

A PUPPET PLAY IN ONE ACT

Christmas Presents

Based on John 13:35 · Written by Carrie Elderberry



SUITABLE FOR
Ages 5 and up

CAST SIZE
4 puppets

PERFORMANCE TIME
8-10 minutes

PROPS REQUIRED
A wish list

MAIN THEME
Christmas gifts should express God's kind of love.

To print just the play on its own, print pages 4-8.

PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

Synopsis

A sweet little boy worries he does not have enough money for Christmas gifts, but his wise Grandma helps him understand that Christmas is about showing love, not spending money. When a selfish girl appears with a long gift wish list, the boy shares what he has learned – and she discovers that Jesus is the very best Gift of all.

Spiritual Concept

Christmas is about sharing love through acts of kindness, not just buying material things. As Jesus said, "By this all people will know that you are My followers, if you love one another" (John 13:35, NLT).

Age Suitability

Best for ages 5-12; adaptable for all ages.

Performance Time

8-10 minutes

CAST & TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Characters (in order of appearance)

BOY – A sweet, thoughtful child who wants to give generously at Christmas but has limited funds.

SPARKY (Puppy) – BOY's loyal dog, friendly and supportive.

GRANDMA – A wise woman who teaches through gentle questioning and encouragement.

GIRL – Initially selfish but open to correction; learns an important lesson about generosity.

Prop Options

- A wish list – a very long thin strip of paper with scribbles written down it (tape several narrow strips of paper together).
 - Christmas sprinkle decorations (mentioned in dialogue).
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PERFORMANCE NOTES FOR PUPPETEERS

New to puppets? General prep, technique, and voice tips live at gospelpuppets.org/getting-started.

Character Notes

SPARKY reacts to everything with barks, whines, and growls – give the puppeteer room to ad-lib these responses throughout. GIRL's transformation should feel genuine, not rushed – let her "Hmm" moments land before she moves on.

Reading the Script

Extra Commas = Pause for breath.

CAPS = Volume / intensity.

Special Sounds: Arf! (happy bark), ARF! (excited bark), ooo (sad howl sound), Grrr! (warning growl).

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

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(Enter BOY and SPARKY. BOY is very gloomy.)

BOY: Oh, Sparky, what am I going to do? Christmas is coming, and I don't have enough money.

(SPARKY whines comfortingly and licks his face.)

BOY: Good girl, Sparky, good girl! Ok, that's enough!

SPARKY: Arf!

BOY: I want to give presents to mom, and dad, and Grandma, and Grandpa,—they always give me so much.

SPARKY: ARF!

BOY: There's my baby sister, too.

(He pets SPARKY, who wags her tail.)

BOY: You're the only one who is easy!

BOY: I'll just give you pats!

(Enter GRANDMA.)

GRANDMA: Well, if it isn't my favorite grandson! How's my little man today?

BOY: *(sadly)* Grandma, you don't HAVE any other grandsons.

GRANDMA: That just makes it even easier! My, you seem gloomy. Is anything the matter?

BOY: Well, there is, but I can't tell you.

GRANDMA: Come on dear, try me. Maybe I can help.

BOY: Well, OK. The problem is, I want to give PRESENTS to people this Christmas.

GRANDMA: But what a wonderful idea!

BOY: It would be, if I had enough money!

SPARKY: *(sadly)* ooo, oooo

GRANDMA: Actually, you have more than you think, because I forgot to pay you, for folding my laundry last week.

BOY: Oh, right!

GRANDMA: My, My! I never did see anyone fold laundry, quite the way YOU do!

BOY: I figured out the folds all by myself.

GRANDMA: Oh, yes, dear. I could tell, BELIEVE me... So, let's see... how about making a batch of cookies, over at my house?

SPARKY: Arf, arf!

BOY: Do you think I'd have enough money to do that?

GRANDMA: Oh, yes. And I'll help you, and you can put Christmas sprinkles on them. EVERYONE loves those!

BOY: Oh, Grandma! Could we really?

GRANDMA: Sure!

BOY: That would be great! Can Sparky come too?

SPARKY: Arf, arf!

GRANDMA: Sure. You know, dear, we don't HAVE to spend a lot of money at Christmas time.

BOY: We don't?

GRANDMA: We only give presents to each other, as a way of celebrating the birthday of Jesus.

SPARKY: Arf, arf!

BOY: Oh, that's right!

GRANDMA: Jesus wants us to show our love to one another, and gifts are just a SMALL part of that.

BOY: You are so smart, Grandma.

GRANDMA: Jesus says, "By this all people will know that you are My followers, if you love one another".

BOY: Sounds good to me!

GRANDMA: I'm going to go find your mamma, and set it all up.

BOY: Thanks, Grandma! Bye!

SPARKY: Arf, arf!

(Exit GRANDMA.)

(Enter GIRL. She has a long gift list, folded.)

GIRL: Hi!

GIRL: This year, I'm totally ready for Christmas!

BOY: Is that your Christmas list?

SPARKY: *(curious)* ooo? Ooo?

GIRL: Yes! I am SO ready for all the presents!
BOY: Wow, so you have ALREADY got your presents for everyone?
GIRL: Oh, no! It's not that kind of list!
SPARKY: *(tip head to side)* ooo?
BOY: Oh. So, it is a list of what you are PLANNING to give to them?
GIRL: *(starting to squirm)* No, it's not that kind of list either...
BOY: *(leaning over, trying to see the list)* Can I see it?
GIRL: *(now she is trying to hide the list)* No!
BOY: Why not?
GIRL: *(defensively)* Well, if you MUST know, it is a list of what I want to be GIVEN.

(BOY and SPARKY look at each other and then back at her.)

BOY: Oh! Um...
SPARKY: *(shake head and growl)* grr...
GIRL: *(Defensively)* Well, how are they going to know what to get me, if I don't tell them?
BOY: Good point. But...
GIRL: I could end up with a lot of stupid stuff I don't even WANT!
SPARKY: Grrr!
BOY: True. But...
GIRL: Here, while I'm at it, let me give you a copy...

(She hands BOY the long list.)

BOY: *(He looks it over)* You know, I don't have enough money for ANY of these.
SPARKY: Grrr!
GIRL: Oh, never mind then. Here, let me have it back.

(She takes the list back.)

BOY: Please don't get mad at me, but there is another way, of looking at Christmas presents.

GIRL: What are you talking about?
BOY: My Grandma told me. She says, presents are a way of celebrating Jesus' birthday.
SPARKY: Arf, arf!
GIRL: Oh, I know all about THAT! The wise men, and the gold —
BOY: Right!
GIRL: Gold—that reminds me! I want some new gold earrings! Do you have a pencil?
BOY: No. But that is NOT—
GIRL: Gold, frankincense, and myrrh—oh! Myrrh is a kind of perfume...
BOY: Yes, but not—
GIRL: I forgot perfume, too! I better go find a pencil...
BOY: Wait, stop!
SPARKY: Arf, arf!
GIRL: What?
BOY: That is NOT what my Grandma meant.
GIRL: Then what did she mean?
BOY: She says gifts are a way, to show our love for each other.
GIRL: I know that! I'm just making sure, my family shows their love to ME...
BOY: Gosh.
GIRL: With just the things I REALLY want.

(BOY and SPARKY look at each other again.)

BOY: Christmas is about us showing our love for OTHER people. And showing our love for Jesus.
GIRL: Oh. Hmm.
BOY: And we don't need to spend a lot of money.
GIRL: What?
BOY: Christmas is about sharing God's love, not just buying a lot of stuff.

(GIRL looks at her list, and then at BOY.)

GIRL: I guess I... um... I never thought about all that.

BOY: It's easy to forget.
GIRL: And you know, I just learned a Bible verse, but I did not understand it. Now I think I do!
BOY: Which bible verse?
GIRL: "A spiritual gift is given to each of us, so that we can help each other".
SPARKY: Arf, arf!
BOY: Yes! And Jesus is the very best Gift!
GIRL: Wow, that IS a different way of thinking.
SPARKY: ARF!
GIRL: (*nodding her head*) I am sorry for being so SELFISH...
SPARKY: ooo, ooo
BOY: How would you like to make some cookies with me and my grandma? You could give some to everybody!

(*SPARKY barks happily.*)

GIRL: Yes. Yes, I would. Thanks.
SPARKY: Arf, arf, arf!
ALL: (*to audience*) You can find out more about Jesus, and Christmas, in the Bible. And that's all for today! Goodbye!

(*Exit all puppets.*)

THE END

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Discussion Questions

1. Why was BOY worried at the beginning of the play?
2. What did GRANDMA teach BOY about the real meaning of Christmas?
3. How did GIRL change by the end of the play?
4. What is "the very best Gift" mentioned in the play?
5. How can you show love to others this Christmas without spending money?

Related Bible Passages

Primary Text: John 13:35 – "By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another." (NLT)

Additional Scripture:

- 1 Corinthians 12:7 – "A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other." (NLT)
- 2 Corinthians 9:15 – "Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!" (NLT)
- Luke 2:1-20 – The full Christmas story.
- John 3:16 – "For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life." (NLT)

Song Suggestions

- "Jesus Loves Me" – Cedarmont Kids –
<https://open.spotify.com/track/2SZzV0eYQVeXodvaTJg0X6>
- "God's Love Is So Wonderful" – Gilda Mathew –
<https://open.spotify.com/track/26KYT90usfw1aToi7LQImf>
- "O Come, All Ye Faithful" – Cedarmont Kids –
<https://open.spotify.com/track/5IJ12V0wS9DXffVBgmmLPE>
- "Silent Night" – Cedarmont Kids –
<https://open.spotify.com/track/2Ege5hVAtmM86Iu0dpkX7M>

Ministry Context

This play works well as part of Sunday School Christmas programs, Advent services, Christmas Eve family services, and children's church special presentations.

Bible Background

The John 13:35 quote in this script comes from the night of the Last Supper, when Jesus gave His disciples a "new commandment" to love one another. It's a striking choice for a Christmas play – connecting the giving of gifts to the deepest kind of love Jesus modeled. The 1 Corinthians 12:7 verse that GIRL quotes is from Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts, where he emphasizes that every gift is meant for the benefit of others – a theme that fits the play's arc beautifully.