



WEEK NINE: HOW CAN I SHARE GOD WITH MY FRIENDS?

Appetizer

What is the best gift you ever received?

(Teachers: Get a few students to answer. Ask the students who answer why they liked these gifts so much. Then bring in three or four gifts that have meant a lot to you over the years. Talk about how special these gifts are to you and how you have cherished them over the years.)

It's a lot of fun to get a gift. There's nothing like the moment when you open a box and discover what's inside. Usually, when we get a gift like this, we can't help but tell the people around us how much it means to our lives.

Main Course

There was a lot of talk in the Old Testament about a certain Gift that was to come. People talked about this Gift and predicted when this Gift might come. They talked about what this Gift would do for the world and how the Gift would be life-changing. Prophets foretold about the Gift, the law reminded everyone about the Gift, and the nations waited in eager expectation to see what this Gift might be.

Hundreds of years went by, but the Gift never came. Then one day an angel showed up in a town named Galilee. There was an ordinary girl there, one who people hardly noticed. Her name was Mary. She was not the queen or a princess, not popular, and not rich. In other words, she was not someone who was likely to be picked for a great task. But the angel Gabriel came to Mary on that day to tell her that the Gift was finally arriving.

Read Luke 1:26-38

God did the unthinkable. He brought the Gift, Jesus Christ, into the world through Mary. The world was never the same after this day, because the Gift had arrived. Jesus is not a fairy tale or a nursery rhyme. He really did come into the world. He was God in human flesh. So why is it so important to you and me that Jesus really did come?

Jesus came to earth to be a perfect example for us. He knew that we were sinners and that there must be perfect punishment for our sins. In obedience to God the Father, Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for each of our sins, past, present, and future.

But if the story stopped there, you and I would be in really bad shape. If Jesus were dead, there would be absolutely no hope in the world. Thankfully, our Savior Jesus Christ did not remain in the tomb. He was raised again on the third day, and right this second He's sitting at the right hand of God. Jesus is alive right now.

Because He is alive today, because He has defeated death, you and I can come alive. We can truly live through a rela-

tionship with Him. He hasn't just saved us from hell; He has given us life now and for eternity. He has paid for our sins and given us the opportunity to have abundant and everlasting life. This is incredible news! This is the Gift that the entire Bible points to, and we can now share in this Gift.

Dessert

Read Luke 1:38

Mary said something remarkable here. Even though she did not completely understand the truth that she was going to give birth to the Gift, she said that she was the Lord's servant.

Think back to the gifts that we talked about to begin our lesson. Can you imagine receiving those gifts and never enjoying them? Of course not! It would be silly to open an incredible gift and never tell your friends about it. And the truth today is that if you know God through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, then you have received the greatest gift of all time, the gift of salvation. Our response should be like Mary's. We should serve God and tell the whole world how good He is.

So this week as you hang out with your friends, tell them about some of your favorite gifts and ask them about some of theirs. Have fun talking about this. Then do something that you may never have done before. Tell a friend about the gift of life that Jesus has given you. Let's pray today that God will give us an unspeakable joy and gladness that will help us tell the world (including our closest friends) how great a gift Jesus Christ really is.