

**Northwest Tampa Church of Christ**  
**Christmas Family Devotional Guide**

**Directions:** Gather around the Christmas tree or the dinner table or a campfire, and pick one person to be the facilitator of the devotional. This person should read out loud the devotional below, pausing after the questions for family discussion time.

**Immanuel: God With Us**

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”- which means, “God with us.” Matthew 1:18-23

Let’s stop and think, for a minute, about the phrase “God with us.” It means that He really came to be WITH US. Our sins made it impossible for us to go to Him, so God took an incredible step toward us. Through the birth of His son, Jesus Christ, we get to see just how amazing God’s love is for us. On earth Jesus experienced and overcame temptation, extreme emotional and physical suffering, and the paralyzing power of sin. HE CAME TO US to defeat these obstacles because we could no longer go to Him. We could not restore our relationship with God, so He reached out to us in a most spectacular way.

1. What are some ways you have experienced “Immanuel” - God actually being with you?

2. Think about how our lives would be different if we remember that God is always with us. How would thinking about God being with us change our actions in the way we live our lives everyday?
3. How do you think it would change others' lives if we constantly think about the fact that God is always with us?

Post a list on the refrigerator as a constant reminder of what we should be focused on each and every day.

In the morning, before you leave the house, try to identify one or two of the items on the list that you can share or model for someone you encounter during the day. Be very intentional, not only about which items you choose but also about actually carrying them out.

At the end of the day, come together as a family and discuss what items you picked and whether or not you had the chance to display them to someone. Discuss why you picked that particular item and why you picked the person to share it with. Describe how the experience went and tell if it was a success or not.

Try to make this a family tradition in which you strategically target someone you encounter each day that might be struggling with an issue. It is up to us to show the love of Jesus. Remember, Immanuel came to be with all of us and it's up to us to be His hands and feet.

### **The Gift of Jesus, Our King**

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of Gold and of incense and of myrrh. - Matthew 2:11

The wise men gave Jesus and his parents extravagant gifts. As we get ready to enjoy Christmas Day and opening presents let's remember some of the amazing gifts God has given us...

- Jesus, the best gift we could get
- The Bible, a gift we can enjoy each day • (Insert some of your own)

What would next year look like if we opened the gift of the Bible each day as a family?

As a family let's decide if we want to read through the Bible in a year using some sort of reading plan. Be aware, the enemy will do everything he can to knock you off target and stop you from completing this family goal, but if we are persistent, God will prevail. He always does.