

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Best Christmas Ever / Week 2

<p><i>"Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord."</i></p> <p>Hebrews 12:14 NIV</p>	<p>DAY 1</p> <p>It's not easy to live at peace with our friends, family members, teammates, or even the other kids in our Small Group all the time. But it's got to be important because the writer of Hebrews tells us to make every effort to do it! The good news is that we don't have to figure it out alone. God sent Jesus to bring peace on Earth. And because of that peace Jesus brought to Earth thousands of years ago, we can call on God still today for help living at peace with others. So, who in your life is difficult to live at peace with? Ask God to help you rely on His peace in that relationship this season.</p>
<p><i>"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."</i></p> <p>Colossians 3:15 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 2</p> <p>As the Christmas season begins, it's easy to be thankful. School is almost out, presents are on the way, and treats are everywhere. But as the season goes on, being thankful can be more difficult to do. When you're stuck with your siblings, when you don't get the gift you hoped for, when the family fights all day long—those things don't usually lead to a grateful Christmas spirit! When you struggle to find something to be thankful for or your attitude of gratitude is tested, you can remember Jesus. He is the reason we celebrate Christmas, and the gifts He gave us are things we can always be thankful for. To help you stay focused on gratitude, make a list of things you're thankful for this Christmas.</p>
<p><i>"They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it."</i></p> <p>1 Peter 3:11 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 3</p> <p>God could've done all kinds of things to help turn our hearts back toward His good. He could've taken any path to bring peace and give us a chance to have a relationship with Him. So, what did He do? God sent Jesus. And through Jesus, God made a way for us to be close to Him. To be at peace with Him. To live in relationship with Him. That's something worth celebrating as we reflect and remember Jesus' birth at Christmas. If you know God and are walking with Him, thank Him for making that possible in Jesus. And if you don't, take time to think about or talk to someone you trust about what we celebrate at Christmas and what it might mean for your life.</p>

<p><i>“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”</i></p> <p>Philippians 4:7 NIV</p>	<p>DAY 4</p> <p>Have you ever had to guard something? Maybe it was a flag in a game with friends, or the net during a sporting event, or a secret for a friend. Whatever it was, you know that when you’re guarding something, it means that you’re protecting it. You’re watching out for it. Well, in the same way, God promises that He will guard our hearts and minds with His peace. That’s a pretty big deal because, as you probably know, so many things can keep us from feeling at peace, especially at Christmas! When that happens, we can turn to God for help in guarding and protecting our hearts and minds. This week, try to memorize this verse so that you can remember God’s promise of peace.</p>
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<p><i>“Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”</i></p> <p>1 John 3:18 NIV</p>	<p>DAY 5</p> <p>One of the best things about Christmas? The gifts of course! Who doesn’t get excited about finding gifts on Christmas morning? And isn’t there something great about giving a great gift to someone you care about? Well, did you know that you have everything you need to give the perfect gift this season? As this verse reminds us, you can give others the gift of love through what you say to them and how you treat them. Who is someone in your life that you know could use a little love this holiday season? Think about what you can give them through your words (a kind text, a sweet note, or a good conversation) or your actions (spending time with them, serving them, or doing something nice).</p>
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<p><i>“Three things will last forever- faith, hope, and love- and the greatest of these is love.”</i></p> <p>1 Corinthians 13:13 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 6</p> <p>Wouldn’t it be great if the kindness, and care, and compassion that mark the Christmas season could last beyond December? Well, while life may look different as Christmas ends each year, the things the season represents can remain. Jesus came to bring us faith, hope, and love—the very things Paul talks about here in this verse. And because of Jesus, those things can be a part of our lives in any season and at any time. This week, place this verse somewhere you will see it as a reminder of the things Jesus came to give us at Christmas. Then, leave it up after the season ends to help you remember that you always have access to faith, hope, and love in Him.</p>
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<p><i>“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”</i></p> <p>Luke 2:14 NLT</p>	<p>DAY 7</p> <p>Memorizing Scripture helps you apply the truth to your life. When you know the verse and keep it in your heart, it becomes more than just something you read. It becomes something that changes you! Commit to memorizing this verse this week. Try putting it to song, adding motions to remind you of the words. It’s a simple way to do an important thing for yourself: remember God’s Word!</p>
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