

## Alley Rundown - December 2 & 3, 2017

**Bible Story:** Any Given Son . . . Day (God Gave us Jesus) • 1 John 4:9-11

**Bottom Line:** Because God gave, I can give

**Key Question:** What do you have to give?

**Memory Verse:** "Command the rich to do what is good. Tell them to be rich in doing good things. They must give freely. They must be willing to share." 1 Timothy 6:18 (NIV)

### **CONNECT TIME: Cane Hole (To be played at the beginning of Service)**

#### **ITEMS NEEDED:**

Candy canes and a Christmas stocking

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Hang up a Christmas stocking. Choose 2-4 players from each team (4-8 total players) for this game. Each player will toss 5 candy canes at the stocking. A player gets three points for any candy cane that go into the stocking and one point for any candy cane that hooks onto the outside of the stocking, similar to cornhole. The player with the most points wins.

**VARIATION:** Make it simple - only give points for candy canes that go into the stocking.

#### **WHAT'S THE POINT?**

Candy canes and stockings make Christmas a lot of fun, but Jesus is the greatest gift of Christmas.

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#### **WELCOME:**

"Hey, hey, everybody! Great to see you today. Can you believe it is December? Crazy! All right, let's be honest about something right out of the gate. How many of you made a Christmas list this year? Come on . . . be honest! (*Look at hands.*) Yep, there we go! I see those hands! You know what? Even I made a Christmas list this year!"

"But let's find out . . . what is something on your Christmas list? Turn and tell the person next to youooooouuuu . . . NOW!"

*Give kids a moment to share.*

"I heard a lot of good things . . . I'm coming to your house for Christmas! So how about another question: have you ever had to get a gift for someone and you didn't . . . dare to say . . . WANT to? Like a time where you HAD to get someone a gift?"

“Maybe you’ve got a friend and you’re thinking to yourself, ‘I know we are friends, but are we gift-giving kind of friends?’ And so you go to the store and wander around trying to take a guess at what your friend might like.”

“Or maybe you do a gift exchange in your family and you drew your third cousin’s boyfriend’s sister’s roommate’s uncle’s brother who you have NEVER met before. What are you supposed to buy for THAT guy?!”

*Optional: This could be a great place to share a quick, appropriate personal story about a time when you had to give a gift to someone but didn’t really feel like it.*

“Gift giving—man, it can be tough!”

“OK, so one more question as we get started this morning, and I know that this question might sound crazy, but just listen. Is it possible to give a gift in a way that you are actually the one getting something? *(Beat)* You are looking at me like I’m out of my mind. Let’s take a deeper look at this in this week’s episode...”

**CG: Week 1 Lesson Video (Runtime: 10:45)**

“So what do we do with what we just saw? I mean, it is pretty amazing to understand how much God loves us, but is there anything we can do BECAUSE of this? I’m so glad you asked. Check out what John says in *1 John 4:11*.”

*“Dear friends, since God loved us this much, we should also love one another. (NirV)”*

“This is huge! God’s gift of love for us . . . Jesus . . . with no strings attached, should then cause us to show that same kind of love to one another! God gave us love through Jesus; now we get to love one another.”

“Now, maybe when we are invited to our ‘*not quite a friend’s*’ party, we should give a gift to them simply to celebrate them and to show love through our thoughtfulness. Or maybe we can give a gift to the coach without trying to earn playing time but to thank them for the time they’ve given to coach the team and to show them how much you appreciate him or her!”

“We are definitely in the season where we are thinking a lot about giving and getting gifts. Like we found out earlier, many of us have made Christmas lists with the things we want to get, but I want you to think about something different. God has been so generous in giving us Jesus, and He has asked us to give to others. So what do you have to give?”

**CG: Key Question Slide**

“What do you have to give? I have a feeling that if you take a few minutes to think about this, you’ll think of all sorts of ways you can give to others. And if you’re having trouble, that’s ok, too. You’ll have a chance to talk more about all of it in Small Group. Let’s pray...”

**(PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS)**