

THE MOST
Wonderful
TIME OF THE
YEAR

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THE MOST  
*Wonderful*  
TIME OF THE  
YEAR

A COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

ACE COLLINS

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THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR  
A COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

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The majority of the ingredients (such as the essential oils) used in the “Pamper / Feed the One You Love” sections can be found at any natural and organic food markets. For storage containers or craft items, visit your local arts and crafts stores.

16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24—10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I see the joy and true meaning of Christmas  
whenever I look into Gracen Seabaugh's eyes.





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# *Introduction*

To come.





*December 1*

*It Is a Wonderful Life*

*The angel said, “Don’t be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. Your savior is born today in David’s city. He is Christ the Lord.”*

LUKE 2:10-11

FOR MILLIONS CHRISTMAS IS NOT CHRISTMAS until they view the 1946 Frank Capra film *It’s A Wonderful Life*. In this Hollywood classic George Bailey is given the opportunity to see what the world would have been like had he not been born. When faced with what might have been George discovers he has set in motion a positive set of events that have brought great light. In fact, without George the world would have been a far darker place.

A thousand years ago, advent was a time of personal introspection. One element of the tradition centered on how different the world would be if there had been no Jesus. As we begin embracing this new Christmas season perhaps, to put things into the proper perspective, we first need to visualize a world where Christ was never born.

For starters there would be no cards, no lights, no decorations, no “Silent Night” or “White Christmas,” no shopping, no gifts, and no family gatherings. December 25th would just be another day on the calendar and the wonder and joy of this season would be something we would never experience. Yet, that is just the beginning.



Your salvation would not be anchored on grace but on the law. The church where you attended as a child, the place where you were saved, the building where you now gather with family would have never been constructed. The relationships you built in church would also be lost. There would be no church bells, no “Amazing Grace” and no chance for redemption. The billions that have been touched through the gifts and missions of the church would have never felt the love of Christ. The compassion born of faith would be completely unknown.

Without Christ there would have been no Mother Teresa, Albert Schweitzer, Martin Luther, Lottie Moon, or Billy Graham. The purpose for their great work would have not been there to motivate or inspire them.

It is easy to get overwhelmed with the demands of the season and fall into the trap of dreading the holidays. Fighting the crowds at the mall, decorating the house, wrapping the gifts and meeting all the holiday obligations is never easy, but consider the alternative. If there were no reason for Christmas then, just like Bedford Falls without the influence of George Bailey, our world would be a much darker and depressing place. Christmas celebrates not just the birth of Christ but how Jesus changed the world and changed each of us. That dramatic change is one we should embrace on the day we kick off this month of joy as well as on each day of our lives! Yes—because of the wonderful life Jesus has given to this world and to each of us—there is a reason to celebrate! Because of Christ there is not only a Christmas but there is hope, light and joy on each day of the year!



## *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

Irish born James Montgomery was one of the leading voices for Irish independence. As the publisher of the *Sheffield Iris* his fiery words landed him in prison several times. On December 24, 1816, Montgomery turned from revolution to inspiration and penned “Angels from the Realms of Glory.” Set to music by an Englishman, Montgomery’s poem would become one of the first Christmas songs ever sung in an Anglican Church. In the end, the revolution the Irish Catholic writer started did not free Ireland, but opened the Church of England to using Christmas music in worship services.



Angels from the realms of glory  
 Wing your flight over all the earth  
 Ye, who sang creation’s story  
 Now proclaim Messiah’s birth  
 Come and worship, come and worship  
 Worship Christ the newborn King

Shepherds in the fields abiding  
 Watching over your flocks by night  
 God with man is now residing  
 Yonder shines the Infant light  
 Come and worship, come and worship  
 Worship Christ the newborn King



Sages leave your contemplations  
Brighter visions beam afar  
Seek the great Desire of nations  
Ye have seen His natal star  
Come and worship, come and worship  
Worship Christ the newborn King

Saints before the alter bending  
Watching long in hope and fear  
Suddenly the Lord, descending,  
In His temple shall appear  
Come and worship, come and worship  
Worship Christ the newborn King



## *Pamper the One You Love!*

If you are looking for a practical gift this holiday season, why don't you make a Recipe Ring using all of the amazing recipes in this book, or maybe some of your family's favorites?

### **Recipe Ring**

4 x 6 blank note cards

Colored paper

Computer, pen, or marker

Metal binder ring

Laminator

Hole punch

Wooden spatula (that has a hole on the end)

Begin by typing up or writing down all your favorite recipes by sections (entrée, sides, desserts, drinks, and so on). Make sure that the recipes can fit on the 4x6 note cards. After printing or writing the recipes, cut them out and glue to the colored paper; then glue the colored paper (and recipes) to the blank note cards. If possible, laminate the cards to protect from wear and tear. Using a hole punch, punch a hole in the card and add to the ring. Attach the recipes to the end of the spatula. Wrap and give as a lovely gift!