

A Great Announcement, Part I

Lesson Focus

It isn't unusual when people find out they are going to have a baby to let everyone know the joyful news. Some couples even send out announcements of the soon-to-be special event. God did much the same with Mary. Mary would give birth to Jesus, the Son of God. Both to prepare her as well as announce this blessed event to the world, God sent an angel to bring this good news to Mary.

Key Passage(s)

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

– *Luke 1:30-33, NIV*

For the Parent

Begin with a discussion of announcements and how we use them to mark important events in our lives. For instance, when someone is about to graduate, they send out an announcement. When two people are about to get married, they usually contact the newspaper to announce the wedding. These are times when people send out announcements before an event occurs. Talk about how announcements tend to be for happy and joyful events. Lead into how we send out these announcements to people we know will want to celebrate, too.

God is no different. He sends messengers, His angels, bearing announcements. Mention other times when God sent an angel such as with Hagar, Abraham, or Gideon. The announcements aren't always joyful ones. However, what God had for Mary was. The Savior would be born and she would be the one to have Him!

Look at the key verses with your child and note first the angel deals with Mary's fears. Angels don't just appear every day and it's understandable for Mary to be frightened. Therefore the angel tells her not to be afraid. Then the angel gives her the wonderful news about the son she will have. Mary is told this son is to be named Jesus. She's also told He will be called the Son of the Most High. In other words, Jesus will be the Son of God, meaning Jesus will be God. The angel concludes the announcement by telling her the baby will be the one who will rule forever, as promised many years before to King David. Remind your child of God fulfilling His promise. Examples like these are why we can trust Him. Conclude that you'll look at another announcement next time, when God announces Jesus' birth in Bethlehem

For the Child

When something good is about to happen in life we like to tell people about it. The people who care about us will be glad to know about the good news and they'll be happy with us. When we tell people about something like this, we call it an announcement. We could make an announcement in person, like telling your mom you got a 100 on a test, or we could send an announcement in the mail, like when we send out birthday invitations.

God makes announcements, too. Except God doesn't send out cards. Instead, He sends out an angel. An angel is also God's creation and the Bible tells us a little about them. We don't see angels every day, but the Bible tells us they are real. The Bible also shows us angels are God's messengers. When God wanted to tell the world something in a really special way, He usually sent an angel. Sometimes He'd do it Himself and sometimes He'd use a person. But when it came to telling Mary about Jesus, He sent an angel.

Mary was going to have a baby boy. This boy was going to be a special boy. That's because this boy was Jesus. God wanted Mary to know she had been chosen to have the Savior. At first Mary was scared. Angels don't show up every day. But the angel calmed her down and then he told her the good news. The angel also told her Jesus was going to come and be King forever.

God had told David many years before someone would come and be King just like David was. With Jesus God honored His promise to David. Here again we see God completing His promise and that's why we can always trust Him when He makes a promise. Jesus promised He'd forgive us of our mistakes. He promised to make us clean. We can believe Jesus because God honors His promises. The angel's announcement told Mary God was doing just that. Mary celebrated God's announcement. We should, too!

Reinforcement

Even if it isn't Christmas time, make up some cards with your child announcing Jesus' coming birth. Talk with your child about what he or she would like to say in the card, maybe incorporate the words the angel spoke into the announcement. Then determine with your child some people to send the cards to.

While these cards work well for an evangelism effort, it might be better to send these cards to people who are strong Christians. Call or contact them before the card arrives and let them know about the card. They then can call or write to tell your child about how great the news was and how proud they are of the child. Use this as an encouraging experience so that your child will always think of this announcement in a joyful way.