

“The REAL Christmas Story” - LESSON 1

“Mary: The Unlikely Mother”

Main Focus:

Nothing is impossible with God!



Power Verse:

“...What is impossible for people is possible with God.” – Luke 18:27



Watt's Up:

“God Can Make The Impossible Possible!”

LEADER'S INFO

When God chose to send His Son into the world to set the world free from the bondage of sin, He didn't choose to do it in a ceremonial way. He chose to do it in the most unlikely way using the most unlikely participants.

Mary was a young girl. She was not a princess in a palace. She was a poor young girl with nothing “special” about her in the eyes of the world. She was very much ordinary in the eyes of other people.

God, however, didn't think she was ordinary. Mary had found favor in the eyes of God, and He chose to do the impossible through this ordinary girl. He placed a baby inside of her through the Holy Spirit. This baby would grow to save the world.

In this lesson, the children will learn that God uses ordinary people to do the impossible - if they follow His plan!



“The Spark” Intro Video

What's the real story?



“Watt's Up?” Teaching Video

Skittles teaches “Watt's Up?”



Character Skit

“Randolph The Reindeer”



Offering Time



Game On!

“Candy Cane Relay”



Bible Story

“The Angel Speaks To Mary”



Power Verse Video

“...What is impossible for people is possible with God.” – Luke 18:27



Call To Action

“MARY: The Unlikely Mother”



Brain Drain

PowerPoint Review Game



Small Group Experience

Main Focus:

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Power Verse:

“...What is impossible for people is possible with God.” – Luke 18:27



Watt’s Up:

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Small Group Experience

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CHARACTER SKIT

Character: “Randolph The Reindeer” (a reindeer who is not too fond of Christmas. He dresses very plainly - in “hipster” attire - wears reindeer antlers and a red clown nose. Carries a box of tissues, blows his nose next to the leader and talks like he has a very bad cold)

RANDOLPH: (enters to his theme music)

Leader: (gasps, super excited) Oh my word. Are you..?

RANDOLPH: Yup. A reindeer. It’s the antlers, I know. Kind of hard to hide. (sneezes)

Leader: But, it’s not just that! You’re not just ANY reindeer, are you?

RANDOLPH: Um...what do you mean?

Leader: Well I mean, it’s just I’ve never met a Christmas celebrity before! Could I please have your autograph, Rudolph?

RANDOLPH: (sneezes) It’s RANDOLPH.

Leader: (laughs) Randolph? That’s not your name! We’ve all heard the song! Right, kids? (starts singing “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”)

RANDOLPH: (interrupts) No! Please stop! You have got me confused with somebody else. Yes, I am a reindeer. But, my name is RANDOLPH. NOT Rudolph. That’s a totally different guy. I don’t know WHY people keep getting us confused.

Leader: I think I know why. I might be the n-

RANDOLPH: (sneezes again) The nose? Yeah, that’s what people keep telling me. My nose isn’t ALWAYS like this. It’s because of my allergies.

Leader: (laughs) What could a reindeer be allergic to?

RANDOLPH: Okay, you know around Christmas time there’s stuff like candy canes, and gingerbread, and tinsel and chestnuts roasting on an open fire?

Leader: Yeah! All of that stuff is great!

RANDOLPH: (blows his nose) Glad you like it, because that’s all the stuff i’m allergic to! I am allergic to (about to sneeze) to...to...(sneezes) Christmas! What’s so great about it? The whole month of December people are sipping hot chocolate and singing carols! (sneezes again) I mean, who IS Carol,
(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)



CHARACTER SKIT

(continued)

anyway? What’s so great about her that we gotta sing about her all the time? What’d you ever do for ME, Carol? *(blows his nose)* I tell ya, Christmas is nothing but a bunch of pointless stuff.

Leader: Christmas is WAY more than just that stuff! Today we’re talking about the REAL Christmas story, and it’s INCREDIBLE! It might be the greatest story EVER! And today we’re going to talk about an INCREDIBLE person, Mary!

RANDOLPH: I thought we were talking about Carol.

Leader: Carol isn’t really a person...never mind. No, we’re talking about Mary, the mother of Jesus!

RANDOLPH: *(surprised)* Whoa, Jesus’ mom? She must have been pretty amazing.

Leader: Well, that’s just the thing, she was just an ordinary girl! God CHOOSES ordinary people to do extraordinary things! And God CHOSE Mary to be the mother of Jesus.

RANDOLPH: Man... that’s a really big deal! She must have freaked out. I would have. Of course, I’m a reindeer, not a human. But, still, that’s kind of scary!

Leader: It’s easy to be scared when God calls us to do big things, but we must be WILLING to follow God’s plan! He’s in control of the entire universe. It’s pretty safe to say that He knows what He’s doing.

RANDOLPH: But, like, Jesus was GOD’S SON. Are you telling me God told a regular old human girl to be MOM to the son of GOD?? *(sneezes, imitates a girl’s voice)* Jesus, go clean your room! *(back to normal)* That sounds like it’d be impossible! Why would Mary even try?

Leader: Because NOTHING is impossible with God! We’ll get more into that with the rest of today’s lesson.

RANDOLPH: That sounds pretty cool. Hey, do you mind if I stay around here for a little while?

Leader: *(excited)* Does that mean you’re getting into the Christmas spirit??

RANDOLPH: No, they just put up a Christmas tree farm next to my house and if I get within 30 feet of it I break out into hives. *(blows his nose)* I’ll be seeing you kids around! *(blows his nose again and hands the tissue to the leader)* Here’s a Christmas present. I’m Randolph the Reindeer, saying...*(about to sneeze)*...saying....*(sneezes)* Excuse me. Bye! *(exits as theme music plays)*



GAME ON!

“Candy Cane Relay”

Items Needed For Game:

a dozen candy canes; a table

Preparation:

Choose three boys and three girls to compete in this game. Place six of the candy canes spread out on a table on the opposite side of the room from the “starting line.” The “hook” part of the candy cane should be hanging slightly off the edge of the table.

How To Play:

When you say, “Go!”, the children place the end of the candy cane in their mouth, then run one at a time to the opposite end of the room. Using only the candy cane, they try to “hook” the other candy cane that is laying on the table, then run back to the starting line - WITHOUT DROPPING the candy cane. If they drop it, they must return it to the table and “hook” it again. When they get back to the starting line, they must “tag” the next person in line who will run down and get their candy cane. This continues until ALL three participants have completed the task.

The first team to have all three participants get all three candy canes and return to the starting line wins!



Bible Story

“The Angel Speaks To Mary”

Materials Needed:

The Data Disc; the PowerPoint presentation for Lesson 1; begin with the slide that says “Bible Story”; follow the instructions below, changing the slides to follow along with the story (*as shown*)

Preparation:

Familiarize yourself with the story in Luke 1:26-37; have your open Bible in your hands as you tell the story

The Story:

Today’s Bible Story is found in the book of Luke, chapter 1. (*show pic*) It was an ordinary day in an ordinary town called Nazareth. An ordinary girl was all alone when something extraordinary suddenly happened to her.

The angel, Gabriel, appeared to Mary. (*show pic*) He spoke to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored of the Lord.” In other words, Gabriel was telling Mary, “Hello. You are someone who is very special to God. He thinks very highly of you.”

Mary was totally confused and, of course, a little scared. I think all of us would be a little scared if this happened to us. Gabriel went on to tell Mary that God had chosen HER to be the mother of His Son. The Holy Spirit was going to place a baby in her tummy, and she was going to give birth to the Savior of the world!

(*show pic*) Mary was shocked. “How can this be?,” she asked the angel. Mary knew that she was just an ordinary girl. She wasn’t a special princess in a castle somewhere. How could SHE give birth to the King of Kings - the Savior of the world? In fact, Mary knew that she was a virgin and that she wasn’t even married yet. She was so confused as to how any of this could actually happen.

(*show pic*) The angel said, “Nothing is impossible with God. The power of God will cause this all to happen. You will give birth to the Son of God.” Now, Mary could have argued with the angel. Mary could have chosen to NOT believe the angel. Mary could have chosen many things in that moment. But, Mary chose to believe that God was able to do the impossible. She spoke to the angel and said, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then, the angel left.

Can you imagine how hard it must have been to believe that this was actually happening? You and I would have a hard time believing that God would use US to do something so extraordinary. But, you are going to learn in your lesson today that God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things! He can make the impossible POSSIBLE!





Call To Action

“Mary: The Unlikely Mother”

Materials Needed:

The Data Disc; a small, old, stuffed animal; a large, new, much nicer stuffed animal

Preparation:

Open the PowerPoint presentation on the Data Disc titled “Lesson One,” begin with the slide titled “Mary: The Unlikely Mother”

The Message: *(title slide)*



Today, I want you to help me make a choice. I have a birthday party coming up for a friend of mine. I am wanting to give my friend a gift that will make them very happy - one that they will LOVE. They really like stuffed animals, so I plan to give them a stuffed animal. Can you help choose which one would be the best gift to give? *(hold up the small, old, stuffed animal)* There’s this one. And, then there’s THIS one *(show the large, new stuffed animal)*. Which one would be a better gift? *(allow response)* I thought you might say that. After all, one of them is definitely the bigger, nicer one. The other one is pretty ordinary and unimpressive.

OK, help me out on another choice. I was thinking about buying a sports car. I am choosing between two different ones. Which one should I choose? THIS one? *(show the pic of the old broken down car)* OR, should I choose THIS one? *(show the pic of the super nice sports car)*. Which one is more impressive? *(allow response)* OK, I kind of thought you might say that! After all, the other one is pretty boring and ordinary



Well, you helped me make some choices. Now, the truth is that I am not buying a sports car nor am I giving a stuffed animal as a gift. You were helping me make a point. As human beings, we tend to look at the outward appearance and determine whether something is “worth” a lot. We look for the biggest, fastest, most impressive thing. But, God doesn’t always do that. In fact, most of the time God doesn’t choose the most obvious or impressive thing or person when He wants to do something incredible in the world.

God Chooses Ordinary People *(slide)*



When God was looking for the young woman to be the mother of Jesus, He didn’t look for a princess. God didn’t look for a wealthy woman who had a lot of power. God didn’t look for a popular lady who was known by many people so that Jesus could be born as a wildly popular baby. Instead, God chose Mary. Mary was a young woman. She was from a poor family and lived in a small, boring town. When you looked at Mary, you wouldn’t have thought she was very special. But, God did. He saw an “ordinary” young woman who served Him with all of her heart. He said, “I don’t care what anyone else thinks about Mary. I am proud of her. I am choosing her to be the mother of the Savior of the world, Jesus.”

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Call To Action (Continued)

I think we often forget that God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Throughout the Bible, God chose ordinary people to do extraordinary things. God chose a young shepherd boy, David, to defeat the giant Goliath. God chose a man who could barely speak, Moses, to be the voice of His people before Pharaoh. God has always looked at the heart. He isn't looking for the tallest, strongest, smartest, or best-looking person. He is looking for those who love Him with all of their heart. Those are the ones He is going to choose to do His will on Earth.

Mary was chosen to be the mother of the Savior of the world. But, you know what? She could have chosen NOT to follow the plan that the angel gave her. She could have chosen to run away and NOT raise Jesus to love and follow God. But, instead, she followed God's plan. She said, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." What can we learn from this?

I Must Be Willing To Follow God's Plan (slide)



We never would have even heard of Mary if she had chosen to disobey God. God would have found someone else to be the mother of Jesus. Thankfully, even though it wasn't easy, Mary chose to follow God's plan. As a result, Jesus was born. He grew up, healed people, raised people from the dead, and ultimately was nailed to a cross to forgive us of our sins. Isn't that amazing?

You might be saying, "I don't know. This whole thing sounds pretty impossible. I mean how can God in Heaven place a baby inside a woman on Earth through the Holy Spirit? That just sounds impossible!" That's what Mary thought, too. Remember, she said, "How can this be?" In other words, "Is this even possible?" The angel told her very clearly...

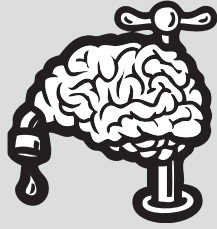
Nothing Is Impossible With God (slide)



The angel said, "Nothing is impossible with God. The power of God will cause this all to happen. You will give birth to the Son of God." And, she did. Jesus was born that first Christmas morning. Mary, the most unlikely mother, proved to the world that NOTHING is impossible with God. It was true then, and it is still true today! NOTHING is impossible with God.

ALTAR RESPONSE: (play soft music)

Pray with the children who have been thinking they were "too ordinary" to be used by God. Remind them that if they love God and are willing to follow God's plan, then NOTHING is impossible. Whatever God tells them to do - share their faith, give to missions, share their toys, forgive their enemy - they can do it with God's help. NOTHING is impossible with God.



BRAIN DRAIN

Materials Needed:

The Data Disc; The DVD

Preparation:

Play the “Brain Drain” Video Intro off the DVD; Open the PowerPoint presentation on the Data Disc titled “Lesson One,” begin with the slide titled “Brain Drain”; there is a slide for each question

1. Watt’s Up today?

Answer: “God Can Make The Impossible Possible!”

2. What is the name of the young woman in our Bible Story today?

Answer: Mary

3. What appeared before Mary?

Answer: An Angel

4. What did the angel say was going to happen to Mary?

Answer: She Would Have A Baby

5. Did Mary choose to follow God’s plan?

Answer: Yes

6. According to our lesson today, “God Chooses _____ People.”

Answer: Ordinary

7. According to our lesson today, “I Must Be Willing To Follow God’s _____.”

Answer: Plan

8. According to our lesson today, “_____ Is Impossible With God.”

Answer: Nothing

9. True Or False: God always chooses the most impressive person to accomplish His will.

Answer: False

10. Where was our Power Verse found?

Answer: Luke 18:27

Small Group Experience

LESSON 1 - "Mary: The Unlikely Mother"



Watt's Up:

"God Can Make The Impossible Possible!"



Power Verse:

"...What is impossible for people is possible with God."

- Luke 18:27

SUPPLY LIST:

* Pipe Cleaners (enough for each kid to have at least seven)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before small group begins, place piles of pipe cleaners at various places around the room. Once small group begins, read the provided lesson excerpt. When the kids hear the name "Mary," they should go collect one pipe cleaner and return to their seat. Continue on this way until the story is complete. Tell the kids to keep their pipe cleaners since they will be used in the next activity.

Say - "I am so excited that it's time for us to learn about CHRISTMAS! I love Christmas, and I cannot wait to get started. Around the room, I have placed several piles of pipe cleaners. Those aren't for cleaning out your ears! You will use them in our next activity. I will read the story, and you all should listen for the name MARY. When you hear the name "Mary," stand up and go collect one pipe cleaner and then return to your seat. Here we go, Christmas story time!"

-Read the provided lesson excerpt aloud pausing when you say the name Mary to allow time for the kids to stand and collect a pipe cleaner-

Say - "It was an ordinary day in an ordinary town called Nazareth. An ordinary girl was all alone when something extraordinary suddenly happened to her. The angel, Gabriel, appeared to **Mary**. He spoke to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored of the Lord." In other words, Gabriel was telling **Mary**, "Hello. You are someone who is very special to God. He thinks very highly of you."

She was totally confused and, of course, a little scared. I think all of us would be a little scared if this happened to us. Gabriel went on to tell **Mary** that God had chosen HER to be the mother of His Son. The Holy Spirit was going to place a baby in her tummy, and she was going to give birth to the Savior of the world!

Mary was shocked. "How can this be?" she asked the angel. **Mary** knew that she was just an ordinary girl. She wasn't a special princess in a castle somewhere. How could SHE give birth to the King of Kings - the Savior of the world? In fact, she wasn't even married yet! She was really confused as to how any of this could actually happen.

The angel said, "Nothing is impossible with God. The power of God will cause this all to happen. You will give birth to the Son of God." Now, **Mary** could have argued with the angel. She could have chosen to NOT believe the angel. She could have chosen many things in that moment. But, **Mary** chose to believe that God was able to do the impossible. She spoke to the angel and said, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then, the angel left.

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Say - “Thank you for listening so well and for collecting pipe cleaners! You will need those pipe cleaners again.”

Ask - How do you think Mary felt when she heard the news Gabriel delivered?

Ask - Why do you think God chose Mary?

Game/Activity

SUPPLY LIST:

- * “Angel Man Phrases” Print Piece (*provided; print one set*)
- * Pipe Cleaners (*use the ones from Bible Story review*)
- * Large surface to write the phrases (*i.e. dry erase board, chalk board, or poster boards*)
- * Scissors (*several pair for the group to share*)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before small group begins, print the “Angel Man Phrases” Print Piece. This game will be played similar to hang man. Choose one of the “Angel Man Phrases” and draw blanks for it on your board. Divide the group into teams and have them combine their pipe cleaners to be used as a team. Allow the teams to take turns guessing one letter. If the letter is in the phrase, write it in the blanks and the team will get to use pipe cleaners to build one piece of an angel. For example; one correct answer might equal one wing. If the team guesses incorrectly, they do not get to add to their angel and the other team gets to guess again. Continue on this way until the phrase is complete. The team with the most completed angel wins! There are three phrases provided so the game can be played multiple rounds as time allows.

Say - “I am dividing you all into teams. Combine your pipe cleaners into one team pile. I am writing some blanks on my board. It is your job to fill in these blanks by playing the game Angel Man! Each team will take turns guessing a letter. If the letter is in the phrase, I will write it in the blanks and your team will be allowed to use a pipe cleaner to form one piece of an angel. For example; one correct answer might equal one angel wing. I have scissors available if you need to cut a pipe cleaner to fit. If you guess incorrectly, you do not get to build an angel piece and the other team gets to guess again. We will continue this way until the phrase is complete. The team with the most complete Angel Man is the winner!”

-Play Angel Man; this game can be played multiple rounds using the various phrases as time allows-

Group Sharing

SUPPLY LIST:

- * “Possible/Impossible” Print Piece (*provided; print one per kid*)
- * Pencils, crayons, or markers

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before small group, print and cut the “Possible/Impossible” Print Pieces. Once group sharing begins, divide the kids into small groups and give each kid a print piece and something to write with.

Say - “Today, we are talking about impossible and possible. The Bible mentions this subject; in fact it’s mentioned in our power verse. I am dividing you all into small groups. Each of you has a page with the power verse printed at the bottom. Read and discuss the power verse together.”

(Continued on next page)

-Allow time for the groups to read and discuss the power verse-

Ask - What does this verse mean to you?

-Allow time for the groups to share their thoughts-

Say - “There are a lot of situations in life that seem impossible. Maybe it seems impossible for you to make a good grade in math. Maybe it seems impossible to only eat one chocolate donut. Maybe it seems impossible to learn to ride a bike. Whether big or small, we all face times when something seems impossible.”

Ask - What are some “impossible things” that you have faced or are currently facing? Write your answers on the left side of your page under the word IMPOSSIBLE.

-Allow time for the kids to write their answers-

Ask - Would anyone like to share what they wrote?

-Allow time for the kids to share their answers-

Ask - How can God help us with the impossible situations we face? Write your answers on the right side of the page under the word POSSIBLE.

-Allow time for the kids to write their answers-

Ask - Would anyone like to share what they wrote?

Prayer Time

Say - “With God, nothing is impossible! ALL things are possible with God! Take a few minutes as we pray, and ask God to help you with any situations you are facing that seem impossible. With God’s help, all things are possible!”
(PRAY)

Closing

Say - “Mary was just an ordinary girl going about her business when something amazing happened. God showed up and completely changed the course of her life. The plans God shared with Mary seemed impossible. The plans would be impossible without God! Mary showed great faith and trust in God. She looked at the impossible plans and decided that they were POSSIBLE with God! Mary believed God, and He used her to do amazing things. God can show up and completely change your life. Maybe you’re facing something that seems impossible. Remember that nothing is impossible with God! Maybe God has shown you big plans for your life and you wonder if they would ever be possible. Remember that all things are possible with God! You can trust God. Have faith in Him and believe and watch as he guides your life and uses you to do amazing things! Thanks for coming today!”

ANGEL MAN PHRASES

1. GOD CHOSE MARY

**2. NOTHING IS
IMPOSSIBLE WITH
GOD**

**3. GOD USES
ORDINARY PEOPLE**

IMPOSSIBLE

POSSIBLE

“...WHAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE IS POSSIBLE WITH GOD.” LUKE 18:27

IMPOSSIBLE

POSSIBLE

“...WHAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE IS POSSIBLE WITH GOD.” LUKE 18:27

FAMILY DEVOTION!

“MARY: The Unlikely Mother”



“God Can Make The Impossible Possible!”



“...What is impossible for people is possible with God.”
– Luke 18:27

God chose to send His Son, Jesus, to be born to a woman named Mary. She was an ordinary person just like you and me. It's important that children understand that God can use them to do extraordinary things!

Read:
Luke 1:26-37

Ask:

- Who appeared to Mary?
- How did Mary first react?
- What did the angel say to Mary?
- How would you have felt if you were Mary?

Say:

Can you imagine? An angel appearing to Mary and told her she was going to have a baby. AND, this baby was going to be the savior of the world! I imagine it must have been so hard to believe, but like the angel said, “Nothing is impossible with God.” With God, Mary was going to have a baby who would one day save the world from sin.

Activity:

Depending on how many members you have in your family, take time acting out the story. Let one person be the angel and one person be Mary. *(If you have more than two kids take turns doing it more than once. If you have only one, allow a parent to be involved)*

Ask:

- Do you think it would have been hard for you to believe what the angel was saying? Why or why not?
- How would you have reacted to the angel's news?
- Do you believe you can do impossible things with God's help? (Name some examples)

Pray:

Pray that, like Mary, your kids would be willing to do impossible things for God!

FAMILY DEVOTION!

“MARY: The Unlikely Mother”



“God Can Make The Impossible Possible!”



“...What is impossible for people is possible with God.”
– Luke 18:27

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