



KALAMAZOO CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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“Meaningful Time Together”

December often brings an excess of family time with holiday get togethers, school breaks, time off work, etc. For some, the extra time together is warmly welcomed, for others it may bring a little extra “holiday stress.” Either way, the time children spend with close friends and family (including extended family) can have a tremendous impact on their lives. In this letter, I want to focus on three ways that spending time with family can have a positive impact on your life this holiday season.

(1) *Spending time with those we love will boost our self-confidence.* Often, our greatest cheerleaders can be found within our close family and friends. When we spend time with these important people, our self-confidence improves. Surround yourself with individuals who love and appreciate you, who stand beside you, and walk-through life – no matter the circumstances – *with you*. Most importantly, let’s also be *that safe place* for our children. We are their biggest cheerleaders and must encourage them as often as we can. What positive affirmations have you spoken into your child lately?

(2) *Spending time with those we love is something that we can never “make up.”* As difficult as this may sound, none of us are guaranteed *tomorrow*. We must make our children our highest priority by investing in who they are *now* and by shaping their character formation *today*. The single greatest gift that we can offer is our *time*. Giving away your time is the same as giving away a part of your life; it is an entirely selfless act. Often, where we spend our free time can reveal what we care about *most*. How much time are you investing in your family this season?

(3) *Lastly, spending time with those we love is mirrored for us in the example of Christ.* Jesus understood the value of time. If scholars are correct, our Messiah offered just less than 10% of his total time here on earth to public ministry. This indicates that he had to be absolutely meticulous in how he spent his time, especially with his disciples. Every minute meant something; every minute had the potential for deep impact. If we follow the example of Christ, we don’t need more time, we simply need to live each moment to its fullest potential. How present are you at this moment? Are you stuck in the past or caught up in the future? Our life can only...ever...truly be lived...*in the present*.

How might you best spend your time this holiday season? I pray that you would be fully present to God, celebrating the reality of Emanuel for this moment. And I pray that you would be fully present to your precious loved ones, embracing them as a gift by the grace of God for this moment.

Below I have included a short list of ideas to help you connect with your kids this holiday season!

Family Outings – Airborne, Bowling, Escape Room, Snow Skiing, Roller Blading, Sledding, Ice-Skating, Echo Valley, etc.

Family Traditions – Unique to every family, begin a new tradition this year! Advent calendars, holiday decorating, Christmas devotionals, cook a meal together, plan a trip away, etc.

Family Game Nights – Trouble (5+), Happy Salmon (6+), Sorry (6+), Sequence (7+), Spoons (7+), Throw Throw Burrito (7+), Ticket to Ride (8+), Rummikub (8+), Catan (10+), Catch Phrase (10+), Codenames (10+), Fuzzy Logic (10+), The Chameleon (14+), etc.

Family Movies/Shows – Little House on the Prairie, A Week Away (Netflix), VeggieTales in the House, The Chosen, The Star, Snow Buddies, Santa Buddies, The Polar Express, A Charlie Brown Christmas, etc.

- **Ashley Robbins, School Counselor**

