

The Christmas Angel

By

James E. Bogoniewski, Jr.

Theme:

This play conveys the importance of putting Christ first in ones celebration of Christmas. An angel helps a typical family go through the transition from a secular celebration of Christmas to one that is honoring the birth of Christ.

Biblical Reference:

The Christmas Story

Approximate Running Time:

45 minutes (60 Minutes with songs)

Props:

A long string of indoor Christmas tree lights. They must be the kind that do not heat up when used. They must be able to be touched while turned on.

Various Christmas decorations packed in boxes as if packaged in the attic for the summer.

A Christmas tree, which shall be decorated as part of the play.

Living room furniture to set the stage.

Refer to the script for a complete description as to how the props are to be used.

Cast of Characters:

Daniel: Daniel is an angel who is responsible for changing people's views of and celebration of Christmas. He is dressed in everyday white attire.

Dad: Dad is the father of the family in need of change. His military training has shaped his idea of parenthood and he's a strict man who likes things done the way he specifies.

Mom: Mom is the mother of the family in need of change. She loves her kids and is willing to do whatever she can to help them out in life. She's not afraid to stand up to her husband, but she's never gone against his wishes.

Beth: Beth is the teenage daughter. She is ready and willing to make a change - especially in regards to Christmas. Her respect for her parents must show through her desire to see things change. She has a great relationship with her family.

Josh: Josh is the teenage son. He truly is a man in training. He's showing signs of being a great young man and father. His respect for his parents must be evident even though he's willing to challenge his father on what he has to say. He has a great relationship with his family.

Rachel: Rachel is a pre-teen daughter. She has a simple, matter-of-fact, know it all attitude that should be based on a younger image of her father. She has a lot of respect for her older sister.

Brian: Brian is a pre-teen son. His sweetness and enthusiasm regarding the season should be evident.

Scene One

[The family is getting together to decorate their living room for Christmas. Stage is set as a living room. A couch, easy chair, television, coffee table, end table, and other homey things are arranged on stage. There is a bare Christmas tree near the foot of the stage, but back far enough from the edge of the stage that the actors can work around it. Beth enters carrying a box of ornaments, sits on the couch, opens the box, and begins to arrange the ornaments on the coffee table. Josh does the same. Rachel and Brian come over to see what the boxes contain. Mom and Dad enter with boxes, leave them, and exit to get more. They continue to enter with boxes until there are boxes strewn all over the living room. Josh, Beth, Rachel, and Brian rummage through the boxes in search of their favorite decorations and just leave them laying around wherever is convenient. Yeah, the living room is becoming a total mess. I'm sure many in the audience will be able to relate with the experience. Mom and Dad enter and go nuts on the kids.]

Mom: I can't believe you guys. Will you just look at this mess!

Dad: *[In a military demeanor, but yet in a humorous manner.]* What do you kids think you're doing? We have to do this in an organized manner, or we're just not going to do this at all. I tell you the same thing each and every year: the best way to decorate our house is to do it in an organized manner. Without organization we have nothing but chaos. Chaos does not belong in our house, especially at Christmas time. Why is it that I have to go over these rules each and every year? Don't you kids remember how we do things in this household? Don't you listen to me when I instruct on the proper way for us to put up and take down our Christmas decorations? Ok, everyone on the couch. It seems as if we have to review the rules before we begin to decorate.

[The kids all groan as they try to get comfortable for the long speech to come. Their checked enthusiasm is evident.]

Josh: Dad, you go over your "family Christmas decoration rules" every year. We hear you every year. It's just that we don't understand why we have to do things the same way each and every year. Don't you know that there are other ways of doing things? Why can't we do things our own way?

Beth: Yeah Dad. I was just reading an article about how good it is for a child's psyche if their parents allow them to decorate some part of their house for Christmas their own way.

Dad: Did you really read that or you just making it up so that it will sway my opinion?

Beth: *[With a glimpse of hope.]* Yeah, I really read it. Do you want me to go and get the article and show you?

Dad: No, you don't have to do that. I believe you.

Mom: Uh, Dear, I read that article too, and I believe that it would be a good idea for us to allow the kids to decorate a part of the house their own way. They are old enough, you know. Maybe your way isn't the best.

Dad: What's going on here? Is this a coup d'etat?

Mom: No Dear, we're not trying to take over the family's celebration of Christmas. This is just a peaceful suggestion. I just think that it may be time for us to change things and take Beth's suggestion. They're not little kids anymore, you know.

Dad: So you're all saying that you'd like to decorate part of the house your own way, is that what you're saying?

[Everyone agrees.]

Beth: That'd be great.

Dad: [Thinking.] Ok, I guess we could do that. I'll assign each of us a room to decorate and then we can each decorate that room the way we want. [To Mom.] Would that be a good compromise?

Mom: I think that would be fair.

Beth: Thanks Dad. [To Josh.] And you said there was no hope for dad.

Josh: I can't believe it, this is the first time we've been able to break through his military training, especially during a holiday season. Wow, maybe this is a glimpse of hope for the future.

Beth: Hey, maybe you should ask him about a car real quick before we lose this window of opportunity.

Dad: [Continuing his lecture.] We can call these personalized Christmas decoration areas "personal designated Christmas decoration zones." Each person will be responsible for decorating their zones their own way to reflect their own interpretation of Christmas. Of course we'll need to gain and organize more supplies, but that shouldn't be a problem.

Mom: I'm sure that Beth and I can find some stores that still have some Christmas decorations available, even though we are late in the season.

Josh: [To Beth.] I don't know, do you really think we should interrupt him just yet? Let him finish with this Christmas thing before we start to hit him up for other things.

Beth: Maybe this is an indication of great things to come.

Dad: Josh? Josh? Are you listening to me?

- Josh: *[Turning to him.]* Yeah, uh, yeah, Dad I'm listening. You're doing great. You just keep on going - never mind about me.
- Dad: I was just about to assign the designated Christmas decoration zones. Josh, you get the garage. Beth gets the basement. Mom gets the kitchen. And I get the living room. Rachel and Brian, you get to help each of us in our different zones.
- Beth: *[Josh.]* Well, we thought we were close.
- Josh: Maybe next year.
- Dad: You can each organize your own designated Christmas decoration zones later, right after you clean them first, but for now you can all help me decorate the room central to our family's celebration of Christmas. The one special room that combines the traditions of the past Christmases with the present - and the hope for many Christmases to come. This is such a special time of the year. It was special for my family growing up, my parents' family as they grew up, and many families before that. We're merely carrying on the traditions of people who have led the way for us, no - they have paved the way for us to enjoy this great and glorious holiday by practicing the traditions of their forefathers. And I can only hope that my grandchildren and great-grandchildren will continue the traditions that we have passed on to you.
- Josh: *[To Beth.]* Not if I have anything to say about it.
- Dad: Ok. Let's get started. Remember, we're all doing the living room first and then you can begin on your own designated Christmas decoration zones.
- Mom: Now, why don't we start by putting these decorations back into the boxes you got them out of and we'll do this in an organized manner - just like your father said.

[The kids groan again about having to put everything back together. Dad opens a box that has the lights in it and begins to get them out. The lights are all balled up into a complete mess. Rachel and Brian take some of the ornaments off the table and begin to put them on the tree.]

- Dad: All right! Who put the lights away last year? This is just not acceptable. *[Holding the lights up into the air.]* Josh, did you do this?
- Josh: *[Laughing at his Dad.]* No way Dad, I didn't do that. If I remember right, you put the lights away last year.
- Dad: Very funny. In all my years of putting lights away, never before have I seen something that looks as disorganized as this. *[Throwing the ball of lights to Josh.]* Untangle them.
- Josh: *[Throwing them back to Dad.]* No way, I didn't do this.

Dad: *[Throwing them back to Josh.]* Well, you're going to undo it, whether or not you did it.

Josh: That's not fair.

[Everyone is busily putting things away so that they can start over. Josh begins to untangle the lights but ends up getting completely tangled up in the mess. He has lights over his shoulder, over his head, under his feet, through his belt, etc. He looks like a human Christmas tree. Beth begins to laugh and point at Josh.]

Josh: *[Very frustrated at not being able to free himself.]* Stop laughing at me. Mom, Beth's laughing at me.

Mom: *[Not looking. She speaks as she is busily putting things back into the boxes.]* Beth, it's not polite to laugh at your brother.

[Beth sneaks around behind Josh and plugs the string of lights into an extension cord - lighting up Josh as if he was a Christmas tree. Beth can't help laughing again. Brian and Rachel begin to laugh too.]

Josh: Mom! This just isn't fair.

Mom: *[Still not looking.]* Kids, it's not right for you... *[Now she's looking. She begins to laugh too.]* Oh, Josh, you look so funny!

[Stage lights fade to black. The lights on Josh remain on for a beat, while the entire family has a good laugh together. Eventually Josh joins in. You can hear various family members remarking on how foolish Josh looks. Then the Christmas lights are cut and the scene ends.]

- CURTAIN -



[As the choir begins to sing their first song the family begins to decorate the living room. If you have the ability to adjust lighting, the stage should be lit just enough for the audience to see what's going on. About 50% of full lighting should work well. The family decorates the Christmas tree, puts up holly, and does whatever can be done to decorate the stage for a secular family's celebration of Christmas. They continue to decorate the living room throughout the first song, Daniel's monologue, and they complete decorating while the choir is singing the second song. All of their movement on stage is to be as quiet as possible. Any interaction between characters is to be mimed.]

SONG #1

Scene Two

[Daniel enters and stands at the foot of the stage and introduces himself to the audience while the family continues to decorate their living room. He is dressed completely in casual white attire. He is wearing no robe, glitter, wings, or halo.]

Daniel:

Hello, my name is Daniel. Believe it or not, I'm an angel. I bet you're not all that impressed. You were probably expecting to see a huge form with powerful wings, a halo, a flowing white gown, and a harp. That's what most people have in their minds when they think of an angel. Sorry to let you down. I have appeared like that before, with powerful wings, a halo, and a flowing white gown, although I can't ever remember playing a harp, but I haven't appeared like that for quite some time. Actually, now that I think of it, the last time I was asked to appear like that was at the birth of Christ when most of the heavenly host serenaded the shepherds as they watched their flocks by night. Boy, that was some night. It was like all of creation had been created just for that very night. We were all called upon to celebrate the greatest birth ever. We were to celebrate the Son of God Himself becoming man. Who would have thought God's Son would humble Himself and allow Himself to be born as a man. We all have memories of that story: the birth of Christ or the Christmas Story - whatever you wish to call it. It doesn't matter if you're very religious or not. It seems as if just about everyone finds peace and joy in the story of the Birth of Christ. At least they appear as if they find peace and joy.

Since the day we announced the birth of Christ to those shepherds in the fields outside of Bethlehem all of my assignments have required me to appear as you see me now - in regular human attire. Most of the time it doesn't really matter what I look like because the humans I am working with usually can't see me at all. From time to time I am asked to appear to those I am trying to influence, protect, encourage, or admonish, but that hasn't happened all that much since Christ was born. Those I am working with are able to hear what I have to tell them. Well, they don't actually "hear" what I have to say, my words are understood by them as if they were a thought that came to their own minds. As if their "conscience" had insight they just can't keep out of their mind.

You see, ever since the birth of Christ the Lord has ordered me to influence humans to recognize the real meaning of Christmas. I don't know of others who have been told to do this. My angelic friends refer to me as "the Christmas Angel." I never really liked the name, but my friends continued to use it, and now it's become like a nickname. My job isn't as easy as it sounds on the surface. Well, it's easy to do the influencing, it's not easy to watch the results.

[Indicating the family behind him.] This family is the next on my list of those I have to influence. I've been watching them for a little while. That's all I really need to get a good read on the family. When you've been doing this as long as I have it doesn't take much to assess what you're up against. They're pretty typical. Most of them are too involved in the traditions of recent years to truly celebrate Christmas for what it really is - the birthday of the Savior of the world. Unfortunately, this isn't as rare as it used to be. In the past most of those I was assigned to work with had little knowledge of Christmas. I only had to guide them to a source of traditional Christmas celebration, like the local Bible-believing church, and the church leaders did the rest. Once they learned the Christmas story it was easy for them to see who Christ was, what the celebration was all about, and the proper way to respond to it - by giving their own life back to God as a gift just as He has done for us. These new Christians were well on their way to establishing a faith in God that outlasted the traditions of the past, because they hadn't become set in their ways. Today most of my work is with people who know all about Christmas - too much about Christmas. They've bought into the secular traditions that have fooled people into ignoring the celebration of the birth of Christ at Christmas. It's much harder to change their hearts. I have to break through the secular traditions before I can attempt to convince them of the true meaning of Christmas. I don't think I'll have a hard time influencing this family. In fact, I believe they're already well on their way to changing without my having done a thing to influence them.

[Turning and indicating the family as they decorate.] Just look at them. So busy getting their house ready to celebrate Christmas that they're missing out on an opportunity to prepare their hearts to celebrate the most wondrous birthday ever.

The father is the tough one. He's so set in his ways, the traditions of his upbringing, his military training, his fear of losing control of his family, especially at Christmas time - yeah, he's the tough one. The Mother seems to be ready for change. She can see that her children desire a change and she's willing to make a change just for their sake. A change would be good for her too. The kids will be the easiest. They're ready and willing to make a change. Any change. Directing that change in the direction of God won't be that difficult a task. In fact, Josh has been praying for a change for quite some time now. But I've got to get the message through to the father. I think I'll work on the children first. *[Snapping his fingers as he is beginning to prepare for the task.]* I think I've got a pretty good idea on how I can do that.

[When his introduction is completed he steps back into the living room and becomes part of the scene taking place behind him. He should find a comfortable place to sit as the family completes the decorating process as the choir sings the second song.]

- CURTAIN -



SONG #2

Scene Three

[The family has now completed decorating the living room. Lights fade to black on the scene as SONG #2 comes to a close. Lights come up on Scene Three. There are many wrapped presents beneath the tree. Beth and Rachel are sitting on the floor near the tree trying to figure out what is inside of the wrapped packages. They are showing additional interest in the packages that have their names on them. They are picking up the presents, shaking them, feeling them, and asking one another what they think could be inside. Daniel enters and sits on the couch. He is intently watching the events under the tree.]

Beth: What do you think is in this present?

Rachel: I don't know. What does it sound like when you shake it?

Beth: *[Shaking the box.]* It doesn't make a sound.

Rachel: Does it sound like a big object just moving around?

Beth: Kind of.

Rachel: Then it's probably clothes.

Beth: Oh yeah? You think you've got it all figured out?

Rachel: I've been doing this for _____ years now. I've got my M-O down pat.

Beth: Your M-O? You've been spending too much time around Dad lately. *[Picking up another package.]* So what do you think is in this one?

Rachel: *[Taking it from Beth, shaking it, listening to it, etc.]* Underwear.

Beth: Underwear? How do you know that?

Rachel: Look, it's from Grandma. She always buys us underwear for Christmas. *[Looking through the packages for more presents with her name on them.]* Um, are there any more for me over there?

Beth: No, I don't see anymore over here.

[Daniel rises and moves over alongside of Beth. Rachel and Beth ignore his movements and do not respond to him as he speaks to them.]

Rachel: Are you sure?

Beth: Yeah, I'm sure. Why are you so anxious to find more packages? Don't you think you have enough presents over there?

- Rachel: Well, it's just that there is this one special doll I was hoping to get this year, and from what I can tell it isn't in any of these packages here. And I really wanted that doll.
- Daniel: [*Speaking to Beth.*] Isn't Christmas about giving rather than getting presents? Didn't Jesus give us the greatest gift when He was born here on earth knowing that He was going to have to die on the cross? Shouldn't we focus more on what we have to give than what we are going to get?
- Beth: [*Thinking about what Daniel said to her.*] You know Rachel, I know you really wanted that doll, but isn't it enough that you got all of these presents?
- Rachel: Well, I guess so, but I really wanted that doll.
- Beth: I know what you mean. I don't see anything that could be what I really wanted either.
- Rachel: What's the point of having Christmas presents if we don't get the things we really want?
- Daniel: Remember, Christmas is about giving, not receiving.
- Beth: I know what you're saying. But isn't Christmas all about giving? I mean, what kind of presents have you given others this year?
- Rachel: Others? What do you mean?
- Beth: Like Mom and Dad. What did you get them?
- Rachel: I haven't gotten them anything yet. I was just going to draw something for them, or give them something that I found in my room that I didn't need anymore. Mom and Dad seem to like that kind of thing.
- Daniel: That's because they love her. It doesn't matter what Rachel gives them. It's what's behind the gift that counts - even to your parents.
- Beth: [*Catching on to the idea.*] That's right. Mom and Dad do like that kind of thing, but they don't like that kind of thing because they need the junk that you find in your room. They like that kind of thing because they know that the present is from you. They're glad that you love them so much you were willing to go through the trouble of picking something out, wrapping it, and giving it to them for Christmas. That shows them you love them. That's what's important. It doesn't matter what your gift is. It's what's inside your heart that counts.
- Rachel: [*Beth's words have obviously affected her.*] So, you're saying that Mom and Dad like my gifts just because I love them.

Beth: That's right. They also have a lot of fun watching you open your presents because they gave them to you just because they love you. So how do you think they feel when you open all of the gifts they gave you and you're still looking for something else?

Daniel: They feel like you're not going to be happy no matter what they give you.

Rachel: Maybe they feel like I'm not going to be happy no matter what they give me.

Beth: And is that true? Or would you love Mom and Dad no matter what they gave you for Christmas?

Rachel: Of course. I don't love Mom and Dad just because of the presents they give me.

Beth: Me either. Well, then maybe both of us should be more thankful that we have parents who love us and less upset because we didn't get the doll we really wanted.

Rachel: I think that's a great idea. Do you think you could take me to the mall to get something special for Mom and Dad this year?

Beth: Sure. I know they'd appreciate it. [*Getting up to go.*] Let's just hope Mom lets us borrow the car.

Rachel: No problem. We'll just tell her that we're going shopping for her.

Beth: So that's your M-O.

Rachel: Yeah. I've got it all figured out.

[*They exit.*]

- CURTAIN -



SONG #3

Scene Four

[Beth and Rachel have gone shopping. Brian is playing on the floor of the living room with some toys. Mom is sitting on the couch reading through a magazine. Daniel walks into the room, approaches Brian, and begins to speak to him. Brian keeps on playing, totally ignoring Daniel. Mom doesn't take note of his presence either.]

Daniel: *[Speaking to Brian.]* Why don't you ask your mother to tell you the story of Christmas? You know, the story about the birth of baby Jesus.

Brian: *[Turning to Mom.]* Hey Mom.

Mom: Yes dear.

Brian: Can you tell me the story of Christmas?

Mom: Sure dear. *[Putting her magazine down.]* Why don't you come up here and sit right next to me? *[He does.]* Now, what Christmas story do you want me to tell you?

Brian: What do you mean?

Mom: Well, do you want to hear the story of *Frosty the Snowman*, or *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*, or the story of *The Grinch who Stole Christmas*, or how about the story *Babes in Toyland*?

Brian: No Mom. I didn't mean any of those stories. I meant *THE* Christmas story. The story that tells us about the birth of baby Jesus.

Mom: Oh, you mean that story. Well, let me see if I can remember how it started..

Daniel: Think back to the time you sat on the couch on your father's lap and he told you the story of the birth of baby Jesus. You remember, it all started a long time ago in the fields outside of Bethlehem. *[He settles down on the couch as if he's interested in hearing the story again too.]*

Mom: Oh, yes. It all started a long time ago in the fields outside of Bethlehem. You see, there were shepherds who were minding their flocks of sheep by night. Suddenly there was a group of angels in the sky.

Brian: They were just flying there in the sky?

Mom: That's right. And they were bright. The whole sky was lit up like it was daytime. The angels told the shepherds that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem. They said, um..

Daniel: Born unto you this day in the city of David a savior, which is Christ the lord.

Mom: Now I remember. They said, born unto you today in the city of David a savior, which is Christ the Lord. The angels told the shepherds that if they went to Bethlehem they would be able to see Him. They had to look for a baby that was wrapped in swaddling clothes...

Brian: What are swaddling clothes?

Mom: It's just another name for baby clothes. They used to wrap brand new babies in something like a blanket. So the angels told them they would find Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. A manger is what they use to feed animals.

Brian: Was Jesus born in a barn or something?

Mom: Yes, Jesus was born in a barn because there was no room for Him in the Inn. The shepherds came and visited with Jesus, they worshipped Him, that means they knew how special He was, and then they went out and told everyone they could find about Him. Everyone they told wanted to see Him.

Brian: In the barn?

Mom: Yeah, it was probably pretty busy in that barn, but everyone wanted to see the new baby that was sent from God. There were even wise men, who lived far away, who saw a special star right over Bethlehem - it was right over where the baby Jesus lay. It took them a long time to get to Him, but when they finally got there they gave Jesus gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh.

Brian: What's frankincense, and myrrh?

Mom: It's Frankincense and Myrrh. Frankincense is a special kind of perfume, and Myrrh is a special kind of spice. They were very expensive gifts. That's one reason why we give gifts each year we celebrate Christmas.

Brian: Like the presents you give me?

Mom: Yep, just like that.

Brian: Mommy, did you get presents when you were little?

Mom: Yes I did. And I loved getting presents, just like you do.

Daniel: But that wasn't your favorite memory of Christmas as a child, is it?

Mom: But you know what Mommy's favorite part of Christmas was when I was little?

Brian: What was it?

Mom: Grandma and I used to make Christmas cookies and take them to a nursing home and give them to the old people who were there. I used to love to jump up on their laps and tell them all about how excited I was about Jesus' birthday, the kinds of presents I was hoping to get, and the plans I had for playing with them.

Brian: Mommy, can we do that?

Mom: What?

Brian: Can we make cookies and take them to old people at the *nursery* home?

Mom: You'd be willing to do that with me?

Brian: Yeah, count me in.

Mom: You know, I think that's a great idea. [*Getting up to head to the kitchen.*] I'm sure we'll be able to find a *nursery* home that would let us visit.

Brian: Great. Do I get to lick the beaters?

[*They exit. Daniel steps to the foot of the stage to address the audience.*]

Daniel: You see, she knew the story. She just had to be reminded. I think she's well on her way to remembering what Christmas is really all about. Now for the tough one. Dad's next.

[*He exits.*]

- CURTAIN -



SONG #4

Scene Five

[Dad is sitting on the couch reading the paper. Josh, having completed the decorating of his designed Christmas decoration zone, is coming to Dad to see if he can get more out of him. Daniel is looking for an opportunity to influence Dad. He quickly moves in on Josh.]

Josh: Hey Dad, can I talk to you for a minute?

Dad: *[Putting the newspaper down.]* Sure, what's going on?

Josh: Well, I noticed that you've been changing some of the things that we've been doing around here, and I think that's a great idea. So, I was thinking that this would be a good time, I mean, I was wondering if...

Daniel: Why don't you ask him if you could do something different with your family this Christmas? Why don't you ask him if he's got any ideas from things he used to do when he was younger.

Dad: Are you okay?

Josh: Yeah, I was, uh, a thought just came to mind. I was just wondering if we could do something different to celebrate Christmas this year. I mean, we do the same thing every other year. We open presents, go to grandma's house, eat dinner, watch football, and sit around doin' nothing. I mean, this designated Christmas decoration zone idea is a great idea. Can't we work off it and do more? Can't we do something really different to celebrate Christmas this year?

Dad: *[As if he's about to walk into a trap.]* Okay. I knew something like this was coming. All I have to do is give in just a little and then the floodgates open. This is why I try to keep a tight ship around here.

Daniel: Would it hurt to listen to what he has to say? He is almost a young man, you know?

Dad: But, that's not to say I'm not willing to hear what you have to say. Why don't you tell me what you have in mind?

Josh: I don't know. I mean, I didn't have anything specific in mind. How about you? Did you do anything different when you were a kid, or did you do the same thing we do every year?

Dad: Well, I'm not sure, that was a long time ago. *[Thinking.]* It's hard to remember what we did to celebrate Christmas.

Daniel: Remember how you used to go caroling before your mother died. Remember how your Dad didn't want to do much for Christmas after she died. Remember how much more fun Christmas was before your Dad decided to stop celebrating it?

- Josh: You okay?
- Dad: Yeah. I just had a thought come to mind.
- Josh: I know the feeling.
- Dad: You know, I just remembered that we used to go caroling when I was a little kid. We all used to go: Mom, Dad, my brothers and sisters, and another family we knew from church. [Smiling.] Humph. We used to go from door to door and sing songs we learned in church. I think one year Mom actually bought some caroling books so that we could sing some new songs, or the verses to the old ones we never could remember. You know, we used to have some pretty good snowball fights along the way, too. But the best part was knowing that we were doing something special for someone else. We always sang for older people who didn't get out of the house much. It felt good to know we were really making their day by standing on their front porch singing to them. I can remember seeing some of them sit in the front window, some in a wheelchair, with this huge smile on their face. It was like the highlight of their Christmas, maybe even of their whole year. I miss seeing that look on people's faces.
- Josh: You went from door to door caroling? I don't believe it.
- Dad: Well, that was before my mother died. Things in my family were a lot different before my mother died. After she died my father didn't want to do anything special around Christmas anymore. She died the week before Christmas when I was twelve. After that my father didn't allow us to do anything special at Christmas time. We went to Grandma's house on Christmas day, but that was all we were allowed to do.
- Josh: Ah, Dad, I never knew that. I'm sorry to hear that things changed for you and your family. I know that this is sensitive, maybe I should just let things go, I mean, celebrating Christmas a different way isn't that important to me.
- Daniel: Don't give up. You're close, so close. Tell him we can start the traditions of his past in your family.
- Josh: Dad? Do you think you'd feel better, with those memories from your past, when your mom was alive, if we started to do those things you used to love to do at Christmas time with our family?
- Dad: Do you think *our* family would want to go caroling?
- Josh: Yeah. Especially if there are snowball fights involved.
- Dad: Do you really think that You and Beth would be interested in going door to door singing Christmas songs for strangers?

Josh: We've been asking to do something different for Christmas. That sounds like a great idea to me. I know Beth would be psyched about it. Mom would love to give it a try too.

Dad: Well, if we did give it a try, we wouldn't even know what kind of songs to sing.

Daniel: They have Christmas caroling songbooks at the Christian bookstore.

Josh: They have songbooks down at the Christian bookstore. Why don't we head down and pick some up? Everyone else is out, we can really surprise them when they get back.

Dad: [*Getting excited.*] They sure would be surprised, wouldn't they? Let's do it.

[*Dad and Josh exit the stage in a hurry. Dad is leading the way. Daniel moves to center stage to address the audience.*]

Daniel: I guess he wasn't as tough as I thought. His father trained him to put the great memories out of his mind. All I had to do was unlock that memory that he had all locked up in his heart and he was ready to make a change. [*He begins to exit.*] I'll have to remember that in the future.

[*He exits.*]

- CURTAIN -



SONG #5

Scene Six

[Beth and Rachel have just gotten home from shopping. Mom and Brian have just returned from visiting a nursing home. Josh and Dad have just returned from the Christian Bookstore. They all meet in the living room to share their experiences. Beth and Rachel first enter with their shopping bags. There are wrapped presents within the bags. They look around to see if they are alone and begin to put the presents under the tree. Daniel stands opposite stage, smiling.]

Rachel: This is fun.

Beth: Yeah, I never knew it could be this much fun to get presents for Mom and Dad, but I can't wait to see the look on their faces when they find out that these packages are for them.

Rachel: You know what?

Beth: What?

Rachel: I don't care about not getting that doll anymore.

Beth: I don't care about my gift either.

Rachel: I like this kind of Christmas better.

Beth: Me too.

Rachel: Thanks, Beth. I love you, you know.

Beth: I love you too. *[They hug.]*

[Mom and Brian enter. They have a pan full of cookies with them. Brian is eager to tell of what they have just done.]

Brian: Beth, Rachel, guess where we just went.

Beth: Where?

Brian: We went to a nursery home to give some cookies to the people that were there.

Rachel: Where did you get the cookies?

Brian: Mom and I made them. Look, we got some left over. Want some?

Rachel: Yeah.

Beth: What kind did you make?

Mom: They're sugar cookies with frosting and jimmies.

Brian: The people at the nursery home didn't care what flavor they were. They ate everything we brought them.

Beth: Where did you get these?

Brian: Mom hid them before we left.

Rachel: [*Speaking in between bites.*] Good thinking Mom. These are great cookies.

[*Josh and Dad enter with caroling booklets to pass out. Brian quickly offers them some cookies.*]

Brian: Do you want some of the cookies that me and Mom made?

Dad: Not right now.

Brian: How about you?

Josh: Yeah, these look great.

Dad: I'm glad everyone is here. I have an announcement to make. Everyone on the couch.

[*Everyone but Josh sit down with reluctance. Josh stands next to Dad with his arm around him as he munches on the cookie.*]

Dad: It's not what you think. Look, Josh helped me think through the way our family has been celebrating Christmas and I've decided that there are going to be some changes around here. I know it's just a few days before Christmas, but I think there's plenty of time to change the way we do things before Christmas gets here. [*He begins to pass out the songbooks.*] These are Christmas caroling songbooks. Josh helped me remember how much I loved to go Christmas caroling with my family when I was a little kid. I think it's about time our family did special things for others at Christmas time.

I've been acting awfully selfish this time of year, but not anymore. It's time I started doing things for other people. It's just about dark out now. Tonight we're going to go caroling, just the six of us as a family. After that we're going shopping for a family I know about at work who could really use some help this time of year. My family used to go to church every Christmas Eve. I think it would be a good idea for us to attend this year. It's about time for us to put Christ back into our celebration of Christmas. Anyone have a problem with that?

Beth: No way dad, I can't believe it. This is great! I'm going to get ready. [*She exits.*]

Rachel: We get to go caroling? And then we're going shopping again? This *IS* great! I'm getting ready too. [*She exits too.*]

Brian: Dad, do you think we could go caroling at the nursery home? I met some new friends there and I know they would probably like

to have us come and sing for them. Maybe we could even bring them some more cookies.

[Dad turns to Mom and shrugs. Mom shakes her head. Dad turns back to Brian.]

Dad: Sure. That sounds like a good idea to me.

Brian: Great! I'm going to get ready too. *[He exits.]*

Dad: *[To Mom.]* What's this nursing home thing all about?

Mom: I remembered how my mother and I used to bake cookies and take them to a nursing home. I thought it was about time for me to start that kind of a tradition with our kids. I only wish I would have done it sooner. So, what changed your heart?

Dad: Josh, actually. *[Josh heads over to stare at the tree. He's overcome with emotion after seeing so many changes in his family.]* He started to ask me some questions about what I used to do to celebrate Christmas with my family. Just like you, I realized that it was about time to start putting Christ back into Christmas and to start doing that by doing things for others. I used to love going caroling. I can't believe it. I'm so excited about going tonight. It's like I'm a little kid again.

Mom: Well, come on, let's go get ready. Are you coming Josh?

Josh: Yeah, in a minute.

Dad: You okay?

Josh: Yeah, I'm just glad to see all the changes in our family, that's all. It's a little overwhelming.

Mom: We'll be waiting for you.

[Mom and Dad exit.]

Josh: *[Praying.]* Lord, I don't know how you did it, but thanks. *[He runs his finger over the lights on the tree, looks at the angel on the top, then turns as if he can see Daniel, smiles, and exits.]*

Daniel: That family is going to be just fine. Isn't it great to see a family who desires to celebrate Christmas by giving to others? How about your family? Have you gotten all caught up in the secular traditions of Christmas? Do you need to change your focus from yourselves to others? Will you give a gift back to Christ, after all, He is the greatest gift ever given.

Think about it.

If you change your ways on your own you'll save me a lot of work. And I could sure use the help these days.

- CURTAIN -

A decorative flourish consisting of a central infinity-like symbol with two horizontal lines extending outwards, ending in small curls.

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