



Date: _____

Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions Giving to God Series, Lesson 32

Lesson Title: Receive the Christmas Gift: Jesus

Take Home Point: Receive the gift of Jesus.

Warm-Up:

Have you ever been on the receiving end of a gift that you knew was given with the expectation that you would reciprocate in some tangible way? How did you feel about both the gift and the giver? By definition, something ceases to be a gift when strings are attached. In our self-centered culture, we are trained and accustomed to expect something in return when we give a gift. There may not be any direct immediate required return, but inside most of us is a little voice that says we should keep count and anticipate a response "gift." Giving is the transfer of something from one person to another without regard for benefit to the giver. It may be time, money, or anything else given for the use, benefit, or enjoyment of the recipient. And once a gift is given, the giver has no claim to the gift or its use, or it ceases to be a gift!

Read: Matthew 1:18-24; Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20; John 3:16-19

Observation (What happened?):

What did Mary and the shepherds do in response to the words of the angels?

What do we get for accepting the gift of Jesus?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why do you think Jesus had to be born as a man in the world to rescue us?

What does it mean that those who don't believe are condemned already?

Insight:

Unfortunately over the centuries, many people have developed a view of God as a stern deity, ready and willing to accuse and punish when we sin. Nothing could be further from the truth! In fact, it is Satan, the enemy of our souls, who is called the Accuser in Zechariah 3:1 and Revelation 12:10. It is Satan who eagerly denounces our faults and failures, tempts us to give up, and encourages us to carry our load of guilt without relief. It is due to his treacherous temptation in the garden that we are all "condemned already" as we are told in John 3. He delights in our misery! But our loving God gives and gives and gives to relieve us of our sin and guilt, to rescue us from eternal separation from him, to lift our load of fear, to provide us with his Holy Spirit, to offer us real power to resist temptation and live for him, to supply us with his word so we can read and remember his gifts. God gave us the gift of his Son, not to rebuke and condemn, but to redeem and promise. Remember the wonderful words Jesus says in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (NIV) Rest comes only to those who are free to rest – we get that by accepting his matchless gift.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How can you show God this week your thankfulness for his gift of eternal life through Jesus?

Pray for the children in your small group to accept God's wonderful gift.

Kingdom Quest year 2