



UNIT 16 | CHRISTMAS | DECEMBER 14-15, 2019

2nd-3rd Lesson

Jesus Was Born

Bible Passage: Matthew 1; Luke 2

Story Point: God came to earth as a human baby to be with us.

Key Passage: “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Big Picture Question: Why do we pray? We pray because we trust God, and know He hears us.

**KID CONNECT:
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
20 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Throughout the Old Testament, God reminded His people through the prophets of His promise to one day send a Rescuer. People cannot save themselves; instead, God planned to save people by sending His Son. God revealed that He would come from the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and He would bless the nations (Gen. 12:3; 17:19; 28:14). He would come from David’s family, and His kingdom would last forever (2 Sam. 7:12-13). He would be born in Bethlehem to a virgin (Micah 5:2; Isa. 7:14).

But after God’s people returned home from exile in Judah, God was silent. For 400 years, God remained quiet. The silence was broken in Luke 1 when an angel told Zechariah he would have a son—John. John would be the forerunner of the Messiah, preparing people for the Promised One. At just the right time, Jesus was born. The Old Testament whispers, “He’s coming ... He’s coming ... He’s coming ...” and the declaration of Luke 2 is “He’s here!”

Help kids understand the significance of Jesus’ birth. Jesus’ birth is not just the beginning; rather, it is a fulfillment of God’s plan to rescue sinners. God’s people could not save themselves, so God came to them. This tiny baby was the hope of the world. He would grow up to show people what God is like and to lay down His life to provide forgiveness and eternal life to all who trust in Him.

After Jesus was born, an angel appeared to the shepherds and said, “Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is Messiah, the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11). Jesus’ birth was God’s gracious gift to us—God with us, for His glory and our peace.

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

Play intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, ask them to tell you how they celebrate Christmas with their family.

SAY • Christmas is such an exciting time! We all have fun family traditions that we use to celebrate the birth of Jesus. While you give and receive gifts this year, remember that God has given us the greatest gift of all: His Son.

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

LARGE GROUP GAME

(CG: GAME TIME SLIDE, CG + SFX: CHRISTMAS MOVIE TRIVIA SLIDES)

CHRISTMAS MOVIE TRIVIA

(Trivia Answer Sheet – per group, Winner Stickers, Prize)

SAY • It’s game time again! How many of you love Christmas movies? I know I do! Well, today we’re going to do something different for our game. I need everyone to sit with their Small Group Leader. We are going to have a small group vs. small group Christmas movie trivia challenge! Here’s how it works; I will put up different Christmas movie trivia questions on the screen and you and your small group will need to quietly answer them on a sheet of paper. I say quietly because you don’t want to accidentally give the answers to other small groups! Your SGL will be the one to fill out the answer sheet but they MUST put the answer that MOST people in the small group think is correct. Then we will collect the sheets and announce a winner at the end of Large Group. Oh, and did I mention there’s a prize for every kid in the winning small group? Yep, that’s right. A sweet prize!

OK, let’s find out which small group knows the most about these different Christmas movies. Here we go!

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: NOEL, VIDEO: SILENT NIGHT)

(battery tea lights - 1 per kid)

Pass out 1 tea light per kid to hold before singing Silent Night. Collect the tea lights at the end of worship so they don't cause a distraction from Large Group.

SAY • We are going to do something special when we sing Silent Night. We are going to dim the lights (if possible) and pass out a battery-operated tea light for each of you to hold as you sing. As you look around the room, remember that if we trust in Jesus we are like a light in a dark place. Jesus came to earth to save us and He wants us to share that amazing news with other people. Let's worship together!

INTRODUCE THE SESSION

(CG: HOUSE WITH TONS OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS)

(no supplies needed)

SAY • Hey everyone! Raise your hand if you have decorated your house for Christmas. Awesome! Well last night, my small group came over and helped me decorate the outside of my house. Wanna see? Check it out.

Yep, that's my house. I saw my neighbor leave their house wearing sunglasses...at night! I was so proud. You know, all these bright lights remind me of a very special story, the story of Jesus' birth.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • If you've been here the last few weeks, you might remember our big picture question: *Why do we pray?* Who can tell us the answer? [Allow responses.] That's right! *We pray because we trust God, and we know He hears us.* God had promised to send a Rescuer to defeat sin, but the people did not know when that would happen. Throughout the years, God's people prayed to God, asking Him to keep His promise. God always keeps His promises, and He heard the prayers of the people. When the time was just right, God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise and answer the prayers of His people.

GIANT TIMELINE

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY • God's people had been waiting for the savior to come for hundreds of years. Between the end of the Old Testament and when Jesus was born, 400 years passed in which no prophets received messages from God. Can you imagine waiting that long to hear from God? God's promise to send a Savior went all the way back to the garden of Eden. After Adam and Eve sinned, God said that one day the Savior would defeat Satan. Though thousands of years had

passed, God did not forget His promise. Let's hear more!

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: JESUS WAS BORN, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)
(Bible)

Show the Bible story video "Jesus Was Born."

SAY • Some people might think of Jesus' birth as the beginning of God's story. As we read the Old Testament, we see that Jesus was God's plan all along. God promised Eve that one of her descendants would defeat Satan. He promised Abraham that through his family, all the peoples on earth would be blessed [See *Gen. 12:3*].

When Jesus was born, most people didn't notice. He wasn't born in a palace to a well-known family. He came humbly. An angel announced His birth to shepherds in a field: "I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). The angel told the shepherds where to find Jesus, and they hurried to Bethlehem and found Him. When the shepherds returned to their fields, they gave glory to God and praised Him.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Note: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

SAY • The details of Jesus' birth may be surprising, but Jesus is the Savior we need. He didn't come to earth because we needed just a little help. He came because we desperately need Him. Sin separated us from God, but God did not leave us on our own. We cannot save ourselves, so God came to earth as a human baby to be with us.

Without Jesus we would have no chance for a relationship with God. We would still be in stuck in our sin and without hope. Jesus' birth fulfilled the promises God made to His people long ago. God sent His son Jesus to save us from sin.

KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible, Key Passage Marker)

Show the key passage slide. Open Bible and lead the kids to read together 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

SAY • Because God the Son came to earth to be with us, we can know God. Joy comes from knowing God. We can rejoice! We can pray to God as our heavenly Father. Every good thing comes from Him, and He is always in control; so we can give thanks no matter what happens.

PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

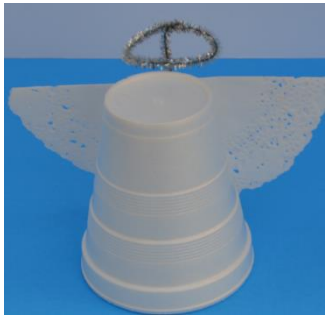
SMALL GROUP

Bible Passage: Matthew 1; Luke 2

Story Point: God came to earth as a human baby to be with us.

Key Passage: “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

Big Picture Question: Why do we pray? We pray because we trust God, and know He hears us.



STYROFOAM ANGEL CUP CRAFT

(1 Styrofoam cup – per kid, 1 small doily – per kid, 1 silver pipe cleaner – per kid, glue & tape – per group)

Turn the cup upside down so the bottom is now the top. Next, fold the doily in half and glue to the back of the cup. Then make a small circle at one end of the pipe cleaner for the halo, attach to the cup with tape and cut off the excess pipe cleaner.

SAY • Who is excited for Christmas? Let’s all share one thing about Christmas that we are most excited for [allow responses]. Christmas is

special for so many reasons, but the best part was that God sent His only Son, Jesus, to earth to be with us!

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

(2 holiday gift bags – per group, 2 “Key Passage Phrase” printables – per group, 1 key passage poster – per group)

Before the session, place a complete set of the key passage phrases in each gift bag.

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 together. Form two teams of kids and instruct them to line up side by side. Place the two gift bags a short and equal distance from the teams. Explain that the first player on each team will race to his team’s gift bag, retrieve one key passage phrase, and return to his team. Then player 2 will do the same. Players continue until they retrieve all the phrases. Each team should race to arrange the phrases so the words are in order. The first team to arrange the complete passage correctly wins.

SAY • God came to earth as a human baby to be with us. Jesus’ birth is one reason we can rejoice always!

DISCUSSION

(2-3 Bibles – per group)

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 1:22-23.

SAY • Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophet Micah said the Savior would be born

in Bethlehem. The prophet Isaiah said He would be called Immanuel, which means God with us. God came to earth as a human baby to be with us. Every promise about Jesus' birth came true.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

What news did the angel share with the shepherds? Why was it good news? *Lead kids to recall that the angel announced the birth of a Savior and Messiah. This was good news because God the Son had come into the world to rescue sinners.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Mark 1:15.)

How did people celebrate Jesus' birth? How do you celebrate? *Review that the angels and shepherds praised God and shared the good news with others. Invite kids to share their own family traditions for celebrating the birth of Jesus. Encourage them to spend time this week praising God and telling someone else the good news about Jesus.*

(Option: Choose a kid to read Rom. 16:25-27.)

How can we respond to God's gift of Jesus? *Help kids understand that we can praise and thank God for sending Jesus. We can ask forgiveness for our sin and ask Jesus to be our forever friend. Then we can tell others about Jesus.*

Use the gospel plan provided to explain how to accept Jesus. Invite kids to ask questions and remember it is okay if you don't know the answer. Talk with another volunteer or your coach if you need help.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about how much Jesus loves us. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God made everything, and He is in charge of everything. Consider reading Genesis 1:1 from the Bible.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family forever. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Ask God to forgive your sin. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. If they are not ready for this, it's okay! Let all the kids know that God loves them and that you are so happy they are here today!

SAY • God came to earth as a human baby to be with us because He loves us. Jesus' birth should bring us great joy because we now have a way to be with God forever! Do any of you want to pray, asking God to forgive all the times you disobey Him, and ask Jesus to be your forever friend? [allow responses] Let's close our eyes and you can pray with me if you are ready.

God, thank you for sending Jesus to pay for my sin and for making a way for me to be with you forever. Please forgive me for all the things I have done that make you sad. I want to obey and understand I need you in my life. Help me to follow you. I love you. Amen

If anyone in your group prayed to accept Jesus please connect with the family at pick-up and share this news with your Coach and Coordinator.

SAY • Today your child prayed to accept Jesus! We talked about how our sin separates us from God and that Jesus came to earth to take the punishment for our wrong choices. Jesus made a way for us to be with God forever.

REFLECTION AND PRAYER

(Journal Page - 1 per kid, pencils)

Ask the kids the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Make time for prayer requests and pray for your group. If time allows, have kids complete the Journal Page provided with this session.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Activity Page - 1 per kid)

Send home the Activity Page and encourage kids to complete it with their family.