

# YOUNG CHILDREN

*Gifts from the Heart*



## **BEST USE**

As a Christmas family activity

## **VALUE**

Focusing on the true meaning of Christmas as you celebrate Christ's birth and find ways to give gifts that money cannot buy.

## **ADVANCE PREPARATION**

Make sure you have the following on hand:

- A basket or gift box
- Pieces of craft or notebook paper
- Pencils or crayons
- Ribbon or pre-made paper ornaments
- Birthday cake or cupcake
- Bible
- Optional: small Christmas tree

## SERVE IT UP

Follow these steps for a great experience:

1. During the December (ideally the first week of the month) call the family together to talk about the meaning of Christmas as you make paper ornaments together with construction paper and ribbon. Place them in a basket or gift box.
2. Ask each person to share why we celebrate Christmas. Afterwards, read the Christmas story aloud from the gospel of Luke (Luke 2:1-20). Explain that the greatest gift we could ever receive was given that first Christmas.
3. After discussing the birth of Jesus and what Christ did for us, let the family know that during the rest of the month you will be giving “gifts from the heart” – which are gifts money can’t buy such as Dad getting the newspaper for a sick neighbor, daughter helping little brother pick up his room, brother telling mom how much he loves her with a big hug, etc.
4. Each time that you catch someone giving a “gift from the heart,” write down what they did on a paper ornament and hang it on a Christmas tree.
5. On Christmas Eve, take all of the ornaments and wrap them. Put a label reading: *To-Jesus, Love-*(and insert your names).
6. Before you begin unwrapping your gifts, take time to give these “gifts from the heart” to Jesus in celebration of his birthday. Open the gift to Jesus and take time to pull out each ornament and read it aloud.
7. You can have a birthday cake, donut, or cupcake with a candle to sing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus.
8. When you finish reading through your “gifts from the heart,” take time to share what you love about Jesus.
9. Close your time in prayer, thanking God for giving the best “gift from the heart” on that first Christmas.