

Christmas — Party of One

CHOOSE JOY EVEN WHEN KIDS ARE AWAY.



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I REMEMBER WATCHING my daughter wave good-bye as she left for a 10-day visit with her father. I was left home alone. I had two choices – I could feel lonely or I could choose joy for myself! I asked God to remind me of His truth that I am never alone; He is with me and will never forsake me. I opted for fun!

Create a “fun plan.”

Planning ahead helps make the time run smoothly.

- *Focus on God’s faithfulness.* Make a list of your blessings. Write down the name of each person you love and 10 reasons why. Write letters to five people you care about. Write a thank-you letter to God for giving you the gift of children and the daily blessings of a home, heat, and food.

- *Start a party.* Invite others who are without family to come and share Christmas in your home. It is amazing

the fun that comes from an eclectic potluck meal served on disposable plates. Have everyone bring a game to play and a food item to share. Pray and ask God to show you who to invite beyond your normal scope of friends. Many others who would otherwise be alone will appreciate having something fun to do.

- *Movies and popcorn.* If you are not up for the large group gathering, ask a friend to join you for dinner and a movie. Christmas Day is a blast at the movie theater and is usually a day that many new features are released. Renting movies and staying in also can be fun with a friend!

- *Give your time to others in need.* An orphanage, a nursing home, or a homeless shelter would appreciate your time during the holidays. Volunteer to serve a meal to the parents of children in the intensive care unit. Share your smile, your hands, and

When children are away, deliberately plan how to spend your Christmas.

your love to lighten someone else’s load during the holidays.

- *Enjoy the solitude!* Pick up that book you have been looking forward to reading. Listen to a favorite CD. Take a walk at a local park. Enjoy the fun of pampering yourself.

- *Travel somewhere new.* Save \$50 a month for one year and find a friend who will do the same. Pick a fun destination and go explore a new city at Christmas. Have fun!

You are not alone.

It is absolutely normal to feel lonely without your children. You are not the only one who feels lost without your children. Create a “Fun Plan” and make this a great Christmas! □

RECOMMENDED READING

- *A Cup of Comfort® for Single Mothers* edited by Colleen Sell (Adams Media, 2008)



- *Chicken Soup for the Single Parent’s Soul* by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Laurie Hartman, and Nancy Vogl (Health Communications, Inc., 2005)



For an extended version of this article, please visit www.ChristianCoParenting.com.

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