

# Trinity Family Film Guide

(For use by Families or in Small Groups)

## *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

(with Jim Carrey):

## The Un-stealable Christmas

*With the help of The Grinch, we will explore the wonder of Christmas. As we ponder the miracle of God as a baby, we will find ourselves revived to new gratitude and awe.*

Duration: 2.5-3.5+ hours

Materials Needed: Paper, Pencil/pen, metal bowl, water, matches/lighter, posterboard, candles, music/instruments for carols (as desired), communion elements

Recommended Movie Snack or Meal: Try ending the viewing with a feast. Who roast beast, who-pudding, and/or who-hash are all great options.

View it with a Twist (optional): Bedeck the viewing area with as many Christmas lights as possible, and watch the film by their light, except for the portion in Intermission Two when the lights must go out.

### **Note to Parents/Adults about Film Guides:**

Movies are a great way to relax and spend time together as a family/group. With a little intentionality, we can make them a special place of connection and growth, as well as a joyful viewing experience. Every Family Film Guide focuses on one theme and seeks to walk adults through engaging their family/group in a growth experience around that theme. For some families/groups, these conversations might seem scary and even awkward, but take courage knowing you are setting the norm of connection and a learning heart in each of your children. If your kids seem too young or too “cool” to participate in some of these things, then at least let them see you participating. They will catch on or warm up. Also, make sure not to underestimate them. Give them plenty of opportunity to participate.

**Parental Warning for *The Grinch*:** (Discretion encouraged before showing to young children.)

The Grinch himself can be a frightening character. It is recommended young children have the opportunity to read and discuss the *Grinch* book by Dr. Seuss before viewing the film.

### **Before Starting:**

Make sure you have read through the entire guide before starting the movie. Gather your supplies and your courage before starting. If you feel rushed going into it, slow down and just pick one or two activities to do. Then just enjoy the movie. It is better to do something well than to stress or rush through the whole thing. Plan further ahead for the next one if necessary, but **don't forget to enjoy this special time with your kids!**

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### **Pre-Movie Exercise:**

Introduction: As adults, introduce the movie (with whatever disclaimer you might want to make for potential scary scenes) with the theme of “Un-stealable Christmas.”

Share: Have everyone in the family/group share a favorite Christmas memory and why it is so special to them.

Imagine: Jesus’ Christmas

Before Christmas was a holiday, it was Jesus’ actual birthday, a boy celebrating his birth with his family. Imagine as a group what kinds of memories and recollections might fill Jesus’ family each year at the celebration of his birth. Below are some scriptures that describe some of what Mary and Joseph experienced when he was born. Use them as you will, but then allow yourselves to get beyond them as well. Go ahead and make up a memory of what Jesus’ birthday was like when he was five, or what traditions the family might have had surrounding the celebration.

Luke 1:30-33 – “Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.’” (NKJV)

Luke 2:10-11 – “Then the angel said to them (shepherds), ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior; who is Christ the Lord.’” (NKJV)

Luke 2:34-35 – “Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.’” (NKJV)

### **First Intermission:**

*(36 minutes, 54 seconds—beginning chapter 8 on scene selection)*

Share: The Drastic Acts of Christmas Love

Instructions: “I might do something drastic,” Cyndi Lou says before she nominates the Grinch for Holiday Cheermeister. She knows she is doing something that looks ludicrous from the outside. Kind of like God being born as a little, vulnerable baby in an animal feeding trough. Love takes drastic action to remind and reclaim those who have forgotten they are loved. The classic Christmas carol, *O, Holy Night* says that with the Birth of Jesus, “the soul felt its worth.” Just like Cindy Lou’s drastic act is going to revive the Grinch’s belief in his own worth, so Jesus’ drastic act does for the world. Today, you are going to plan a drastic act of love for someone.

*Step 1:* As a family/group pick one person you know who could use reminding of how valuable they are.

*Step 2:* Brainstorm drastic ways you could communicate love to this person. Think illogically, beyond normal, and don’t limit the ideas. Simply record.

*Step 3:* As adults, pick two of the ideas brainstormed and present them to the group for discussion and then a vote.

*Step 4:* Make a plan for how this drastic act can be carried out this Christmas season.

### **Second Intermission:**

(59 minutes, 39 seconds beginning of chapter 12 on scene selection)

#### The Flammable Christmas

*Instructions:* Look above and remind yourself of the things said about Jesus at his birth. Isn't it amazing that the one who knew he was destined to be king of everything would choose to allow himself to be crowned with thorns instead of gold and jewels. Discuss this concept and use the scene where the mob forces the Grinch into the Cheermeister Chair, etc., to imagine the mob enthroning our King on the cross.

After his torture, the Grinch gives an impassioned speech about the "avarice" of the Who's and how so much of what they mean by Christmas makes its way eventually to the dump. Look up avarice if people don't know what it means. Jesus said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy." The Grinch ends this scene by setting aflame the Who's Christmas Tree, the epitome of a Christmas treasure which moth and rust can destroy. Now you are going to have the opportunity to remember what is most eternal this Christmas.

*Step 1:* Tear a piece or pieces of paper into small slips. Take five minutes and have everyone write or draw things they like about Christmas that aren't lasting, things which will find their way to the dump eventually.

*Step 2:* Place all these pieces of paper in a metal bowl. With water nearby, light the papers on fire until only ash remains, just like the Who's tree.

*Step 3:* Now add a small amount of water to the ash to make an ashy slurry.

*Step 4:* On a poster board or large piece of paper now write in ash paint the things about Christmas which are eternal and can't be burned or dumped. Display this poster prominently in your house this Christmas season as a reminder of those Earthly things Jesus came to redeem.

### **Third Intermission:**

(1, hour, 22 minutes, 0 seconds—beginning of chapter 17 on scene selection)

#### THE RELENTLESSNESS OF CHRISTMAS LOVE

There is only one baby in world history who's birthday is celebrated globally. His name is Jesus and it was his Christmas life the Devil and humanity tried to steal on the Cross. Like the Grinch they failed miserably. As Lou Who says, "You can't hurt Christmas." As the Grinch says, "It came just the same!"

Activity: Caroling—(Goal): Enjoy reflecting upon and reenacting the Relentless love of Christmas.

- Silent Night
- Little Town of Bethlehem
- Come, O Come Emmanuel
- Joy to the World
- Hark the Herald Angels Sing
- Come all Ye Faithful
- Away in a Manger

*Instructions:*

*Step 1:* Pick a carol from the list above to sing in total darkness. Close eyes if needed.

*Step 2:* After the first carol, light one candle as the leader and sing another carol from above.

*Step 3:* Light one more candle for another person, or multiple candles for other people and sing another carol.

*Step 4:* Repeat until everyone has a lit candle and at least a few carols have been sung. Then end with “O, Holy Night,” as a “weary world rejoices,” and “your soul feels its worth.”

### **Post-Movie Exercise:**

#### Activate: Communion

As much as the Grinch can remind us of those “Un-Stealable” aspects of Christmas, it and Christmas both remain stubbornly Earthy. *The Grinch* and the Christmas story both end in a feast. To close our Christmas exploration, we are going to partake in the feast of communion. Using whatever elements you have, even apple cider and gingerbread, share communion with each other.

Jesus commands us to do so, “in remembrance of me.”

Use this poem to inspire your remembrance, as desired.

Worthy is the lamb born in Bethlehem.  
Holy is the bread wrapped warm in Bethlehem.  
Precious is the wine first pressed in Bethlehem.  
Glory is the song, babe’s cry in Bethlehem.

Worthy is the lamb slain in Jerusalem.  
Holy is the bread broken in Jerusalem.  
Precious is the wine poured free in Jerusalem.  
Glory is the song, “Finished” in Jerusalem.

Worthy is the lamb, the feast in Mt. Zion.  
Holy is the bread, risen high in Mt. Zion.  
Precious is the wine, making glad in Mt. Zion.  
Glory is the song on all lips in Mt. Zion.

#### Family/Group Statement:

*Step 1:* Say the following out loud as an entire group:

*This Christmas, give us the riches which can’t be stolen. Amen.*

*Step 2:* Thank yourself (from us) for making your family/group movie time “A Trinity Family” movie time!

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Check us out at [ATrinityFamily.org](http://ATrinityFamily.org)

