

## A Kids' Day

Children are naturally, and rightly, excited and anxious as Christmas approaches. When I was a kid I thought it was just the best treat ever when Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Frosty the Snowman aired back to back in early December. It was one of those nights mom and dad let me stay up past my regular bedtime- that fact alone meant something special was going on!

As children, we are pretty good at focusing in when something is truly important to us. Decorations, music, shopping, parties, and special meals and other goodies all help, don't they, to raise the energy level and heighten the senses of an already energetic kiddo. Let's listen in on a conversation between two young friends, both boys, a few days before Christmas.

(exasperated) "Do you know what my teacher said to the class before we left on Friday? She said, "Remember kids, Christmas is for your parents too."

"Ok, so?"

"So? Well, I don't see where Christmas is for parents at all!

"Oh man, you're crazy- of course Christmas is for parents too. Remember, as difficult as it is to imagine, parents were once kids. If we say "Christmas isn't for them," when did that happen?"

"Alright, look, I will prove it to you. Last year, when you were opening presents with your brother and sister, didn't you keep a close eye on everyone's presents...and didn't you, in the back of your mind, make sure everything was pretty even?"

"Sure I did, all kids do that."

"Right- **kids** do that...adults don't do that. Adults don't worry about whether the gifts appear to be fair and equal."

"Hmmm...I guess that's true, but..."

(Interrupting) “Wait, there’s more! Would you agree with me that beginning with the day after Thanksgiving, kids begin to get really nervous about Christmas?”

“What do you mean when you say “nervous?”

“I mean we want to be sure we are good so we stay on everyone’s nice list, we are worried about the choices we have made, how people think about us, whether we met everyone’s expectations.”

“Hmmm...(thinking)...I suppose...well, yes, I never really thought about it, but I do finally begin to think about being good and kind. Um, I hate to admit it, but I kinda watch what I say a little more around Christmas.”

“Uh huh...and what about parents and other adults? Do they get all worried and anxious about these things? Of course not! They are past all that silliness.”

“Huh! That makes sense...you have been thinking about this for a while, haven’t you?”

“Yes I have...and I have one more. Now, this one sounds...oh, I don’t know...religious...and I guess it is, but you will know what I mean. Church for the past month has been all about “preparing for Jesus’ coming.” The pastor talked about our spiritual journey, and how difficult it is to trust that Jesus is ahead of you even when you cannot see him. There were lots of things to think about, and pray about, and some of it is scary. Angels keep saying, “Do not fear,” but honestly, there are times I am afraid. Am I wrong? It feels wrong...because, I never hear about adults being afraid.”

(pause)

Children are naturally, and rightly, excited and anxious as Christmas approaches. Are we so different?

