Christmas be more meaningful?**

3. **Growing Up in Christian Families Focusing on the Secular Festivities**

Some of us grew up in Christian families, but were so involved in gifts, parties, Santa Claus, etc. that the excitement faded before the Christmas bills were even paid off. If this is you, are you going to celebrate this year? Will you celebrate it the same way as in the past?

How can you make Christmas more fulfilling?

4. **Growing Up in Christian Families with a Christ-Centered Christmas**

Still other of us were in Christian families who put an emphasis on the spiritual aspect of Christmas, as the birth of Jesus Christ. There was a spiritual richness. Yes, we also had **family and friends, food and fun!** This year, will you celebrate **focusing on Jesus**, as your family did in the past? It’s so easy to slip into focusing on the many other activities.

5. **Where did the “Wonder” of Christmas Go?**

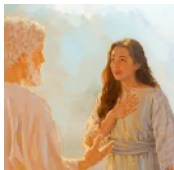
Children can be satisfied with all the gifts and Santa Claus. They feel the excitement. As adults, we have begun to realize that all the “Christmas” festivities are not enough. They can seem shallow. They don’t truly satisfy the hunger, the deeper longing in our hearts for something more. Many of us adults have lost the “wonder.” How? We grew up. We got busy and tired. But not all of us. **There are some that are so full of the wonder of Christmas that we look forward to it! How? Why?**

6. **Celebrating a Christ-Centered Christmas Brings the True “Wonder”!**

Those of us who are head-over-heels in love with Jesus, love celebrating His birth! Our traditions included family, friends, food and fun, but we also made sure that we included Jesus. This is what keeps the “wonder” in Christmas and remains even after it’s over. One of the names for Jesus is “**Wonderful**” (Isaiah 9:6)! Some call this wonder the “**Spirit of Christmas.**” The Bible calls it the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives inside of Christians year around, but He makes Christmas even more special when we follow His focus on Jesus. Jesus is the reason for the season. Christmas without “Christ” is just Xmas, it’s lost its true meaning.

7. **What is the True Meaning of Christmas?**

“God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, ‘Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you... 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 Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God’ ” (Luke 1:26-35).





8. Why Did God Send His Son? - a. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Sin means to do wrong, to break God's laws - example: The 10 Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17). b. "For the wages of sin is death," (Romans 6:23). c. "For **God so loved the world** that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him (*His Son*) should not perish but **have everlasting life**. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him (*Jesus*) is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son" (John 3:16-18). Jesus said, "I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am (*in heaven*), *there* you may be also" (John 14:4). **Jesus' birth is the true meaning of Christmas.**



9. How Do We Become Christians and Have Our Sins Forgiven? - a. Believe Jesus is God's Son (Romans 10:9). b. Repent of our sins (Acts 2:38). c. Ask God's forgiveness (Matthew 6:12). d. Receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9).

10. Here is a suggested prayer: "Lord Jesus, I know I have done wrong. Forgive me for all my sins, and cleanse me. I repent from my wrong ways. Help me be the kind of person You want me to be. I will love You and serve You. Right now, Lord Jesus, I receive You as my personal Lord and Savior. I will join You in heaven and live there forever. AMEN!"

Name _____ Date _____

12 Family Traditions for a Christ-Centered Christmas That Bring the "Wonder" Back! Love, Laugh, Live! Attitude of Gratitude!

Wise Men
Still Seek Him!



1. Listen to and sing Christ-exalting Christmas carols. Go caroling.
2. Decorate house with a nativity scene inside, stars and angel lights in windows. Have devotional time with Jesus, filling your house with His Presence. "In Your presence, there's fullness of **joy**" (Psalm 16:11). Jesus **loves** you (Galatians 2:20)!
3. Send cards, texts, and emails celebrating the birth of Jesus. Tell Jesus, "Happy Birthday!"
4. Say, "Merry Christmas" everywhere we go. A **merry** heart is good medicine (Prov.17:22).
5. Share the real meaning of Christmas with others. Jesus is the **Prince of Peace** (Isaiah 9:6)!
6. Share Christ with others: witness, pass out or text tracts, invite them to church.
7. When appropriate, give Christ-centered gifts: Bibles, devotionals, prayer guides, Christian movies, Christian music, etc. Jesus is the **Desire of All Nations** (Haggai 2:7). Jesus **satisfies!**
8. Watch a Christ-focused movie with our family. Examples: The Gospel of John, The Star of Bethlehem, the Greatest Story Ever Told, The Nativity Story, A Charlie Brown Christmas. Read Christmas books to children: Christmas in the Manger, God Gave Us Christmas, Humphrey's First Christmas, Room for a Little One - A Christmas Tale.
9. Refuse to get so busy that we miss our church during the Christmas season. Be involved in its Christmas program and activities. Serve the Lord with **gladness** (Deuteronomy 28:47).
10. Increase the money we give our church. God'll pour out **blessings** on us (Malachi 3:10).
11. Help others, give to others; Christmas is about giving. Volunteer or give donations of food, clothing, and money to organizations: Salvation Army, Toys to Tots, food drives, etc.
12. Make Christmas Eve a Holy Night again. Read the Christmas story from the Bible with our families (Matthew 1:18-223; Luke 2:1-10). Sing Christmas Carols and pray, then open presents that evening or wait and open them on Christmas morning.



Merry Christmas! — NationTakers Ministries
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