

December 25, 2023 – Christmas Day

Open the Gift

[Luke 2:1-14](#)

⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.^[a]

When do you open Christmas gifts in your family? I found out when I got married that not everyone has the same traditions! In my family, we always opened one gift on Christmas Eve (not the gifts from Santa, mind you, they weren't under the tree yet). Christmas morning we would open all the gifts that Santa brought and wonder how he knew just what we wanted. But in my husband's family, all gifts were opened on Christmas morning. It took us many years to navigate this chasm of differences!

How do you open Christmas gifts? In my family, everyone tore into any package that had their name on it, with wild abandon and shouts of joy. In my husband's family, each one took turns opening a gift, being careful with the paper, smoothing it out so it could be reused, or repurposed as shelf-liners. The ribbons were saved as well, untied and rolled onto a cardboard tube. This tradition, too, took a while to reconcile.

On that first Christmas morning, the greatest Gift of all was given to the world, wrapped in swaddling clothes. And all the participants opened that gift in a different way. The angels sang, their joyful praise echoing off the Judean hills as proclaimed peace to all. The shepherds quietly adored the newborn baby, wondering how and why they were chosen to be present. Joseph stood by the manger, smiling quietly in awe, knowing that this child would change the world. And Mary, gazing into the Miracle's eyes, pondered all these things in her heart.

I have learned over the years that there is no right or wrong way to open a gift. The joy is not in the time of day or style of wrapping paper -- but in the gift itself. Something that someone has chosen just for you, something that meets your needs, something that stirs happiness within your soul.

Gracious God: This Christmas Day help us to open the gift of Christ in our lives. In your awesome generosity, You sent your son, chosen just for us, sent to forgive our sins, and to provide us all a Savior. Remind us not to leave this gift under the tree. Let us open the Gift, sing praise to the Giver, and share the Good News with all. Amen.

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