

The Unopened Gift

Friends, didn't they do a wonderful job?

Well we're certainly glad you appreciate all the energy and effort they put in to this presentation.

But friends it's also very important to us that you are aware of all the time and effort that God has put into sending his Son Jesus Christ as a gift for us – for you and me.

Did you know that God had already started His plans to send Jesus in the 3rd chapter of the first book of the bible? As soon as Adam and Eve had messed up, God was promising to do something about it.

And through-out all the stories in the Old Testament, from Noah to Abraham to Joseph to Moses and the nation of Israel - you can find clues, hints, and more promises that God is planning to send his son Jesus.

And finally, after all that planning...Jesus is born! God's gift to us – for you and me.

A gift that will change our world, a gift that will change our lives.

Friends when a child is born and you look down at that little baby, all you can see is potential... possibilities... new opportunities.

This child might grow up to be...a talented world famous artist, the politician who brings peace to the middle east, the doctor who discovers a cure for cancer, the scientist who solves the world's energy problems...

But friends, tonight... as we see the little baby lying in a manger, what we are seeing is God himself in the flesh!

And Jesus is the possibility of a new human nature, the promise of a new world. Imagine being a person who isn't affected by hatred, greed, jealousy. Who doesn't have the capacity to lie, cheat or steal. Who is always patient, kind, loyal and understanding.

Imagine a world where there is peace between nations, between peoples, where families aren't torn apart, and marriages aren't broken. A world where sickness and disease have been eradicated and death does not exist. A world where each person has enough to eat and a place to live and they find meaning and purpose and fulfillment in the work they do.

That's the possibility, that's the potential which is lying in the manger tonight friends. Jesus is the Savior of the world, and this is what He is going to do. This is God's gift to you and me – to the world!

But the question is will you “open this gift” from God? Will you “open it” by how you respond to Jesus in the here and now?

Friends, maybe you've heard of C.S. Lewis – the author of the famous Narnia stories. C.S. Lewis pointed out that when it comes to responding to Jesus there are three choices that we have. We need to decide if Jesus is a liar, a lunatic or He is Lord.

So friends, what do you think – liar, lunatic or Lord?

The angels, the shepherds, the wise men, Joseph and Mary thought he was Lord, and truth be told – I'm convinced too.

But, maybe you're not able to make up your mind right now, after all He's just a little baby and it takes time to reveal the potential in a child's life, to see what He grows up to be, right?

Friends if you're not sure who or what Jesus is, liar, lunatic or Lord... then I invite you to journey with us here at Valleyview and discover who Jesus grew up to be, and what He is doing in the lives of people here in this church.

And You can see for yourself, who this Jesus really is! God's gift to you and me. Amen.