

Special Gifts

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1

**Lesson 4****Focus:**

We can accept
God's amazing gift.

Lesson 4**Bible Basis:**

Luke 2:21-38

Lesson 4**Memory Verse:**

"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."

—John 3:16

Students will do an activity using a popular Christmas song about gifts as they consider the amazing gift God wants us to accept.

Materials:

- Internet access
- "Our 12 Days of Christmas" worksheet (6 copies cut in half; template at the end of this document)
- Whiteboard and marker (or screenshared document)

PRIOR TO CLASS: Make six copies of the "Our 12 Days of Christmas" worksheet (template found at the end of this document). Cut each page in half so that you have 12 copies of the worksheet. Beginning with the second sheet, number each worksheet with one ordinal number in succession (2nd through 12th) written in the appropriate spot on each sheet. Keep the first sheet for yourself, label it "1st" and fill in "*partridge in a pear tree*" as the gift. (If your class is meeting online, email the worksheet for families to print for their students in time for class.)

Many different cultures have different ways of celebrating Christmas. In one tradition, the 12 days of Christmas was the period starting Christmas day and ending on January 5, the day before Epiphany, the celebration of the wise men's arrival. One popular Christmas song that has been around for over 150 years tells the story of a number of gifts that were given over a period of 12 days. We're going to use "The 12 Days of Christmas" to create our own version of this well-known Christmas song.

Divide your students into 11 groups (even if each "group" contains only one individual). If you have a small class, you can assign multiple days of Christmas to each group. (If your class is meeting online, you can use the breakout room feature of your video chat software.)

Randomly distribute “Our 12 Days of Christmas” sheets (1 per group) and pens/pencils. (If you have a small class, give some groups more than one sheet.) Instruct groups to come up with a gift that corresponds with the specific day on their paper. For example, the group with day four (4) of Christmas might write “Four cups of coffee”; the group with the 12th day of Christmas might write “Twelve frosted cookies.” Give the groups a minute to choose their gift and write it on their paper.

When the groups are ready, have them get in a line in order from the second day of Christmas up to the twelfth day. Explain that the first day of Christmas will still be the partridge in a pear tree—everyone will sing that together—but the assigned group for each number will be responsible for singing out loud on the day shared by their group. Using the link below (a karaoke version of the song with no lyrics)—or with no music if preferred—sing through the song, allowing each group to sing their gift at the appropriate time. If you play the karaoke music as backup, it is suggested that your students not be allowed to look at the words on the screen as it might confuse them if the group singing “12 frosted cookies” sees 12 lords a leaping on the screen. This has the potential to get pretty silly, so have fun with it. You may have to do it twice to get the hang of it.

If desired, play this karaoke background music as your students sing their version of the Twelve Days of Christmas [4:30].

Christmas Carols - 12 Days of Christmas (Karaoke Version)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cjFgtgi9UQ>

Gifts are a big part of the Christmas season; our 12 Days of Christmas song showed that! Most everyone gets very excited thinking about the gifts they want to open and enjoy!

For some people, the excitement of gifts during Christmas isn’t what they are going to get; instead, they love the opportunity to give something to someone they care about. In fact, recent data shows that 43% of Americans begin their Christmas shopping in October. That kind of early planning shows just how much people want their gifts to family and friends to be perfect. Whether they do their shopping really early or not, your family and friends also enjoy picking out what to give you and then watching you open it on Christmas.

➤ **You probably remember a favorite gift that you’ve received. But can anyone remember a favorite gift that you gave? What made it special and memorable? How did you feel as you watched the other person opening your gift? How did they respond?** (Allow students to share their experiences. Be prepared to share your own.)

Our lesson today focuses on a very special gift that is offered to everyone, even though we don’t deserve to receive it. Let’s take a look at what this special gift is, and how two people responded when this gift was brought into their lives.

Additional source:

<https://www.safe1.org/resource-center/financial-education/so-how-much-do-americans-spend-on-christmas/>

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher’s guide; your Step 4 appears below.)



Our 12 Days of Christmas

On the _____ day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me...



Our 12 Days of Christmas

On the _____ day of Christmas,
my true love sent to me...

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Materials:

- Internet access
- "The Best Gifts Can't Be Wrapped" worksheet printouts (1 per student; template found at the end of this document)
- Pens/pencils
- Whiteboard and marker (or screenshared document)

Before class, print out a copy of The Best Gifts Can't Be Wrapped worksheet (template at the end of this document). (If your class is meeting online, email the worksheet for families to print for their students to bring with pens/pencils to class.)

Without a doubt, gifts are a big part of the Christmas season. In fact, the average American household spends just under \$1,000—\$997.73 to be exact—on Christmas each year! People put thought into what the perfect gift would be for someone they love, and then they spend time and money to find that specific gift. We sing about gifts in songs, we see gifts being given all around us, and we enjoy the excitement of receiving gifts on Christmas.

Our lesson today reminded us of the most amazing gift that has ever been given—the gift of Jesus. His birth was celebrated by the shepherds and wise men who came to visit Him, and Simeon and Anna rejoiced in the fact that Jesus was the Savior they had been waiting and longing for.

Most of the time, when we think of gifts, we think of things—an object that is wrapped up in pretty paper with a ribbon or bow. It's easy to focus on the toys, games, electronics, clothes, and other stuff that we are excited to get, and give, at Christmas.

But gifts don't always have to be objects that we can touch and play with. We can give in other ways besides going out and buying something in a store. These gifts might not be something that we can wrap, but they can still be given to people in our lives through our actions, our words, and our thoughts.

Encourage students to think of gifts they can give that can't be bought or wrapped. List ideas on the whiteboard (or screenshared document) as they are shared. Ideas will vary but might include:

- Forgiveness when someone hurts me
- Kindness toward my brothers/sisters
- Love and compassion to people around me
- Willingness to work and do my best in school
- Respect to my parents
- Thankfulness for what I've been given
- Loyalty to my friends

Distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home) and give students time to list the gifts that they might strive to give. Instruct them to wait to fill in their gift to Jesus.

Optional: While students are working, the following music video may be played in the background if you feel comfortable:

O Holy Night - HomeTown

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUh7xDO-8bE&list=RDpMI2vcJsgB8&index=2>

When Jesus was sent to earth as a baby so that He could grow up and ultimately give His life for our sins, we were given the best gift we can ever receive—the gift of eternal life. Salvation through Jesus ensures that we can rejoice in the gift of Jesus the same way that Simeon and Anna did. They knew that He would save His people from their sins, that He would prepare a place for them in Heaven, and that those who give their lives to Him through faith, repentance, and baptism will be with Him forever. That's a gift like no other, and it's freely given to whomever chooses to accept it.

Invite students to think about and write down the gift that they can give Jesus. Students who have already been baptized may want to give Jesus their time through daily devotions, service by finding ways to bless and give to others, or a stronger relationship through intentional prayer. Students who haven't yet accepted Jesus as their Savior may write that they want to be baptized; others who aren't sure may be uncertain of what to write. Make yourself available to students after class who might have questions about becoming a Christian.

Before closing in prayer, encourage your students to keep this gift list somewhere where they can see it regularly and be reminded of the gifts they can be giving to those around them long after the Christmas season has ended.

Additional source:

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The Best Gifts Can't Be Wrapped

What gifts can you give to the people listed below?

To your parents: _____

To your sibling(s): _____

To your teacher: _____

To your friend(s): _____

To someone you don't like: _____

To someone who is unkind to you: _____

To someone in need: _____

To Jesus: _____

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. John 3:16