



IDEAS FOR CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

Here are activities that have become cherished traditions with many families.

- ◆ Hang up stockings a week or two before Christmas as you are decorating your home or early in the day on Christmas Eve so that your children are more focused on the Lord's birth as they go to bed that night.
- ◆ On Christmas Eve, let children place figures in the representation as they are mentioned in the story as it is being read.
- ◆ Invite 2-3 families over for a "dinner" of appetizers. Go caroling together or help the children dramatize the Christmas story.
- ◆ Light the whole house with candles on Christmas Eve (but be very careful not to leave candles unattended).
- ◆ Enjoy opening the Christmas gifts at an unhurried pace. While some families open all the gifts in the morning, others spread them out throughout Christmas Day or even the next day. Some families have a parent sit by the Christmas tree and distribute the gifts one at a time, everyone watching as the gift is opened. Another family lets each person take a turn handing someone a gift that they bought or made for them. One mother has her children open a gift and immediately write a thank you note before opening more gifts. Each family will need to find a way that appeals to its members.
- ◆ If your church congregation doesn't have a worship service on Christmas Day, you may want to have a family worship service in the morning—before or after eating a special breakfast.
- ◆ When there are young children in the family, you may want to sing "Happy Birthday" to the Lord. This may help them understand *why* we celebrate Christmas.
- ◆ Consider opening stockings *after* worship, giving first priority to the Lord's birth.
- ◆ Put different quotes from the Word on place cards or little pieces of paper under the plates before Christmas dinner. These quotes can be selected so that they highlight a different theme each year, such as angels, light, shepherds, peace, *etc.* Read them aloud during your Christmas feast.
- ◆ Share precious memories of a previous Christmas or something you have cherished this Christmas.