



#59933

## MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

- Props:** *Ten (10) pieces of fruit, labeled with fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Have two fruits labeled with patience.  
Christmas lights.  
Headband with a star and angel to go on “tree’s” head.  
Three gifts attached to long ribbons that will be placed around the neck of “tree” person.  
Bucket with pieces of tinsel and/or confetti inside.  
Song sheets or hymn books.*
- People needed:** *Three (3) readers; person dressed in green to be the “tree;” person to decorate “tree” and conclude devotion; song leader.*
- Reader 1:** The world is very busy making the most of Christmas – buying, selling, baking, decorating, over-eating and drinking, rushing here and there.
- Reader 2:** We are Christians. Our celebration of Christmas should be different from that of the world. We celebrate the fact that Jesus Christ, the Father’s only begotten Son, became man through the Virgin Mary and the Holy Spirit.
- Reader 3:** Our Christmas celebration includes many customs. Christmas customs often serve for good causes. The best customs of all help to draw us to the whole-hearted worship of Jesus, our Savior. The custom of the Christmas tree helps us express our joy over the birth of Christ.
- Group sings:** “Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising”  
LW #48 stanzas 1, 3; TLH #90 stanzas 1, 5
- Reader 1:** Christmas trees come in all sizes. Some are big, some little, some are real, some man-made. Yet the sight and smell of an evergreen tree shouts “Christmas” to most of us. Martin Luther was one of the first to use a tree as a home decoration. It is said that while on a walk one Christmas Eve, he noticed a snow speckled evergreen tree sparkling in the moonlight. He couldn’t forget the beautiful scene, so he brought an evergreen tree home to enrich the Christmas celebration for his family.
- Reader 2:** In the Bible the tree is both a symbol of man’s sins and his deliverance from sin. By a tree whose fruit was forbidden, Satan tempted Adam and Eve, and by their willful disobedience sin and death came into the world. It was with a tree, the wooden cross of Calvary, that the Savior overcame

sin, death and the devil as He suffered and died in our place for our sins and the sins of the whole world.

**Reader 3:** Evergreens are most often used for Christmas trees. Green is the color of life and living things. Our Christmas trees remind us of life, the everlasting life we are promised by faith in our Savior, Christ Jesus.

*(Person dressed in green comes out and raises arms to shoulder height.)*

**Group sings:** O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, How lovely are thy branches.  
Not only green when summer's here, but in the winter, cold and drear.  
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how lovely are thy branches.

(Text: Public Domain)

**Reader 1:** Good news that is not shared does not benefit anyone. On the first Christmas God used two ways to announce the birth of the Savior.

**Reader 2:** He sent angels to the shepherds to tell them that the one to deliver them from the punishment for their sin, their Savior, has been born. The shepherds went to worship Him.

**Group sings:** "While Shepherds Watched" – LW #70 or TLH #109

*(Decorator places headband with a star and an angel on head of the "tree" person.)*

**Reader 3:** God placed an especially brilliant and large star in the heavens that told the Wise Men that something wonderful had taken place. They followed the star and went to Jerusalem where they learned the King of the Jews had been born. They traveled on the road to Bethlehem to worship the Savior.

**Group sings:** "As with Gladness Men of Old" – LW #75 or TLH #127 stanzas 1-3

**Reader 1:** Martin Luther is also credited for the first use of lights on a Christmas tree. He told his children the lights should remind them of the brightness of the Bethlehem star and its message of the Savior's birth.

**Reader 2:** God's Word in Matthew 4:16 tells us, "*The people living in darkness have seen a great light.*" Without Christ we would be in eternal darkness, separated from God, lonely, afraid and uncertain.

**Reader 3:** Jesus, the Light of the world, came as a babe of Bethlehem to take away the darkness of our sin. We are no longer alone. He removes our fears and doubts. Because of Jesus' presence in our lives we can feel safe and secure, delivered from the fear of death. The lights on our Christmas tree remind us that God is with us. "Immanuel" means "God with us."

**Group sings:** “O, Come, Oh, Come Emmanuel” LW #31; TLH #62 stanza 1

*(Decorator puts the lights on “tree” person and plugs them in.)*

**Reader 1:** Ornaments add to the beauty of our Christmas trees. These ornaments might remind us of the fruits of the Spirit. In Galatians 5:22, 23 St. Paul says “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

*(Decorator and Reader 1 start putting the “fruits” on the “tree” person, keeping the two “Patience” fruits for the last.)*

**Reader 2:** The ornaments we place on the tree do not make the tree, but they do add to its beauty. In the same way love, joy, gentleness, goodness and all the rest do not make a Christian.

*(Reader 2 helps place fruit on the tree. “Tree” person acts impatient, taps foot, rolls eyes, etc.)*

**Decorator:** *(Addressing Reader 1 and 2)* Here’s two “Patience” fruits – that’s good. I think our tree needs a little patience tonight!

**Reader 3:** We are Christian by faith in Christ as our Savior. But these fruits of the Spirit are the outward evidence of Christ’s love working in our lives.

**Reader 1:** The gifts that we place under the tree should remind us that God is the giver of all good things. God the Father has given us the best gift of all, His only Son. *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*  
John 3:16

*Reader 1 places gift with the ribbon around the neck of “tree” person and then sits down under the tree.)*

**Reader 2:** Through Jesus, God’s Son, we receive the gift of God’s peace that passes all understanding. In John 14:27, Jesus says, *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid.”*

*(Reader 2 places gift with the ribbon around the neck of “tree” person and then sits down under the tree.)*

**Reader 3:** Through the Holy Spirit, God the Father has given us the gift of grace. *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not by yourselves, it is the gift from God – not from works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8

*(Reader 3 places gift with the ribbon around the neck of “tree” person and then sits down under tree.)*

**Group sings:** Oh, How Joyfully

Oh, how joyfully, Oh, how merrily Christmas comes with its grace divine!  
Grace again is beaming, Christ the world redeeming  
Hail, ye Christians, hail the joyous Christmas time!

Oh, how joyfully, Oh, how merrily Christmas comes with its peace divine!  
Peace on earth is reigning, Christ our peace regaining  
Hail, ye Christians, hail the joyous Christmas time!

Oh, how joyfully, Oh, how merrily Christmas comes with its life divine!  
Angels high in glory, Chant the Christmas story  
Hail, ye Christians, hail the joyous Christmas time!

(Text: Public Domain)

**Decorator:** There is something our tree needs. *(Decorator walks over to where a bucket is sitting, picks it up like it is heavy and carries it carefully so as not to spill the contents.)* Our tree needs water to stay fresh and beautiful... *(“Tree” person looks shocked, then very worried.)* ... just as we need Jesus, the Water of Life, in order to be spiritually refreshed. *(Decorator acts like she is going to throw water on “tree” person, but quickly turns and throws small pieces of tinsel and confetti at the group watching the sketch.)*

**Decorator:** Our tree, and maybe even the gifts we have shown today, might look just a little goofy or silly. But there is nothing silly about God’s love for us. Let’s sing His praises once more with this favorite children’s song, “God Loves Me Dearly.”

God loves me dearly, grants me salvation  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.  
Therefore I’ll say again, God loves me dearly,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me!

(Text: Public Domain)

**Decorator:** Now what are we supposed to do with this wonderful message?  
Worship our Triune God and GO AND TELL!

**Group sings:** “Go Tell It On the Mountain” LW 504

All Scripture is from NIV.

MESSAGE OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE – *Written by Joyce Wollenburg*  
*Published by Lutheran Women’s Missionary League*  
2005