



GOD WITH US

SPECIAL 10-DAY EDITION

YM360

BY ANDY BLANKS

Thank you for sampling,

GOD WITH US

SPECIAL 10-DAY EDITION

Christmas can be a time when we get so wrapped up in the commercial aspects of the season that we lose sight of the spiritual aspect. We are so familiar with the story that we can forget how amazing it is. God came to our earth in the form of a fragile, human baby. THAT is the most amazing story ever told. And we need to do whatever we can to keep from losing our awe of this story.

God With Us is a 10-day Christmas and Advent devotional that will help students prepare their hearts and minds to celebrate the most wonderful story ever told. With bonus family devotions for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, this resource will empower your students' entire family to celebrate Christmas together.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT
GOD WITH US: SPECIAL 10-DAY DEVOTION,
PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CALL US AT 1.888.969.6360.



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SPECIAL 10-DAY EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

What is something extraordinary that you take for granted?

How about your phone? We rarely think about how incredible the technology is you have in your hand. Just a few years before you were born, the kind of technology you walk around with every day would have been unthinkable.

What about the human body? You don't think about it, but consider how incredibly complicated a simple act, such as reaching for the remote control, is. You somehow decide to reach for it, and your brain fires all these signals to your nerves, which move your muscles to reach out and grasp something a few feet away from you. It's stunning how miraculous this simple action is.

Why don't we think about how cool these seemingly random things are? Because they are so routine. We do them so often we don't think about them. We lose the wonder because of how seemingly normal it is.

The same is true when it comes to how we think about Christmas. And we **HAVE** to change this.

Christmas can be a time when we get so wrapped up in the commercial (and chaotic) aspects of the season that we lose sight of the spiritual aspect. We are so familiar with the story that we can forget how amazing it is. God, the eternal, unchanging God who spoke the universe into being, came to our earth in the form of a fragile, human baby. And He did this to save us from the penalty of our sins so that we could be in relationship with Him. **THAT** is the most amazing story ever told. And we need to do whatever we can to keep from losing our awe of this story.

That's what this book helps you do. Each day, from December 1 to Christmas morning, you will be walking through the Christmas story, the moment when God became human. You'll be challenged to be moved by this story and to see your life and faith differently. There are even family devotionals for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Prepare your heart and mind to celebrate the most wonderful story ever told.

DAY



DEVOTIONAL PASSAGE: LUKE 1:26-33

If your family has ever received a birth announcement in the mail, you know that they're pretty cool. You've seen these, right? Baby is born. Mom and dad dress baby up in a super-cute outfit (or go the minimalist route and show the baby in his/her birthday suit). The picture is taken and, most likely, uploaded to a site that specializes in birth announcements. And then, all the details are added. Full name. Date of birth. Weight and length at the time of birth. And maybe even a statement from mom and dad: "Our family is pleased to announce the birth of . . ." Some are elaborate. Some are simple. But all are intended to let the world know the existence of a treasured new arrival.

Read Luke 1:26-33. This was a birth announcement unlike any other in history. No uploaded pics to a website. No US Postal service involved. This was a DM straight from God to Mary. Can you imagine? Mary is minding her business when an actual angel just appears. We can understand why she would be afraid! And look at what the angel said to Mary. This is the heart of this most amazing birth announcement.

The language the angel used to announce to Mary of the news of her pending pregnancy would have rocked Mary's world. "Son of the Most High." "Throne of his father, David." "Reign over the house of Jacob." "No end to his kingdom." This language, these words, would have signified to Mary that this baby was the long-awaited Messiah. The messenger and the message told her that she was about to be a part of something bigger than anything she could have imagined. Everything about her life and the world was about to change.

There is no way we can even begin to process what Mary must have been feeling. The angel's announcement signified that God was working His plan to bridge the gap in history. The birth of Jesus signified the connecting of the narrative thread from the Old Testament to the New. God was continuing His faithfulness to His people but in a new, bigger way. The nature of the game was changing. Jesus was God with us. Emmanuel! This was a birth announcement unlike any other. And it changed the course of history.

THINK ABOUT THIS:

- The announcement that Jesus would be born was a game-changer. How has God been a game-changer in your life? Think of three ways your life is different because you know and are known by Jesus.

DEVOTIONAL PASSAGE: LUKE 1:34-38

I don't understand. That doesn't make sense. How is that possible?

Each of these phrases expresses a similar emotion: confusion. Maybe you can remember the last time you were really confused about something. Maybe it's been a while. But we've all been there. Faced with a situation we can't quite figure out, we just sort of shake our head, confused about the outcome.

Read Luke 1:34-38. Here, Mary is confused. And rightly so. The angel has just told her she was going to have a baby. Mary, confused, wonders how in the world this is going to happen, considering she is not married and has never been with a man. The angel's reply is powerful in its simplicity: "Don't worry. God's going to take care of it." Huh?

Do you wonder if Mary had a ton of questions? The Holy Spirit is going to be the dad? Will I know when it happens? Will the baby need nine months to grow like normal? Or will he just appear one day? What will people say? Are you sure you've got the right girl? Maybe she had a lot of questions. We don't know. What we know is that Mary responded to the amazing news with one phrase. Looking at this messenger of God standing in her living room, she simply said, "I'm the Lord's servant. If you say so, I'm on board."

Mary's faith is remarkable. She instantly trusted God, even though she could not have had any idea of how God's plan would work out. She didn't know HOW it would work, but she knew WHO was doing the work. And that made all the difference in the world.

The next time God leads you to do something you may not fully understand, remember Mary. Follow God's leading with the confidence that His plans are perfect.

THINK ABOUT THIS:

- Can you recall a time in your life when God led you to do something, and you didn't exactly know how it would turn out? What helped you to go through with it?
- What obstacles are standing in the way from you trusting God more? What do you need to do to remove these obstacles?



ANDY BLANKS

Andy Blanks is the Publisher and Co-Founder of YM360 and Iron Hill Press. A former Marine, he has worked in youth ministry, mostly in the field of publishing, for nearly 20 years. During that time, Andy has led the development of some of the most popular Bible study curriculum and discipleship resources in the country. He has authored numerous books, Bible studies, and articles, and regularly speaks at events and conferences, both for adults and teenagers. But Andy's passion is communicating the transforming truth of the Bible, which he does in his local church on a weekly basis.

Andy and his wife, Brendt, were married in 2000. They have four children, three girls and one boy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

YOU KNOW IT'S IMPORTANT TO GROW CLOSER TO GOD

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