

CHRISTMAS IDEAS

1. Start with Jesus, a cup of tea, a notebook, and a pencil.
2. Ask Him to guide you, give you ideas for keeping Him the main part of Christmas. Ask Him to give you ideas to keep your kids and grandkids focused on Jesus. Get ready to write! Expect Him to send ideas your way throughout the year through various means.
3. Set up a budget. Check to see if the Lord agrees. If so, then stick to it. Put so much away a week/paycheck. Determine if you should put it in the bank or some special place at home and/or wallet. If you think you'd be one to "dip into it" with the intention of putting it back, then it's best for you to put it in the bank.
4. Choose a present according to the person rather than the price. The more you know about the recipients likes and dislikes the more successful you will be in choosing a gift they really like, no matter what the price. A really thoughtful gift that costs \$1.00 will be more appreciated than an expensive gift that didn't take the heart of the person into account.
5. No money? No problem! The gift of time is often more important than any gift.

- a. a shopping trip
- b. babysitting
- c. help with housecleaning, planting a garden, weeding a garden, canning the harvest, washing the car, walking the dog, etc.

The ideas are endless and do not necessarily have to take place at Christmas. Give a coupon for future use:

- a. For a single or senior, give coupons for baked goods with the instruction that they need to give you a week's notice.
- b. Kids - stay up late extra half hour, mercy card – get out of one discipline, Mom will do your turn at some chore, and the one they liked the best - one hour absolutely alone with Daddy. Again, endless possibilities!
- c. Tea party, one or once a month, etc.
- d. Cooking lessons (Do this with kids and it becomes two gifts in one, because it frees up mom and dad for a couple of hours.)
- e. Library book (A couple agreed not to spend any money at Christmas, because they had none. The husband wrapped a beautiful book of love poems for his wife. When the wife protested because of their agreement, he told her to open the book. It was from the library and had to be returned!)

6. Older people definitely love the gift of time. Errands, Dr. appt., stamps, pet food, birdseed, a box of cards for various occasions, perhaps addressed for them, threaded needles with various colored thread. Anything they may have a difficulty buying on a fixed income, have difficulty traveling to or doing for themselves, and especially for those who are alone, just someone to talk to.

7. Family –

Write a letter telling how much you love them, what you see in them (talents, abilities, possibilities, qualities, your heart for them, etc.)

Husband - a letter about how much you love, but **ESPECIALLY** how you respect him - what you respect about him.

Grandparents - Write a letter about your fondest memories of time spent with them, how they made a difference in your life. Life is short. You don't know when or if you'll get a chance to say all the things you'd like to share if you wait.

Write a blessing/prayer for each member of the family.

KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

1. You, as a woman, set the tone and attitude for your home. (If Momma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!) This is your God given responsibility, and as such, He will give you the power to do it.
2. DO NOT COMPLAIN, WHINE, WISH FOR WHAT YOU CAN'T HAVE, OR POUT, etc.. Remember, attitudes are contagious!
3. Advent wreath, Jesse Tree
4. Birthday party for Jesus.
5. Barn celebration
6. Gift for Jesus
7. Watch for gift from God every day (mom with young kids)
8. Lower stress by not having unreasonable expectations. In prayer, ask God about what should be priority and what can be let go. Have that notebook and pencil ready!
9. ENJOY CHRISTMAS! ENJOY JESUS! CELEBRATE!