



DAY 16

Monday, December 17

(Candle of Joy)

EPHESIANS 2:1–10

“For it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God...”

—Ephesians 2:8

The Gift that Lasts

by Tracy Bradley

*A*s a child, I loved the Christmas season... the sounds of Christmas carols and bells ringing, the smell of pine and home baked goodies, the sight of dazzling Christmas displays and happy shoppers hustling about. I have to admit the biggest thrill for me was waiting with anticipation for Santa to arrive. My whole being was filled with excitement as I walked down the stairs on Christmas morning to view all the gifts neatly arranged beneath the Christmas tree.

As years passed, I learned that Christmas was more than just a time of decorations, Christmas carols, Santa Claus and receiving presents. Most importantly, it is a time to celebrate the birth of Christ by giving to others.

As a Christian, I began to truly understand the greatest gift I could ever receive is our Savior, Jesus. God gave us the gift of his Son so that we may live with him forever. There is no greater gift at Christmas than the joy of knowing Jesus. This gift is for anyone who will receive it. As I have matured in my faith, I realize how important it is to not only receive the gift of eternal life through Christ Jesus, but to share that gift with others.

This Christmas season, as you select gifts for loved ones, maybe you can share the greatest gift of all. It will always be the right size; the price is not out of our reach; it will never go out of style; and it will last forever. Share with a friend, family member or co-worker “the reason for the season.” The joy of knowing Jesus is the only gift that will last for eternity.

RESPOND:

DO: Wrap an empty box. Place it under your tree. Open it Christmas day to symbolize the gift of Jesus.

PRAY: that the family celebrations within our church would be Christ-centered.

