



# The True Spirit of Christmas

*Dorothy Thurgood Manning*

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## **The True Spirit of Christmas** Dorothy Thurgood Manning

The True Spirit of Christmas is a rhyming picture book geared for children ages 3 to 8. It is about Maddie, a spoiled child who loves Christmas and thinks she knows what it's all about. On Christmas Eve, she confronts Santa over the lack of presents he is leaving under the tree for her. Santa teaches her that the true spirit of Christmas is in giving and not receiving.

## **The True Spirit of Christmas Details**

Date : Published January 14th 2015 by CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

ISBN : 9781506021942

Author : Dorothy Thurgood Manning

Format : Paperback 32 pages

Genre : Holiday, Christmas, Childrens

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## **From Reader Review The True Spirit of Christmas for online ebook**

### **Stacie says**

I love Christmas books. I have one whole tub full of Christmas books that I love getting out and rereading with our kids each year. If you are looking to add to your Christmas book collection, add this one to your list.

Maddie loves Christmas! Well, most of it anyway. Maddie loves to hang the lights and decorate the tree and window shop, telling her family all the gifts she wants. But, she isn't thrilled with making gifts for her family at school or making cookies with her brother. Finally, on Christmas Eve, when all Maddie can think about are all the gifts she is going to receive, she meets someone who shows her what the true meaning of Christmas is all about.....the giving.

The story is sweet and kids will be able to identify with Maddie's excitement. The book is "mostly" written in rhyming verse. I say mostly, because some of the rhymes didn't work for me or were awkward. The pattern and rhythm to the story were thrown off a few times, but I imagine only the parent reading the story would notice. The kids will delight in the vivid illustrations and getting themselves excited for the upcoming Christmas season while reading this story.

If you are looking for a reminder lesson on teaching your children that it is truly better to give than receive, this is the book for you. I think this book would be perfect for preschool to lower elementary aged kids. It's available on Kindle, paperback, and most recently, hardcover, so you can add to those special books you set out at Christmas time.

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### **I'd So Rather Be Reading {Nat} says**

I know it's mid-summer, but I believe books about Christmas are fun all year-round. After all, "I'm going to ask for that for Christmas" passes Kaitlyn's lips on a regular basis. Kaitlyn and I really enjoyed The True Spirit of Christmas.

I like that Manning uses her book to teach a lesson about giving, not receiving, at Christmas. As is expected, Kaitlyn loves to receive gifts. So she identified well with Maddie, the protagonist. But, Maddie is a bit of a brat when it comes to receiving gifts: she has to have it all and she has to have the best. This extremism in the main character was good for the story as it really drove home the point of how we look to others when we make Christmas all about ourselves.

Kaitlyn loved the illustrations in The True Spirit of Christmas. She especially loved the expressions on the character's faces and how easy they were to read. The faces helped her "read" the story on her own after I'd read it to her. The story rhymes, and some of the rhymes were a bit tongue-twisting. Kaitlyn loved hearing them, but I didn't love reading all of them. This is the only thing I didn't love about this book.

As soon as we finished the book, Kaitlyn asked to read it again. That's her version of giving a book five stars! We enjoyed The True Spirit of Christmas and would definitely read Dorothy Thurgood Manning again.

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## **Marjorie says**

Given To Me For An Honest Review

The True Spirit of Christmas by Dorothy Thurgood Manning (Author), Dorothy Thurgood Manning (Illustrator) is the author's debut print novel. This book is about a little girl who believes Christmas is all about her and the amount of gifts she should have. Then one night she sees Santa putting just a few gifts under the tree for her and she doesn't like that at all. What happens when she asks Santa why? Does she ever learn the real meaning of Christmas? The pictures are bright and colorful. The words are very clear. It can be read alone or read to. This would make a great addition to your child's bookshelf or to any library's bookshelf. It also would make a great gift and Christmas is just down the road. I gave this book 5 stars but it deserves so many more. I highly recommend this book to everyone. You will not go wrong if you pick one up. I look for more from Dorothy Thurgood Manning.

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## **Sandra Stiles says**

First let me say that these pictures are absolutely gorgeous. Maddie is a young girl who loves everything about Christmas. Unfortunately she always wants more. On Christmas Eve she sees Santa putting presents under her tree and wants to know why she doesn't have more gifts. What he tells her is a lesson all children should learn.

I received a copy to facilitate my review. The opinions expressed here are my own.

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## **Rob Slaven says**

I received this book free for review from the author or publisher in exchange for an honest review. Despite the privilege of receiving a free book, I'm absolutely candid about it below because I believe authors and readers will benefit most from honest reviews rather than vacuous 5-star reviews.

On my Amazon review I read the entire book on video but GoodReads won't let me post that so you get a few bullet points:

- \* Great illustrations
- \* Text is a bit off; some stumbling metre and some imperfect rhymes
- \* Great message and well delivered.

PS: I hope my review was helpful. If it was not, then please let me know what I left out that you'd want to know. I always aim to improve.

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## **Nancy Silk says**

"Engaging Story With A Wonderful Message"

This is a very delightful, meaningful, rhyming children's book for ages 3 to 8. Little Maddie loves Christmas...she helps to hang the lights, trim the tree, and walking with dad to the shops to window wish. Most of all, Maddie loves tearing into her gifts, always looking for more and more gifts. Maddie feels the handmade gifts she learns to make at school are worthless. On Christmas Eve, at midnight, she tip-toes down the stairs. She sees Santa with gifts, but none for her. She speaks meanly to Santa, thus Santa gives her a lesson about the true spirit of Christmas. The author is very skilled in her narration and prose, and I'm pleased to note her talents extend to colorful, illustration artwork. Make sure you read this story to your children before Christmas. It may make a big difference when Christmas morning arrives!

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## **Connie says**

This beautifully illustrated, rhyming book has a wonderful message for the Christmas season. At this time of year, most children are making their very long lists of things they want Santa to bring, and they often don't realize that they should also be thinking of others. The author brings this to their attention in an easy-to-understand book .

I am thrilled to say that I received a copy of this book in a Goodreads giveaway. It will be a treasured addition to my holiday season for years to come.

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## **Kathryn Svendsen says**

The True Spirit of Christmas is about a little girl named Maddie who loves everything about Christmas from putting up the lights to trimming the tree. The thing she loves most though is getting all those wonderful gifts on Christmas morning – the more gifts, the better. In fact, there can never be enough for her.

Her list of desires is so long that when she goes to see Santa at the mall, you can see the expressions on the children waiting in line for their turn – they are very unhappy with how long it is taking. Even Santa is tired of listening to her.

When it comes to making gifts for others, she doesn't want to do that because she thinks they are only good for throwing away and of no value to the recipient. She scoffs at the imperfect cookies that her brother makes to leave for Santa.

On Christmas eve, she gets up and finds Santa putting a few gifts under the tree for her and is angry with him because there are only a few. He offers to take them away to give to children who will be thankful and then proceeds to explain to her that Christmas is not about getting, it's about giving.

When Christmas morning comes and her brother gives her the gift he made for her, she comes to understand by the pleasure on his face that there is joy in giving and not just in getting.

I have to admit, I didn't like Maddie very much. I found her to be very selfish and greedy. Fortunately by the end of the story she comes to see that there is joy in giving and not just in receiving.

I did not particularly enjoy the ending as I felt it was a little negative. The last stanza reads "Our story ends here. But let me make clear, Other families won't be so lucky this year...."

The True Spirit of Christmas was also illustrated by the author. The pictures are colourful and detailed. The faces of the adults and children are definitely expressive.

If you are looking for a book that explains what Christmas is about that has no connection to religion of any sort, this might be what you are looking for. Even so, the idea that it is better to give than receive is a belief that is reflected in Acts 20:35 "remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Overall, I thought that The True Spirit of Christmas was one way to help young children remember that Christmas is about giving rather than receiving. I gave the book 3 stars out of 5.

Thank you to the author for providing a copy of the book in exchange for a fair and honest review. A positive opinion was not required. All thoughts were my own.

To see my complete review visit Shelf Full of Books <http://kathrynsshelffullofbooks.blogspot...>

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## **Lesley Dahlseng says**

\* This is a requested review. A pre-publication copy was given in exchange for my honest opinion.

In her children's book "The True Spirit of Christmas", Dorothy Thurgood Manning draws our hearts away from the spirit of Christmas commercialism to a deeper meaning of finding fulfillment in giving rather than receiving.

Maddie is a girl who loves Christmas and all its festivities. It could be stated that she is full of Christmas Spirit . . . or is she? Even more than hanging lights and trimming trees, Maddie sums up the value of Christmas by the number of presents she receives. As the story goes, "Christmas had to be perfect. And the gifts that she got could not be a few but must be a lot." Maddie does not hesitate to express this attitude anywhere and everywhere, even to Santa at the mall. She complains to her teacher that the hand-made gift projects are only fit for slobs, and she laughs at the gingerbread men that her brother had baked.

Maddie's change of heart occurs after a very frank encounter with Santa. He corrects her selfish view of Christmas with the wise instruction that the Spirit of Christmas is not about getting, rather, "It's all about giving, and it brings me such pleasure to give children gifts I know they will treasure."

The message to this story is simple and understandable for young children as well as a worthwhile deposit into their attitude toward Christmas and character overall. Christians seeking a Christ-centered message should not be thrown off by the book's title since there is no reference to Jesus within the story. However, if you seek a biblical application, then the lesson would match that of Acts 20:35 which states that it is more blessed to give than to receive - an important lesson for anyone regardless of their faith.

There are several downsides to the story. Though the colors are warm and inviting, most of the facial expressions within the book are not, due to the storyline. The children's faces at times appear much older than they should as well. The text faces several bumps along the way in rhythm and inconsistency in rhyme. Some may cringe when Santa calls Maddie a "brat" (though she was certainly acting like one), and the story may have better ended one page earlier than it did. Whereas the lesson crescendoed into a joyful realization of the Christmas Spirit, it quickly down-spiraled to a rather depressing end: "Our story ends here. But let me make clear. Other families won't be so lucky this year." Nonetheless, there is still a creativity and a worthwhile message that families can enjoy!

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### **Janice Spina says**

The True Spirit of Christmas is a heartwarming tale of a little girl and her love of Christmas, especially receiving gifts. Maddie is so unaware of her selfish attitude towards receiving many presents at Christmas time that she loses the true meaning of Christmas - giving to others. On the Eve of Christmas Maddie is concerned about how many gift Santa will bring her. She sneaks down to see Santa leaving only a few presents for her. She is quite upset with him and lets him know it. What Maddie doesn't expect is what Santa has to say to her. I don't want to spoil the surprise so I won't tell you what Maddie learned but it is very important!

Read this adorable book with lovely rhymes and beautifully done illustrations by this talented writer and illustrator. I look forward to more creative books from this author. I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Randy says**

A beautiful little book in which little Maddie learns a lesson about Christmas. A vain child that discovers the joy of giving without thought of any return.

Rhyming verse and terrific artwork by the author highlight this morality tale disguised as a story to be read by the young ones. I think the wee ones will like it.

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### **Suzanne Williams says**

A very sweet story with beautiful illustrations. Text was hard to read on pages (digital version read on my computer). The paperback would perhaps read fine. Also, the rhyming sometimes was awkward and I had a hard time following the point halfway in. By the time I finished, however, I appreciated the sentiment regarding giving and Christmas. Very good things for a child to learn. Author might have included another thought after the ending. It felt abrupt and I found myself asking, "How can I help?" Overall, a very nice children's book worth the price. I was given this book for my honest review.

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