

Every day is Christmas for God.

There is something wonderful about the Christmas season. Even in the midst of the hustle and bustle and pressure there is a feeling of excitement – gifts and giving, family and feasting, peace on earth and good will to men. Even the air changes. Little kids change their behavior – last minute reprieve from months of mischievousness.

The world becomes brighter – lights everywhere twinkle their smiles of the season. The world becomes filled with decorations – explosions of color. There is an expectancy in the air that isn't there during the rest of the year. There is a celebration coming filled with joy and magic, wonder and beauty. Everything is wrapped in mystery, hidden in gorgeous paper capped with bows and tinsel.

Children live in expectation. Living out the mystery of what is under the tree. What will they get? Will they get what they wanted? Will there be surprises. (Will they get socks? 😊) Curiosity, and the wish for x-ray vision (rather than sugar plums) dances through their heads. Shaking packages gives no clues. Christmas will never come.

And this is the first divide that Christmas marks between children and adults. To the adult Christmas comes too fast to get everything done. This begins to mark the transition from childhood to adulthood. Christmas creates other divisions, like the old saying: First you believe in Santa Clause, then you don't, then you become Santa Claus and then you begin to look like Santa. The childhood - adult transition runs right through Christmas.

The childhood excitement of Christmas, experienced without the attendant cares of preparing for the season, will eventually morph into being the adult who is responsible for much of the joy of the season for children. The season totally changes when the joy of receiving is replaced by the joy of giving. This new role comes with the excitement of watching the joy of the children and the surprise in their eyes and their squeals. This, then, become their gifts to you.

You become the adult when you go from not knowing what is under the tree, to knowing what each package contains (after all you bought it. 😊) And then someday, you again will not know what is under the tree because your own children will have become adults and they will begin their own cycle of giving.

Christmas becomes an overwhelming joy when our gifts bring such pleasure and happiness. At this point we enter the mystery of the giving of our heavenly Father. The first Christmas gift, His gift to us, was wrapped in swaddling clothes. His gift brought joy to Mary and Joseph, to the shepherds, to the wise men and to Anna and Simeon in the temple and eventually, the whole world.

God's giving was never limited to one day nor even the twelve days of Christmas nor just to the season. Everyday is Christmas to our heavenly Father because the surprise and delight of His children fills Him with joy as His children daily open gifts that He gives - love, encouragement, joy, family, daily bread, miracles, reconciliation, healing, faith, perseverance, sunshine, rain, winds and clouds, springtime, and harvest. "If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in Heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him?" Matthew 7:11.

Christmas is more than a date on the calendar. And when the Christ child is born in the manger of your heart – the celebration never ends. God gives us His presence and presents every day, and He rejoices in our delight and our surprise at His never ending goodness.

Every day with God is a "Merry Christmas."