



#59971

THE TRUE GIFT

*Characters: Interviewer
Mary, the mother of Jesus
Mrs. Santa Claus
Sign holder*

Mary and Mrs. Claus may be dressed in typical costumes — shawl and Santa hat or more elaborate.

Props: TV station sign, applause sign, microphone, 3 chairs, table

Interviewer: (Interviewer is standing. Sign holder holds up TV station sign.) Welcome to _____-TV and the program _____ sponsored by Lutheran Women's Missionary League. We have two special guests this evening. Please welcome Mary, the mother of Jesus (Mary enters and goes to chair indicated by Interviewer) and Mrs. Santa Claus. (She enters and goes to other chair; sign holder holds up applause sign. All three women sit down.)

Mary, tell us about yourself and your family.

Mary: I am from Nazareth, a small town in northern Judea. One day an angel of the Lord named Gabriel came to me and told me I was to have a child. I was around fourteen years old and did not have a husband, although I was engaged to be married to a man name Joseph. Gabriel assured me that the child would be the Son of God.

Interviewer: How did Joseph react to the news?

Mary: At first he was going to divorce me. But Joseph was visited by an angel in a dream, and the angel said to him; "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matt.1:20b-21).

Interviewer: How wonderful to hear the fulfillment of the prophecy written by Isaiah: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel which means God is with us (Is. 7:14b).

Did anything else happen during your pregnancy that would cause you to wonder about what was happening?

Mary: Just after I had learned I was pregnant, I went to visit my cousin, Elizabeth. She was much older than I and was pregnant for the first time. Her husband, Zechariah, could not believe the news and was not able to speak until their son, John, was born. She was about six months along when I went to visit her. As soon as the baby heard my voice, he leaped for joy in her womb.

Interviewer: How exciting this must all have been for you and your family! When was Jesus born?

Mary: Your traditions have his birthday celebrated on December 25th.

Interviewer: Thank you, Mary. And we have Mrs. Santa Claus with us also. Her husband has a busy life around December 25th. Mrs. Claus, could you tell us about that?

Mrs. Claus: Thank you. Yes, Santa Claus is quite busy in the days leading up to December 25th. Getting all the gifts ready and then appearing at all the activities and malls in the United States is very time consuming. The true meaning of Christmas is often lost in the shuffle by many.

Interviewer: How can Santa be all over the country at the same time? Do you mean Santa Claus isn't real?

Mrs. Claus: The character of Santa Claus is based on St. Nicholas, a Christian bishop who lived in the fourth century. St. Nick, as he sometimes is called, was famous for his generous gifts to the poor. Each country around the world has different customs and even names for St. Nick or Santa Claus. In Romania, for instance, he is called Grandpa Koleda. On Christmas Eve in Peru all the children who expect presents leave their shoes on the stairs. There are many different ways people celebrate Christmas which may have little or no connection to Jesus.

Interviewer: Mrs. Claus, you said earlier that many people lose the real meaning of Christmas. Could you explain further what you meant by that?

Mrs. Claus: While carrying on the tradition of Santa Claus may be fun, the birth of the Christ Child is the true reason for Christmas. There is nothing that changes in how He came to be born and die for each of us.

Interviewer: It IS important to remember the true meaning of Christmas. The character of Santa Claus is just that, a character based on different folklore. But Jesus Christ is real and He lives in each of us.

Mrs. Claus: Santa may promise you a gift under the tree, but you may or may not get what you wanted. Jesus, however, will keep His promises of giving good gifts to His children. I know that Jesus is the best gift anyone can give or receive. He is God's gift to the world, and He died on a much different tree—the cross.

Mary: Yes, Jesus was born in Bethlehem and 33 years later He was led to a cross. There He gave the gift of His life so that we each may have the gift of eternal life. He is with each of us every day and continues to give us many gifts including our families, our homes, and our food, and especially the forgiveness of our sins. We need to share this gift with anyone we meet, including our children and grandchildren.

Interviewer: We do indeed need to remember the true gift of Christmas and put Christ back into CHRISTmas. Thank you to both of our guests for allowing us to interview them. We wish them and all of you a Blessed Christmas. *(Sign holder holds up applause sign.)*

Scripture is from the English Standard Version of the Bible.

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