

GO DEEPER

This devo is designed to be used in your group. Start or end your meeting with it or share it on social media during the week.

✦ A Christmas Story for Everyone || ALEXANDRA KUYKENDALL | alexandrakuykendall.com

She climbed into my lap with her footy jammies on and her hair still damp from the bath. The exhaustion of the day was pressed into my body and attitude. A day where I was constantly moving yet nothing felt accomplished. A day like so many before it and likely so many ahead.

I didn't want to do story time. I simply wanted this pint-sized version of me to go to bed so I could begin the nightly Netflix binge.

Gracie held her choice up for me to see, a hard covered picture book with a star on the front, a tale of three wise men going to see a baby. I smiled through the fatigue. I couldn't resist, this familiar story of adventure and travel and a guiding star brought a bit of comfort. This was what I needed tonight, a story for my weary spirit.

My girl snuggled in; her pink stuffed elephant tucked under one arm, her special blankie under the other, and waited for me to begin. Her anticipation struck me. Before I opened the book, she knew it held something she wanted to see. I rarely held that much wonder about anything these days.

I opened the cover and began reading aloud. We snuggled on the couch and read the story that changed everything.

This story.

In a night, the history of the world shifted. Humanity suddenly had a sense of God as he came in ordinary flesh. I know what it is to deliver a baby. I couldn't fathom delivering one in a barn, much less one that was fully holy. Too wacky. Too unbelievable. Too beyond the expected. And yet, there Mary was, holding her own child under these very circumstances.

I turned the pages and considered the characters: the wise men, Joseph, the shepherds. None of them knew the next part of the story. Like my girl, they waited with anticipation as the actual Christmas unfolded in front of them. They were probably scared, stressed and overwhelmed, yet they didn't turn away, they came to the baby, to the story, to find out what was next.

I closed the book and took a deep breath in and then exhaled it out. I prayed that the wonder of this story would refresh my spirit. That I would carry the story with me into tomorrow. A little bit of wonder in the midst of my ordinary life.

Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often.
- Luke 2:19 (NLT)

✦ **Deeper Discussion:** To encourage deeper discussion, use these questions in addition to our "Talk" questions in the Connection section.

- What gives you a sense of wonder?
- How can you keep the Christmas story at the forefront of your heart this season?
- What does it mean for you to love the people around you more during this season? What would it mean for you to love God more?
- Pray that your family will point others to the source of hope, love, joy and peace during the Advent season.