

The Most Absolute Best Wrapped Gift Ever Discussion Guide

Summary

This sermon explores the story of the shepherds who received the announcement of Jesus' birth, emphasizing that Jesus is the greatest gift God has ever given us. Jonathan examines how God's plan doesn't always make sense to human reasoning... the Messiah came as a baby born in humble circumstances, and the announcement was made to lowly shepherds rather than royalty or religious leaders.

The detail of Jesus being 'wrapped snugly in strips of cloth' is significant, as these shepherds would have recognized this as how lambs destined for temple sacrifice were protected from birth. This foreshadowed Jesus' ultimate purpose... to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

The sermon highlights four key points: God's plan doesn't always make sense, Jesus was born with purpose written into every detail, God's plan isn't always convenient, and when we encounter Jesus, we can't help but tell others.

The shepherds' immediate response to leave their flocks and seek Jesus demonstrates the proper response to God's call, even when it's inconvenient. After witnessing the miracle, they became messengers themselves, sharing the good news with everyone and returning to their daily lives transformed, continuing to glorify and praise God.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You this morning with grateful hearts, thanking You for the incredible gift of Your Son, Jesus. As we gather together to study Your Word and discuss the amazing story of the shepherds who first heard the news of Jesus' birth, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us today. Help us to be receptive to Your Spirit's leading and to see Jesus with fresh eyes, just as those shepherds did so long ago. Prepare our hearts to receive whatever You have for us in this time together. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's the most memorable or meaningful gift you've ever received, and what made it so special to you?

Key Verses

- John 1:1-5
- John 1:10-14
- John 3:16
- Luke 2:8-20
- Micah 5:2
- Micah 4:8
- John 1:29

Questions

- Why do you think God chose to announce Jesus' birth to shepherds rather than to kings or religious leaders? What does this tell us about God's heart?
- The sermon mentions that God's plan doesn't always make sense to human reasoning. Can you think of a time in your life when God's plan seemed confusing but later proved to be good?

- What significance do you see in the detail that Jesus was 'wrapped snugly in strips of cloth'? How does this connect to His ultimate purpose?
- The shepherds immediately left their flocks to go find Jesus, even though it wasn't convenient. What might be holding us back from responding immediately to God's call in our lives?
- How did the shepherds' encounter with Jesus change them? What evidence do we see of their transformation?
- The shepherds became messengers themselves after meeting Jesus. How can we share the gift of Jesus with others in our daily lives?
- Jesus chose to be born in a stable among the 'unclean' and 'unwanted.' How does this encourage you when you feel like an outcast or when life feels messy?
- The sermon states that Jesus is 'the most, absolute best gift you will ever receive.' How does viewing Jesus as a gift change your perspective on your relationship with Him?

Life Application

This week, take time each day to reflect on Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Consider how recognizing Jesus in this way changes your perspective on the challenges you're facing, and on sin and grace in your life. Like the shepherds, look for opportunities to share the hope and joy of Jesus with someone in your family, workplace, or community. Ask God to help you respond immediately to His call, even when it's not convenient.

Key Takeaways

- God's plan doesn't always make sense to human reasoning, but He sees value in the overlooked and outcast
- Jesus was born with purpose and significance written into every detail... He came already wrapped for the cross
- God's plan isn't always convenient, but faith calls us to step out of our comfort zones to seek Jesus
- When we encounter Jesus, we can't help but tell others about the amazing gift God has given us
- Jesus is the greatest gift we will ever receive... the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world

Ending Prayer

Father, thank You for the incredible gift of Jesus, the most wonderful gift that was ever wrapped. Thank You that through His birth, life, death, and resurrection, we can be restored to right relationship with You. Help us to understand the depth of Your love that would send Your Son to be born into this world so that He could die for our sins. Like the shepherds, may we respond with immediate faith and passion, recognizing Jesus as our Savior and sharing that hope with everyone around us. May our lives reflect the joy and wonder of His coming, not just during this season, but every day. Transform us by Your presence and empower us to live out the joy of Your salvation. In Jesus' precious and holy name we pray, Amen.