

**DAMASCUS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
CHALKMARKS
HOME OF THE EAGLES**



The Heart Of Education is Education of the Heart

Connecting With Christmas

When you hear the word “Christmas,” what immediately comes to your mind? Memories filled with family, fun times, moments of quiet awe, wonderful remembrances of special Christmas church services, delicious food, time spent in recounting the Christmas story as portrayed in Scripture? Or perhaps, it was a time of turmoil, family squabbles, over-kill on giving and receiving, or a deep and disquieting sense that something significant was missing?

Whatever your Christmas memories, good or not-so-good, it is never too late to start afresh and anew by building positive, Christ-centered Christmas recollections for your family. First, we need to ask ourselves, “What is Christmas all about?” Is it to do our part to make sure retailers end their year in the black? Is it using Christmas as an excuse to pamper ourselves with gifts we have wanted but had difficulty in justifying? Is it knocking yourself (and your family) out with cooking, decorating, entertaining, and shopping because that is what Christmas is all about? Is that what it is all about?

What about seeking to reduce Christmas to its true meaning and deep significance? What about saying “Slow Down” to the shopping/entertaining/food preparation frenzy and choose to focus on the true meaning of Christmas - remembering the birth of our Savior? Listen to the story of one West Virginia family...“I think we all enjoy Christmas more because we’re focused on its true meaning,” the Dad said. “We teach our kids about love and respect and about helping others and giving gifts to each other because God has blessed us as a family. Our children are gifts to us, and we haven’t enjoyed Christmas any less at all because Santa isn’t in the picture.”

Jamie said they want to encourage their children to do the right things for the right reasons. “We don’t want to set our children up for a life based on being good or being nice so someone will bring you presents. We believe in the grace of God and how we don’t earn salvation or God’s love. Those are free gifts to us. We teach our children that we give them presents because we love them, and we receive things from them because they love us. Gifts aren’t something we earn.” This family sets a spending limit and steers away from trends and competition in giving gifts. “We don’t want to be caught up in the latest and the greatest. We look for things our children will enjoy and appreciate. I know parents who are out frantically searching for more presents because they’ve spent a certain amount of money on one child and feel they have to spend an equal

amount on the other. Greg and I just don’t want to be caught up in all of that.”

The two children make gifts for their cousins and enjoy getting gifts that have been made for them. “It’s neat to know somebody thought about your favorite color and about what you might really like,” Jamie said. “Children have to be taught how to be grateful and appreciative. That doesn’t just happen. If they can learn to really enjoy a gift that was given to them or made especially for them, they develop that sense of true gratitude, and that’s something we all need to do, regardless of our age.”

The Christmas season carries out the theme of teaching Christian principles all year long, the Mom added. “We talk about why God sent Christ and why we are waiting for Him to come back again. We give and receive presents because we are celebrating everything about Jesus, not just His birthday. In fact, we talk about how we don’t even know for sure Dec. 25 is the Lord’s birthday. That’s an honest celebration of Christmas,” she said. “It boggles my mind that so many parents don’t think about a child’s soul,” she said. “When we have to stand before God some day and answer for how we raised our children, we don’t want to have all those coulda, shoulda, woulda things to deal with. Our whole thing is to be proactive parents. With lots of prayer and the day-to-day teaching and example, we want to make sure our kids don’t grow up without experiencing God’s grace. We want them to know and remember Christ is the center of all we do — all year long, not just on Christmas Day.” (Story excerpted from *The Register-Herald* newspaper, Beckley, West Virginia)

If you have gotten caught up in the typical Christmas merchandising madness, perhaps this would be the year to step back, cut back, and bring Christ back into Christmas.



How many Christmas gifts would it take to match Jesus?
CrossDaily.com

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST ON NEXT PAGE

- ⇒ LIBRARY NEWS-BOOK FAIR & GIFT
- ⇒ REWARD FOR RETURN
- ⇒ SCRIP REWARDS
- ⇒ EARLY DISMISSAL FRIDAY
- ⇒ MERRY CHRISTMAS & GOD BLESS YOU!

Book Fair Success Story

Thank you to all of you who visited and shopped at our recent Book Fair. Your generosity is measurable and appreciated. Because of your participation, we were able to purchase \$565.00 worth of product for the library! I'm currently working on getting those books cataloged and into your hands. Be sure to stop by and see how God continues to provide.



A Recent Donation

The library recently received a donation that could be a valuable, spiritual guideline for our DCS families. The **Goebel family** donated a book titled What Can We Watch Tonight? It is a family friendly guide to movies that have been released since 1990. Before you head off to the video store or Netflix, you may want to take a look at this book to evaluate movie choices. It could also be helpful in finding an uplifting movie to rent or purchase. Thank you Goebel family!

Reward for Return

One of our students lost a pink and white flowered make-up bag. She is offering a cash reward for the return of the bag and contents. This was lost last Wednesday at school, in the girls' locker room, or on the way to her car after school. The bag contains various items of jewelry that have many memories for her – a silver cross, gold heart ring from her father, and a blue, blown glass heart necklace that she



wore every day. Each of the listed items are important to **Ivy** and hold value only to her. If you happen to come across this bag, please turn it in to the school office. No questions asked; a cash reward will follow along with heavenly rewards. Thanks!



Scrip Rewards

Congratulations to **Louise Walker**, our latest Scrip winner. Miss Walker is a faithful Scrip "orderer". Because she buys Scrip, her name was entered into the drawing for a \$25 Starbucks gift card. Her name was drawn and she now enjoys her favorite Starbucks drinks! Easy! Free! And tasty!

Tuesday, December 15th, was the last time to order Scrip before Christmas. One "orderer" will be enjoying a \$30 Fred Meyer Scrip gift card! Easy! Free! And rewarding for simply ordering Scrip! Got yours?!

Early Dismissal on Friday

Friday, December 18th, we will be dismissing early ~

- Kindergarten – 11:30
- 1st-3rd grades – 11:40
- 4th-6th grades – 11:50
- 7th-12th grades at noon



Merry Christmas and God's blessings to your family from the DCS family!

