



TEASER:

In a world full of delightful distractions, it's a little too easy to forget Jesus this Christmas.

INTRODUCTION:

[Note: the products I refer to below have images in the presentation slides.]

I always find it interesting to see what young people want for Christmas. Here are some of the top gifts teenagers have put on their Amazon wish lists this year for Christmas:

- A portable waterproof speaker so that you can play your music anywhere. Now you can listen to Drake... I mean, Chris Tomlin... in the shower!
- Want a GoPro but don't have enough hundos? How about this little camera: it's only \$59 and is rated pretty well.
- And this little lipstick-sized charger is small, but it's big enough to completely charge most smartphones while you're out and about and can't find a place to plug into a wall for that quick charge. And that's what we need, right? To be able to use our smartphones even more!
- Do you want a place to sit while you veg in front of your favorite screen? For only \$250, you can have this giant beanbag!
- And check out this little flashback to the good ol' days. With this \$150 turntable, you can listen to all your mom's old Lionel Ritchie albums!
- Or here's something we all need, something to help us take even more selfies. With this selfie ring light, you can be sure to light up all your blemishes for all to see! Only \$13, but it doesn't include Photoshop.
- Or check out this affordable Virtual Reality headset. It's so affordable, it might just work a few times!

Wow! Those are just some of the top gifts today. I guess a Red-Rider BB gun is a thing of the past. No G.I. Joe with the Kung Fu grip?

When I was a kid I wanted...

[Author Note: share personal story about what you wanted.]

Well, I love Christmas, Christmas decorations, turkey, and family. Turn to the person next to you and share personal story as to why you love Christmas so much.

One of the decorations you see every Christmas is the Nativity scene: a display of some sort representing the original Christmas and the birth of Jesus. Some stores even sell these Nativity scenes. Here's one that was on discount last year.

Sadly, this is probably a true representation of what Christmas is becoming in our world: a celebration that is missing the very object of celebration. It's like we are all so caught up in Christmas "stuff," and we're forgetting the whole reason as to why we're celebrating Christmas in the first place.

Don't worry, you're not alone. This is a common struggle. In fact, it happened to Jesus two thousand years ago when two sisters invited Him over for dinner.

SCRIPTURE:

Luke 10:38-40 (NLT)

As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me."

Let's pause right there and consider Martha. She was distracted. But think about it: is there anything wrong with cooking? Anything wrong with having someone over for dinner? Then what did she do wrong? She allowed her serving and prep to draw her away from the peace of just hanging out with Jesus. In addition, she allowed her cooking and cleaning to become a source of bitterness and resentment between her and her sister.

Think about this: Mary and Martha wanted to get to know Jesus. They thought, "I know, let's invite him over for a meal!" Martha was a great cook, so why not use her skills, her gift of hospitality to connect with Jesus.

It's funny, though. Her very strength—cooking and hospitality—became a distraction. The very festivities planned to celebrate Jesus coming to connect with them distracted her from connecting with Jesus.

It's kind of like Christmas, right?

When do you allow good stuff to become a distraction in your life?

Do you think we can relate to the word “distracted” today? In a world where young people spend **an average of 9 hours** and parents spend over 9 hours a day soaking in entertainment media?

All of this is on that device that we carry around in our pockets. The average adult is only awake 16 hours a day. Do the math. This doesn't leave a whole lot of time to walk the dog, get coffee with a friend, or play with your children!

We are distracted. Picture what this looks like in the typical home: the adults are staring at the TV, the kids are streaming something on a mobile device, the toddler is flicking colors across the screen of her new iPad, and the dog is on the treadmill, because no one will walk him!

Our devices definitely can distract us. Ask this lady.

A brand new study revealed:

- 57% of teens know that social media distracts them from doing homework
- 54% say social media keeps them from interacting with the people in front of them
- 42% believe social media has reduced the amount of time they spend with friends in person

Isn't it funny that a device designed to connect us with others can disconnect?

Isn't it sad that a holiday designed to celebrate the coming of Jesus now distracts us from connecting with Jesus?

Pause for a moment. Answer this question in your mind: *Sometimes I allow _____ to become a distraction in my life.*

SAY BIG IDEA: