



TIS THE SEASON

ETERNAL GEMS YOUTH NEWSLETTER



SPREADING LOVE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

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Hi Readers, I hope your week is filled with love and positivity during this holiday season.

The whole point of the Christmas story is love.

The Bible makes it clear that the birth of Jesus was the result of God's love for his people. "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16 NIV). Knowing what we needed, God sent Jesus to embody love and show us how true love looks. At Christmas especially, we should be striving to follow this command and love those around us. What are some ways we can make love the central message of our Christmas season? We can imitate Jesus by words, thoughts, and acts of love as well as teaching others to love.

Love is patient. Let's face it. Running errands, shopping, buying gifts, decorating, planning, cooking—it is time-consuming and somewhat intense. There can be a big temptation, even for believers, to become easily frustrated, irritable and impatient. But, God has called us to love others, and part of displaying that love is being patient in parking lots and store lines, and with those who aren't as polite as they should be. Your patience will shine the light of Jesus and stand out in a crowd.

Love is kind. Take the opportunity to show an extra measure of kindness to those around you this Christmas. Bless your teachers with a gift or a special breakfast, reach out to those in need in your community through a food bank or by lending a hand in an elderly neighbor's yard. A small act of kindness goes a long way and gives you the precious chance to be the hands and feet of Jesus to those around you.

Love does not envy. There may be some great gifts given to those around you this Christmas. Don't give in to the temptation to envy what others have. Rejoice with them, and thank God for the gifts you've been given—whether material or spiritual.



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A CHRISTMAS CAROL



CHARLES DICKENS

BOOK OF THE WEEK

A Christmas Carol recounts the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, an elderly miserable man, who is visited by the ghost of his former business partner Jacob Marley and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come. After their visits, Scrooge is transformed into a kind and gentle man.

GINGERBREAD COOKIES

- 3/4 c. (1 1/2 sticks) butter, softened
- 3/4 c. packed brown sugar
- 2/3 c. molasses
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 3 1/4 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2" piece fresh ginger, grated (optional)
- Zest of 1 orange (optional)



1/2 tsp. finely ground black pepper (optional)

Directions

In a large bowl using a hand mixer, beat butter, brown sugar, and molasses until fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add egg and vanilla and beat until combined. In a medium bowl, whisk flour, spices, baking soda, and salt until combined. With the mixer on low, gradually add dry ingredients to wet ingredients, as well as fresh ginger, orange zest, and black pepper (if using), until dough just comes together. (Do not overmix!)

Divide dough in half and create two discs. Wrap each in plastic wrap and chill until firm, about 2 to 3 hours. (Alternatively, divide dough in half and roll each piece of dough between two pieces of parchment to 1/4" thick. Chill until firm.)

Preheat oven to 350° and line two large baking sheets with parchment paper. Place one disc of dough on a lightly floured surface and roll until 1/4" thick. (Alternatively, peel off both sheets of parchment from dough, then replace one sheet of parchment back underneath dough.) Cut out gingerbread men with a 3" wide cutter and transfer to baking sheets.

Bake until slightly puffed and set, 9 to 10 minutes, depending on the size of your cookie cutters. Let cool on baking sheets for 5 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack to cool completely.

Repeat with remaining disc of dough. Decorate with icing and sprinkles as desired.

Riddle time

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

Answer: snow flakes

What do you get if you cross a Christmas tree with an apple?

Answer: a pine-apple

What did Santa Claus say to the over-stressed snowman?

Answer: chill out



ELF



Buddy (Will Ferrell) was accidentally transported to the North Pole as a toddler and raised to adulthood among Santa's elves. Unable to shake the feeling that he doesn't fit in, the adult Buddy travels to New York, in full elf uniform, in search of his real father. As it happens, this is Walter Hobbs (James Caan), a cynical businessman. After a DNA test proves this, Walter reluctantly attempts to start a relationship with the childlike Buddy with increasingly chaotic results.

Available on: Hulu, YouTube, iTunes, Google Play Movies and Tv, Amazon Prime Video Vudu & more



"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH, BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE."

GOD LOVE FOR YOU IS NEVER ENDING. HIS LOVE FOR YOU IS FAITHFUL. THE CHARACTER OF HIS LOVE IS UNCONDITIONAL. GOD LOVES US NO MATTER WHO OR WHAT WE ARE. THIS IS THE MANNER OF HIS LOVE. HIS LOVE IS SACRIFICIAL. HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON TO DIE ON THE CROSS SO WE CAN BE SIN FREE. WE MUST BE FOREVER THANKFUL FOR HIS LOVE AND RECIPRATE IT. WE MUST SHOW AND SPREAD THE LOVE THAT JESUS GAVE US, ESPECIALLY DURING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.



— JOHN 3:16

