



## Seeing Christmas: The Toys & The Gifts | December 11, 2019

### Discussion Guide

#### The Scoop

If you ask any kid what their favorite part of Christmas is, it's always the presents. But sometimes that leaves us wondering... what do the presents have to do with this season at all? What do gifts have to do with Jesus? Read below to hear more.

#### Key Verses

**John 3:16-17 (NIV)**

*"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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

#### Discussion

We've all seen the videos of kids opening Christmas presents. Most of the time it's hilarious pure joy and excitement. There is usually screaming, yelling, laughing, and celebrating. It's no surprise that most kids would say the presents are their absolute favorite part about Christmas. As kids, we have such anticipation for those gifts. We wait patiently for a month, going back and forth between wanting to know what mom and dad bought for us, but then also wanting to be surprised.

1. Why do you think we love these videos so much? What is it that, as adults, makes us smile to see such joy and excitement?
2. Do you remember waiting patiently for Christmas morning as a kid? Describe what it felt like and what made it so special.

As adults, most of us love giving and receiving gifts as well. We love to see the joy on people's faces. But sometimes, during the craziness and business of the season, we forget why we buy and exchange gifts on Christmas. Especially if we have someone on our list that's really difficult to shop for; shopping can feel more like an exhausting chore. In this series, based on the book *Seeing Christmas* by Karen Stacy, we are encouraging you to step back and consider how you see Jesus in the things you experience every year, like the toys and gifts.

3. Does buying gifts feel exciting or exhausting to you? Why do you think this is the case?
4. How do you think Jesus is reflected in the gifts we both give and receive?

While some people question if the gifts are really what the season is all about, Karen argues that yes, they are! The toys represent Jesus, because they bring joy to girls and boys. The gifts represent Jesus, because they are given in kindness and show God's kindness to us. When we give and receive gifts this year, we should reflect on the fact that Jesus is the greatest gift we've ever and could ever receive. In John 3:16-17, we read about why Jesus is the greatest gift. It says that God loved us so much, that he sent his only son to live on Earth and die in order that we might have eternal life.

5. Does Jesus often feel like the greatest gift you've ever been given? Why or why not?
6. Do you think about God as a generous God, who loves to give? What in your life has shaped or influenced that perspective?

#### What's Next?

If you take the time to stop and look at them more closely, the things that we all experience during the Christmas season have deeper meaning. And when we reflect on Jesus' life, we see that his whole life was a picture of a God who loves to give. So as you give gifts, even to the people who are hard to shop for, consider how extending that gift is similar to how God extends the greatest gift to us in Jesus. On the other side, when you receive gifts, think about how you can share the greatest gift you've ever been given in Jesus – just like how you can't wait to wear your new sweater.

This week, as you live out and engage your faith and Christmas, think about how you can carry this message with you. Pick one person to share the greatest gift you've ever been given with.