



TODAY'S TOPIC:
Holiday Traditions

You are welcome to use this lesson to inspire spiritual conversation in your family or youth classroom. It is written for elementary age but could be adjusted as needed.

THINKING JOB: Ask a “thinking job question” to get everyone thinking about something pertinent to the lesson. This could be asked moments or hours before your conversation.

What is something my family does together during the holiday season?

Lesson

Materials	Things to Prepare	Today's Goal
•	•	Know what a tradition is and that traditions connect us to each other.

ASK: What is a “tradition”? It is something you do, say, or believe that is repeated and passed down from the older people in your family to the younger, who grow up and teach it to their children, and on and on. A tradition usually is something you do together that brings joy. They are often part of a celebration.

ASK: At the end of the year, there can be lots of traditions. Christmas is the most popular celebration in most Western countries, but there are many more religious and winter celebrations around the world. What kinds of traditions do you have in your family at this time of year? Maybe they have to do with winter or with holidays. Here are some common traditions at this time of year: decorations (winter, Christmas, Hannukah), food (special to your family, gingerbread), lights (menorah, hang lights on the house or tree), music, gifts, special clothes, things to watch (movies, nutcracker, parade).

SAY: One fun part of traditions is that even if they are inspired by one story, culture, religion, or family, they can be enjoyed by all people. Traditions connect us. Some examples:

PRESENTS –We give presents as a way to show we care. Many religions and cultures have a tradition of giving gifts this time of year. Sometimes the tradition is the gifts are handmade or special to the person receiving it.

MISTLETOE – (Might have to explain what it is.) Old beliefs are that it is good luck, keeps evil spirits away. Also a sign of love and friendship which is why we now say you have to kiss someone if they are standing under the mistletoe.

SNOWMAN – Snowmen are not part of a religious story, but they are part of every culture that has snow. In Japan, they are made to look like daruma dolls for luck. In Tibet, they are carved to look like Buddha. And in England starting around the 1400's parents and children would create snowman galleries to show their creativity. And of course they inspired the famous Frosty the Snowman.

SPEND TIME WITH THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE - Holiday traditions are the most fun when done with cherished friends and family. Whether baking cookies or caroling, decorating the tree or snuggling up on the couch with a classic holiday movie, being surrounded by your favorite people makes everything better. No matter what holidays you choose to celebrate, the season is a time to give thanks, reflect on the past year, and spend time with loved ones.

AFFIRMATION – I am connected to others through our traditions. repeat 4X

Note: Printable affirmations and coloring sheets for this lesson are available at <https://www.milehichurch.org/youth-family/> .