

## A Christmas Valentine©

**Cast:** Mother, Father, two teen-aged sons

**Set:** kitchen table, 4 chairs, Christmas tree (partially decorated), construction paper, scissors, red ribbons, etc.

**Costumes:** Father in suit, with briefcase, others in casual clothes, boys with school books or book bags

**CHOIR/CONGREGATION:** LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS, LOVE WAS WHEN or similar anthem or carol

### SCENE I

*(Mother enters and sits at table cutting red hearts out of construction paper and tying red ribbons onto them. Two teenaged sons enter.)*

MOTHER: Hey, boys, how did school go today?

1st SON: Same old, same old...

2nd SON: I'm about ready for a nice long Christmas break. (both boys move to table and look over her shoulder) Looks like you've been getting ready...

1st SON: For Valentines! Mom, you've had some crazy decorating ideas before, but this takes the cake!

2nd SON: Don't you have your seasons a little mixed up, Mom?

MOTHER: Well, I was trying to think of a way to make our Christmas decorations be something that would make us think about the real meaning of Christmas. Last Sunday the choir sang this song about God's love reaching out to us at Christmas. Ever since then I have been thinking about how God's love for us is a kind of valentine. And since Christmas...well, just think about it for a minute, a valentine is a message of love.

2nd SON (*shaking his head*): I'm thinking, Mom, but it still sounds like Valentines to me and not Christmas. Christmas is supposed to be about angels and shepherds and wise men...and GIFTS!

1st SON (*playfully hitting brother on the shoulder*): Hey! Don't be a wise guy! Be serious, I think I see what Mom is talking about.

MOTHER: Think about Mary; she received a message of love from God. Here she was, a young woman, probably still a teenager...and all the young Jewish women believed that a Messiah was coming, and wondered, if just maybe, they might be the one who would be chosen to be the mother of that special manifestation of God's love. And then one day, an angel appears to Mary and says that God has chosen her as the one to be the mother of His son. Can you imagine a greater message of love? The Bible said she was really frightened at first, but the angel reassured her, and said she had found favor with God, and that her child was to be called Jesus, that He would be a king and would reign forever. Mary was confused, too, about how all this could happen. But the angel explained it to her...it would be a miracle.

2nd SON: Oh, man, I hate to admit it, but maybe you've got a point, Mom.

MOTHER (*smiling at him*): Every once in a while... Well, I've got to go to choir. Can you guys finish cutting out these hearts for me?

(*Mother exits; Boys roll their eyes, look at each other, then reluctantly sit and pick up the paper and scissors*)

**CHOIR/CONGREGATION:** MARY HAD A BABY, GENTLE MARY, or similar anthem or carol

## SCENE II

1st SON: You know, I've been thinking about what Mom said about a valentine being a message of love.

2nd SON: Come off it. It's just another one of her off-the-wall things.

1st SON: No, I bet there are other ways to find valentines in the Christmas story. Look at the angels.

2nd SON: No way, man, doesn't make sense to me.

1st SON (*gets up, walks around, gesturing to brother*): Listen a minute...the angels received a valentine because they were given the opportunity to tell the world that the Messiah had been born. Here the children of Israel had been waiting all these years for the prophecy to come true. And now God tells them the time has finally arrived and He calls the herald angels...

2nd SON: That always reminds me of Charlie's (*substitute name of minister of youth*) story about Harold, the angel in the Christmas story...

1st SON: Yeah, I like that one, too, but come on, be serious for a minute. God calls these very special angels to Him and tells them they have a special job to do; a huge announcement to make: Jesus is going to be born in a manger in a little town of Bethlehem...(sits as music starts)

**CHOIR/CONGREGATION:** ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY or similar anthem or carol

### SCENE III

2nd SON: I think there might be something to this after all.

1st SON: You mean you're going to agree with me about something?

2nd SON: Don't get used to it.

1st SON: OK, why don't you see if you can find a valentine in the part about the shepherds.

2nd SON: Let's see...(walks over and hangs a heart on tree) the shepherds...well, seems like I heard somewhere that shepherds in those days were kinda way down on the bottom of the job hierarchy. I guess it was kind of a nasty job, out there with the sheep night after night...sleeping on the ground. I bet the bath facilities were a little lacking too. They must have smelled kind of ripe! When they came into town the girls all probably ran in the opposite direction.

1st SON: What's our excuse?

2nd SON: Now who won't be serious?

1st SON: Sorry - just couldn't resist. Go on...

2nd SON: OK, so here are these smelly guys out on the hillside. They've finally gotten all the sheep counted and checked, had their supper...(turns and looks at brother) I wonder what kind of food they ate out there-no pizza delivery, hunh? (brother rolls eyes and shakes head) Well, anyway, then they settled in to get some zzz's, though I guess they had to post somebody on watch...and suddenly, the sky lights up. They must have thought the end of the world was coming. And then this voice tells them not to be afraid. Yeah, right! That would have really calmed us down! And then the angel tells them about the Messiah being born right over in the next town and that, if they will go over there, they can see Him. And then the whole sky is filled with angels singing glory to God. You know, if I had been God and I had been picking the perfect group to announce

this wonderful news to, I don't think I would have chosen a measly group of shepherds. So I guess God's valentine to them was that they were picked to hear the stupendous announcement of the birth of the Messiah. His message of love to them was that in His eyes, they were important enough to be the first to hear, the first to see, and the first to go out and tell everybody that the prophecy had been fulfilled and the Savior had been born.

*(returns to table and sits)*

**CHOIR/CONGREGATION:** THE FIRST NOEL or similar anthem or carol

#### SCENE IV

*(Father enters, puts down briefcase)*

FATHER: Hey, fellas, what's going on? *(walks over to table and looks at what they are doing)* Aren't you two a little beyond cutting up construction paper hearts?

2nd SON: Oh, Mom has had another of her weird ideas. We are making valentines for Christmas decorations. She said, before she left for choir and asked us to finish these up, that a valentine is a message of love, and Christmas is God's message of love to us.

1st SON: Yeah, so we've been talking about how you can find valentines all through the Christmas story. Want to help us?

FATHER *(chuckling)*: With the story or the cutting?

SONS: Both

2nd SON: Come on, it will be good for your image! We won't tell on you if you won't tell on us. *(Father takes off coat and joins boys at table)*

1st SON: Why don't you see if you can find a valentine in Joseph's part of the story.

FATHER: Let me see if I've got this straight. I am supposed to find a message of love, or a valentine, about Joseph. Well, he had a really tough role in all this. He was engaged to Mary and finds out she is going to have a baby, and the baby is God's. He knows the baby isn't his because Mary is still a virgin. He must have been a kind man because he could have kicked Mary out in the streets or even had her stoned, but he decides to just divorce her quietly. *(You remember we talked once before about how in those days an engagement was as binding as a wedding and could only be ended in divorce.)* Then an angel comes to him and gives him the straight