Date: 12/26/15

Title: The Unopened Gift

Theme: God wants us to accept, use, and enjoy His great gift of salvation.

Object: An unopened Christmas gift (A jar of honey from Eric and Carry)

Text: John 1:11-12 (NKJV)11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

Good morning kids! Did you all have a nice Christmas?

Did anybody get sticks or coal in their stocking? Did anybody get a rotten potato?

You mean you all got nice presents? You must have been good kids!!

Did you get anything for Christmas that you really liked? What was one of your favorite gifts?

Well it sounds like everyone had a really nice Christmas, but it’s all over for another year (364 days).

But guess what. I have a Christmas present here that I haven’t opened yet. [Get it out.]

How many of you have Christmas presents at home that you haven’t opened yet?

You mean you opened them all right away? You didn’t save any for later?

You didn’t put any in the closet to save until you were a teenager so you could open then?

Well, I’m glad you haven’t saved your gifts, because when someone gives you a gift, they want you to open it, and use it, and enjoy it.

But this morning, this unopened gift reminds me that there are millions of people who haven’t opened the best Christmas gift of all.

You see, Christmas is a time for us to remember the greatest gift every given.

God gave his own dear Son Jesus to come and die on the cross for our sins so we could be forgiven and be God’s children forever.

The best gift ever didn’t come wrapped in pretty paper and laid under a tree.

The best gift was God’s Son, wrapped in human flesh and laid in a lowly manger.

And while many people try to make the Christmas tree the center of Christmas, the tree that really matters is the Old Rugged Cross, where Jesus stretched out His arms in love and died for you and me.

This is the greatest gift ever given: the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God offers this gift to you and to me and to everyone in the world.

Anyone can turn on their radio, TV, or computer and hear the gospel, the good news about Jesus.

Anyone can pick up a bible and read the good news for themselves.

But you know what? Most people aren’t even interested enough to open the gift.

It’s like they find this present under the tree, and they read the tag and it has their name on it, and it says: “From God with all my love.”

And they say, “O… It’s from God…so what…big deal. Maybe I’ll open it someday…maybe just before I die… but right now, I’m not really interested in a present from God.

And they put it in the closet.

Would you treat God’s greatest gift that way? (No way!)

God wants you to receive it, to use it, and to enjoy it.

And the promise of God’s word is that if you receive Jesus you will become a child of God.

Does that sound good? Are your interested? How many want to be a child of God? Let’s receive God’s greatest gift! [prayer]

Hey, I wonder what’s in this gift. You want to open it? Maybe it’s something we can use and enjoy.

[Have spoons so each can have a taste of honey.]