



# NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

## Charlie Brown Christmas

I have watched the [Charlie Brown Christmas](#) movie many times over the years. In many ways, I can relate to him as a “loveable loser”. How many [Peanuts](#) characters can you name?


[Charles M. Schulz](#) was born in November 1922. His first group of regular cartoons, a weekly series of one-panel jokes called [Li'l Folks](#), was published from June 1947 to January 1950, in a local St. Paul newspaper. It was there he first used the name Charlie Brown. In 1950, Schulz submitted his cartoons to United Features Syndicate, who responded with interest. “But the title of Li'l Folks had been licensed before, so they said we have to think of another title. I couldn't think of one and somebody at United Features came up with the miserable title Peanuts, which I hate and have always hated. It has no dignity and it's not descriptive. I couldn't think of anything else. I said, why don't we call it [Charlie Brown](#) and the president said "Well, we can't copyright a name like that.”<sup>1</sup>

*Peanuts began as a daily strip on October 2, 1950, in seven newspapers: On February 13, 2000, the day after Schulz's death, the last-ever new Peanuts strip ran in papers. He had personally made them for 50 years. He also helped to produce a total of 45 animated television specials, an eight-part television mini-series and five full-length motion pictures.<sup>2</sup> He received many awards, including the Congressional Gold Medal and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Schulz's income during his lifetime totaled more than \$1.1 billion. There is even a [Charles M. Schulz Museum / Resource Center](#) and [website](#).*

Schulz was reared in a Lutheran family. He as active in the Church of God and later taught Sunday school at a United Methodist Church. “He had read the Bible through three times. He would never tell people directly what to believe. God was very important to him, but in a very deep way, in a very mysterious way.”<sup>3</sup> In the 1960's, Robert Short interpreted certain themes and conversations in Peanuts as consistent with parts of Christian theology and used them as illustrations in his book [The Gospel According to Peanuts](#).

Schulz's main goal for the first Peanuts TV special was to focus on the true meaning of Christmas. “He insisted in the early days of production that the script feature some religious overtones, particularly a passage from the St. Luke gospel about the birth of Jesus Christ. The producers agreed to include just a Nativity scene but by the time the script was finished it had included an entire minute-long speech directly from the New Testament. This led to the biggest arguments between Schulz and the producers, with them insisting that the special was an “entertainment show” and the speech would scare off advertisers by narrowing its audience. Thankfully, the now-iconic speech survived the final cut and has aired in the special every year since.”<sup>4</sup>

The Christmas tree that Charlie Brown picks is [a lonely unattractive tree](#) that no one wants. Lucy and others soon realized the true meaning of Christmas and decorated the poor tree. For the first and only time, Linus even gave up his security blanket. Beyond its references to religion, unheard of on television at the time, the special also marked the first-time children voices were used for animated characters. A Charlie Brown Christmas has become a Christmas staple around the world spreading the true reason for the season using the voices of babes.

<p>Charles Stambaugh Mt Wolf, PA          “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”          John 3:16</p>	<p>I gave this Charlie Brown tree to my father just weeks before his passing. It has a blanket to show that my father gave his all to mankind. The added lamb represents Christ's love for my father and mankind. The tree is currently in the chaplain's office at the Brethren Home.</p>	
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<sup>1</sup> [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peanuts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peanuts) <sup>2</sup> [schulzmuseum.org/about-schulz/frequently-asked-questions/#toggle-id-20](http://schulzmuseum.org/about-schulz/frequently-asked-questions/#toggle-id-20)

<sup>3</sup> [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_M.Schulz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_M.Schulz) <sup>4</sup> [parade.com/85819/parade/charlie-brown-christmas/](http://parade.com/85819/parade/charlie-brown-christmas/)

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