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I was alone and singing at the top of my lungs, loving some of my holiday favorites like "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" and "Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire."

As I left one store and headed to another, the song "Let it Snow" came on, and I sang right along. However, when I got to the chorus, instead of singing, "*let it*

snow, let it snow, let it snow," I unconsciously sang, "*let it go, let it go, let it go.*"

I caught myself as soon as I did it, wondering where in the world those words had come from!

Was I subconsciously needing to let things go? Was God speaking to my heart to simplify and re-prioritize? Was I more stressed than what I realized?

That little singing "faux pas" soon became my holiday mantra. I needed to learn to let things go. So I started by deciding not to send out Christmas cards and our annual Christmas letter.

Then I moved on to decreasing the variety of cookies I made during the holiday season.

This year, I gave in to colored lights on the Christmas tree. My husband and boys have always wanted colored lights while I preferred white lights. When we put up the tree this year, half of our white lights didn't work so as my husband put on his coat to run to the store and replace the lights, I decided to "let it go," as I gave him the go ahead to get colored lights.

I'm finding freedom in letting things go: Lower expectations. Less stress. More margin in my days. More focus on the true meaning of Christmas.

What do you need to let go of this holiday season? Where do you need to cut yourself some slack and lower the expectations? Where do you need to step back and refocus on the things that are most important over the next few weeks?

I invite you to change the words, too. The next time you hear the song, "Let it Snow," just insert the new words into the melody. Like me, you'll be reminded of the choices you do have during the holidays.

Merry Christmas!

Jill

Wife of Mark
Mom to Anne, Evan, Erica, Kolya, and Austin
Nana to 20-month-old Rilyn



I Corinthians 13: Christmas Style

By Sharon Jaynes

If I decorate my house perfectly with lovely plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights, and shiny glass balls, but do not show love to my family - I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals, and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love to my family - I'm

just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home, and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my family - It profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties, and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ - I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return, but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.

Love never fails.

Video games will break; pearl necklaces will be lost; golf clubs will rust.

But giving the gift of love will endure.

Taken from *Celebrating a Christ Centered Christmas* by Sharon Jaynes. www.sharonjaynes.com.
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"I wish she would sleep through the night."

"I wish he could walk."

"I can't wait until they go to school."

"Oh how I wish she could drive!"

Every mom does it.
We focus on what's *next* instead of what's *now*.

What if we learned to live in the MOMent?

Grab some friends and join us for the 2012 Hearts at Home conferences where we will learn to delight in an ordinary day.

Slow down.
Be refreshed.
Live fully...in the beauty of the MOMent you are in.



The 2012 events feature Michelle Duggar, Dr. Julianna Slattery, the Fly Lady, and dozens of workshops that will enrich, encourage, and equip you to be the best mom you can be!

REGISTER NOW!

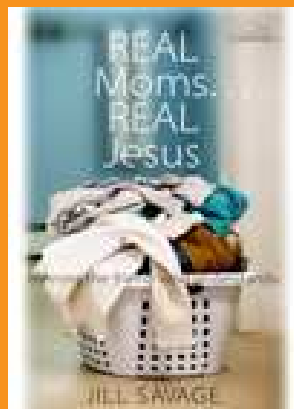
God's "Mom Revolution" Truth for You

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his

shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6

Want to start the new year off right?

Join Jill Savage for a Facebook study of her book
Real Moms...Real Jesus.



If you'd like to be part of this online moms group from January 9 through February 20, grab the book off your bookshelf, order it from [Hearts at Home](#) or [Amazon](#), or ask for it for Christmas!

The best part of a Facebook study is that you can participate anytime during the day.
It's the only moms group you can attend in your jammies!

Join the study [here!](#)



Has Hearts at Home impacted your family?

Will you help us impact other families?

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Thank you so much for your encouragement and support!



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