

# A Christmas Worth Remembering

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Hector kicked his boot in the snow, angry that he couldn't change Mama's mind. Why did they have to work at the homeless shelter for Christmas?

Christmas was for opening presents, eating delicious food, and playing games. He didn't want to spend it handing out presents and food

to other people. Mom called it community service, but he called it a bummer.

"What are you doing?" David, his friend from next door, asked as he came into Hector's yard. "Going to build a snow fort?"

"No," Hector said. "I'm just trying to cool down."

"Well, it's definitely cold out here. What's wrong?" David asked.

"My mom said that we're going to the homeless shelter," Hector said. "We're going to help provide them a Christmas lunch, and we're going to hand out presents to the kids."

"What's wrong with that?" David asked.

Hector stared at him, his mouth hanging open. "What's wrong with it? We're going on Christmas Day, that's what." David bent toward the snow and scooped up a handful. He rounded it into a snowball. "It might not be so bad. We did something like that with our local outreach ministry at Thanksgiving." Hector hadn't known that. Still, he didn't believe it would be very fun. He and David started a snowball fight, and for now the shelter was forgotten.

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The next week passed quickly. Soon it was Christmas Day. Mama and Papa gave Hector a new basketball, and he couldn't wait to try it out since his old ball had been flat for months.

But then he remembered he would have to wait to try it out. It was time to go to the shelter now. As they left, Hector sat in the back seat of the car with his arms crossed and a frown on his face.

At the shelter, a man greeted them with a happy smile. "Thank you for helping," he said. "I believe you will enjoy your time here."

Hector seriously doubted it.

The man told Papa where he could serve food, and he pointed Mama toward several large boxes that overflowed with presents.

Wow! Where had all those gifts come from?

Hector helped Mama pass out the presents. Some of the kids ripped open their packages as soon as they received them. They'd laugh and smile, and Hector couldn't help it. He started to like it. Giving those kids a new toy was definitely awesome. Soon it was time to go home, but Hector wasn't frowning anymore.

"What did you think?" Mama asked as they headed home.

Hector thought of his new basketball, but he also thought of all he'd done that day. "I'm pretty sure this was the best Christmas ever," Hector admitted. Papa nodded. "This was a Christmas worth remembering."

Hector couldn't agree more.

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- 1) Which statement is not true?
  - a) The sight of kids excitedly ripping open their gift packages moved Hector.
  - b) Christmas isn't just about having a festive time for yourself; it's also about caring for others.
  - c) David felt the visit to the homeless shelter might not be as bad as Hector thinks it is.
  - d) Hector was still upset after what he experienced at the homeless shelter.
  
- 2) Which sentence best shows Hector's change of mind?
  - a) On his way back from the homeless shelter, Hector was thinking more about what he'd done for the kids there than playing with his new basketball.
  - b) Hector thought although the idea of visiting the homeless shelter wasn't as bad as he thought it was, it couldn't beat the pleasure of playing games.
  
- 3) Which verb best completes the sentence?

Neither his parents nor his friend \_\_\_\_\_ successful in convincing Hector.

  - a) was
  - b) were
  - c) are

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- 4) What does the word “bummer” mean as used in the sentence?  
Mom called handing out presents and food to other people community service, but Hector called it a bummer.
- a) an unpleasant thing that will soon turn into a pleasant thing
  - b) something very annoying or disappointing
  - c) something that is interesting but too long

- 5) What three things did Hector think Christmas was for?

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