

**Purpose:** God's gift of Jesus Christ is the perfect gift.

**Supplies:**

- Bibles
- Wrap 2 packages (one beautifully done and second wrapped only in newspaper)

**Total Time:** 45-50 minutes. Leave time at the end for teens who may want to receive God's gift!

## **ACTIVITY**

(5-10 minutes)

### **Top Ten Signs You've Hired A Bad Department Store Santa**

10. "Fluffy white beard is heavily soiled with chaw stains"
9. "Lectures each child on the wonders of Scientology"
8. "There's always two or three elves on defibrillator duty"
7. "Tries to snort the fake snow"
6. "The suit is more orange and reads '\_\_\_(your county)\_\_\_ Correctional Facility'"
5. "Every night ne walks out with a sack full of Ipods"
4. "Instead of saying, 'ho, ho, ho,' he keeps mumbling something about 'Jihad'"
3. "Tells every kid climbing on his lap, 'Careful of Santa's flask'"
2. "Because of an earlier incident, he can't go within 50 feet of Victoria's Secret salesgirl"
1. "Points out which kids he thinks will be a criminal"

### **Top Ten Unsafe Toys for Christmas**

10. Junior Electrician Outlet Panel
9. Hasbro's Slippery Steps

8. Black & Decker Silly Driller
7. Roof Hanger Paratrooper Outfit
6. Remco's Pocket Hive
5. Traffic Tag
4. Will It Burn? From Parker Brothers
3. Chimney Explorer
2. My First Ferret Farm
1. Ooh – You're Blue!, the Hold-Your-Breath Game

## **LARGE GROUP**

(20-25 minutes)

What a "wonderful time of the year!" Gifts, Santa, peace, love, family, Jesus, snow (maybe), Christmas trees, etc. are all things we might say about Christmas.

**What is Christmas all about? What's the true meaning of Christmas?** *Allow time for the teens to share their thoughts.*

Bring out 2 wrapped packages: one wrapped perfectly and very intriguing and another wrapped with newspaper done not to perfection. **Which gift do you feel most drawn to?** *Give the teens the opportunity to express themselves.* Leave the wrapped packages in site for all teens to see. (Holding the newspaper wrapped gift, say) **This package reminds me of the gift God gave us. Why do you think this would remind me of God's gift to us?** *Allow time for them to think, process, and share.* Some of the teens may come up with the right answer, but let's make sure we go to the Bible to look first hand at God's gift to us.

*Background:* We need a lot of background to understand why Jesus had to be born. So hang in here as we will go through this quickly but also in a way that's helpful in seeing the importance of Jesus' birth. Adam and Eve sinned back in the garden. Because they chose to not honor and respect God, they became separated and divided from the perfect God. They chose to disobey God and to please themselves. Since that time, all humans continue to do the same. BUT because you and I continue to sin (choose to do things that go against who God is), we need something to bring us back to God because God wants to us to be close and by design, we want to be close to something bigger than ourselves, BUT our sin keeps us at a distance. For a long period of time, God set up some rules to help people deal with their sins by having a monthly sacrifice where people would offer their best livestock. This was done by having some sort of ceremony that involved the bleeding and killing of the animal. This blood represented the cleansing that needs to happen for our sins. Just like when we get a cut, we bleed. Why? This bleeding process helps cleanse the cut so it hopefully doesn't get infected. Well, that's what this animal sacrifice was doing for their sins. God promised that

someday He would send The Perfect Sacrifice that would take care of all our sins. So, after this Perfect Sacrifice would be sacrificed, the people would no longer have to go through the monthly ceremony...but would now trust in this Perfect Sacrifice to take away the sins of the world. This Perfect Sacrifice is now the ONLY way to bring people back to God. **What do you think is the Perfect Sacrifice?** Jesus Christ.

Read John 14:6-7. Jesus Christ is the ONLY way! Jesus came to save the world!

Read John 3:16-17. Ok, back to the package wrapped in newspaper.

Read Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:4-7

1. What stood out to you in these verses?
2. Jesus is also called the "King of the Jews." Was Jesus' birth considered royalty in our eyes? Not at all! Very much the opposite!!! Like these 2 packages...Jesus' birth is a lot like the newspaper wrapped gift.
3. Knowing what you understand about heaven, why did Jesus leave to come into this world as He did?

## **SMALL GROUP**

(10-15 minutes)

1. What would be the perfect Christmas?
2. What does Christmas mean to you?
3. What are your family Christmas traditions?
4. What is the best gift you have ever received?
5. Share about a gift you received that was wrapped in the right paper and looked too cool!
6. What is the best gift you have ever given?
7. What is the worst/embarrassing gift you have ever received?
8. Would you rather give or receive presents?

## **WRAP UP**

What do these verses have to do with this newspaper wrapped package over this very nicely wrapped package? Jesus' birth isn't considered to be the most royal of births. Instead, His birth was very simple, poor, humble, and not what we would expect. Jesus gave up the perfect living conditions to come to this earth because His Father, God, asked Him to. It was for

you! He experienced the earthly pains that you and I face: rejection, loss, abuse, sorrow, etc. Jesus Christ is God's perfect gift to us. All we have to do is receive the gift...just accept it and it will change our lives. Jesus is the perfect gift because He never ever sinned. Everything Jesus did pleased God the Father. Therefore, Jesus is the once and for all sacrifice. That's the perfect gift.

### What are you going to do?

Invite the teens who want to stay behind to talk more about

1. Having a relationship with Christ
2. Wanting to receive God's gift of Jesus Christ
3. Or, needing to talk

## CHALLENGE

Ask the teens to read the verses around Jesus birth at least 3 times by the next time we meet. Have them write down the things that stood out and the things that are amazing about his birth.

## SALVATION VERSES

Below are verses the teens may find helpful in assisting them to a relationship with Jesus Christ. Either make copies for the teens and/or go over them with the interested teens.

God's Amazing Gift that Leads to Eternal Life with Him!

- We all are sinners: Psalms 51:5, Romans 3:9-12, Romans 3: 22-24, 1 John 1:8-10
- We are chained to our sin: John 8:31-36, 2 Peter 2:19, Romans 6:16-18
- We cannot be close to God because of our sin: Colossians 1:21-22, Ephesians 2:12-13
- Sin has a punishment: Romans 5:12, Romans 6:23, Galatians 3:10
- We cannot save ourselves from our sin: Romans 8:7-8, Ephesians 2:1-5, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:4-7
- JESUS saves us!!! John 1:12, John 3:14-16, John 10:11, 14-15, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Ephesians 5:25-27, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, Romans 5:8
- We can be rescued when we trust Jesus: Romans 10:9-13
- God will never turn anyone away! John 6:37, Romans 10:13

- Your new purpose in life: Romans 8:1-14, Ephesians 5:1-21, 2 Corinthians 5:15