

Christmas: God Shows Me that ... Jesus Is His Son

Bible Story: Jesus Was Born (Luke 2:1-10)

Bible Phrase: Jesus is God's Son. *Luke 1:35*

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Levels of Biblical Learning

God

- God shows His love to all people.

Jesus

- God sent Jesus to earth because He loves us.
- Jesus is God's Son.

Life Application

I can know that Jesus is God's Son.

Bible Skill

Knows that each main part of the Bible is divided into smaller parts called books.

Early Arriver Activity

Pack for a Trip—As children arrive, show them the items and suitcase. Say: “These are items you may want with you if you were going on a trip. Pack the bag and pretend you are going somewhere far away. You may pretend you are walking, driving in a car or taking an airplane.” As more children arrive, ask them to take turns packing and unpacking the bag.

WARM-UP

Get-involved Activity (5–10 minutes)

Guide the children to sit with you on the floor in a circle. Say: “I have hidden the figures from a manger scene around the room under the domes. When I say go, find the domes and bring the figures back to me.” Talk about the different figures. Continue: “I will hide the figures again, but this time I will leave one out. After you find them, we will try to decide which one is missing.” Repeat this several times, changing which figure to exclude.

WORKOUT

Group Learning (15–20 minutes)

1. Begin the meeting. Ask the children to sit with you in the story area. Say: “Today’s Bible story is about when Jesus was born. Before He was born, Mary and Joseph had to travel a long way. God’s Son was born in a special place.”

Provide:

- Small suitcase or backpack
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Hairbrush
- Child’s pajamas
- Toy
- Shirt
- Pants

To Do:

- Place the backpack and other items on the floor.

Provide:

- 6 domes
- Plastic manger scene which includes Baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, shepherd, donkey, and sheep

To Do:

- Place each figure from the manger scene around the room under a dome.

Provide:

- Bible
- Bible times costumes
- Copies of the Bible story
- Box for manger
- Raffia
- Doll
- Baby blanket

To Do:

- Ask older children or youth to act out the Bible story while the coach narrates. Ahead of time give each actor a copy of the Bible story with cues for actors so they will be familiar with the story and their actions.
- Designate an area for Bethlehem and the shepherd's field. Place the box filled with raffia in the area designated for Bethlehem.

Teaching Tip: Sheets or large pieces of fabric can substitute for Bible times costumes.

Provide:

- "Review Cube" (EZ Pack Item 5)

Provide:

- CD 1
- CD player

To Do:

- Cue CD 1 to "Who Is That Baby" (track 39).

Provide:

- Piece of 11-by-14-inch paper
- 5 index cards
- Marker

To Do:

- Print the Bible phrase on the paper.
- Print one word of the Bible phrase on each card.

2. Tell the Bible story. Open your Bible to Luke 2 and place it in your lap. Say: "Listen and watch very carefully. Today we have special guests who are going to help me tell the Bible story."

Jesus Was Born

Joseph and Mary were waiting for her baby to be born. At this same time, all the people had to be counted. People had to go to their hometowns and put their names on a list.

So Joseph went to his family's hometown, Bethlehem. Mary went with Joseph. *[Mary and Joseph enter the room and walk slowly to Bethlehem.]* Bethlehem was crowded with people. Every room in the town was taken. Joseph found a place where he and Mary could rest. *[Mary and Joseph sit down by the manger.]* That night, Baby Jesus was born.

Mary wrapped Baby Jesus in soft cloths. She laid this special baby in a manger filled with hay. (The manger was a box where hay for the animals was kept.) *[Mary places a baby doll wrapped in a blanket in the manger.]*

In a field nearby, shepherds were taking care of their sheep. An angel appeared to the shepherds. *[The angel comes in and stands near shepherds.]* They were afraid. The angel said, "Do not be afraid. I have good news for you. God has sent a special baby. He was born in Bethlehem. You will find the baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem. *[The shepherds leave their sheep and find Jesus in the manger; they bow down.]* They found Baby Jesus lying in the manger, just as the angel had said. When the shepherds left, they told everyone they saw about the special baby in Bethlehem.

—Based on Luke 2:1-10

Thank your special guests for coming today to help you tell the story. *[Actors leave the room.]*

3. Review the Bible story. Show the "Review Cube" to the preschoolers. Choose a child to toss the cube first. Say: "After you toss the cube, you may bring it to me so I can read the questions." Give each child a chance to toss the cube and answer a question. Help each child feel successful by helping with the answer if necessary. Remind the preschoolers that Jesus is God's Son.

4. Sing. Sing "Who Is That Baby" together as a group. After singing the song once, talk about how Jesus is God's Son. God sent His Son as a baby. Say: "We will sing this song again, remember that Jesus is God's Son and He loves you."

5. Introduce and explain the Bible phrase. Show the Bible phrase strip to the children and read it to them. Distribute the cards to the children. Say: "Look at the Bible phrase strip and then look at your card. Match your word to the ones in the strip. I will call someone to place his word on top of the one it matches." Repeat the Bible phrase together three times. Remind the children that we celebrate Christmas because Jesus was born and He is God's Son.

6. Practice the Bible skill. Explain to the children that the Bible is a book that is made up of many smaller books. Hold up your Bible so that all the children can see it. Open the Bible to the Old Testament and show the title pages of two or three different books in the Old Testament. Then open the Bible to the New Testament and show the title pages to the gospels. Sing the song “Books of the Bible” from “Songs to Familiar Tunes.”

7. Apply the Bible truth. Distribute the manger scene figures to the preschoolers. Explain that they are going to tell you the Bible story using the figures. When all the children have had a turn, say: “Christmas is the time we celebrate Jesus’ birth. God sent His Son to earth as a baby. Everyone who saw Him knew He was special. Just like the shepherds who left the fields and their sheep to see God’s Son.”

8. Pray. Instruct the children to listen while you thank God for sending His Son, Jesus, and for loving us. Give any child who wants to pray a chance to do so.

9. Transition to STRETCHING. Call a child by name and ask him to say, “Jesus is God’s Son” and then quietly walk to one of the STRETCHING activities.

STRETCHING

Art and Manipulatives (20–25 minutes)

These activities are designed to help teach the preschoolers that Jesus is God’s son. Play the song “Who Is That Baby” quietly in the background as the children complete their activities.

Activity Page, Side 1

Help the boys and girls count the items in the picture and circle the picture of Baby Jesus. Find opportunities to explain God sent His Son as a baby because He loves them.

Activity Page, Side 2

The activities on side 2 have the possibility to be messy. Help the children stay clean by providing wet wipes to clean up after each activity. The snack activity requires using a crock pot. Make sure this is well supervised and only one child at a time is stirring the mixture. Look for opportunities to emphasize that Christmas is the time when we celebrate Jesus being born and that God sent Jesus because He loves us.

Provide:

- Bible
- “Songs to Familiar Tunes” (CD Item 12)

Note: Listen to “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” (track 7) on CD 2 to hear this familiar tune.

Provide:

- Manger scene figures used during WARM-UP.

Provide:

- Activity Book Page (CD Item 41)
- Pencils or crayons
- Materials for the activities listed on side 2 of the activity page
- CD 1
- CD player

To Do:

- Print an activity page for each child.
- Cue CD 1 to “Who Is That Baby” (track 39).

REACH OUT

Missions Emphasis Time (10–15 minutes)

Provide:

- “World Map” (EZ Pack Item 2)
- Four paper arrows
- Tape

To Do:

- Attach a piece of tape to the back of each arrow.

Christmas is celebrated around the world in different ways. There are many countries who do not allow missionaries (special people who tell others about God) to tell their people that Jesus is God’s Son.

Christmas Around the World

Christmas is not celebrated around the world like it is in America. The kingdom of Bhutan is between Tibet, China, and India in the Himalayas. The people cannot celebrate Christmas like we can. *[Place a paper arrow pointing to the kingdom of Bhutan and one where you live the map.]* They may put a few decorations, a string of colored lights or maybe a picture of the manger scene up in their homes. On Christmas they must go quietly to each others’ homes. They often will only have a beat-up guitar, but they sing to God and thank Him for His Son Jesus.

In Pakistan most people do not celebrate Christmas or even know what it is about. *[Place a paper arrow at Pakistan on the map.]* Christians can tell the true meaning of Christmas and talk about Jesus during December.

In China Christians find many ways to tell people about Jesus. *[Place a paper arrow at China on the map.]* Some of the things they can do are meet with students on campuses and tell them that Jesus is God’s Son, host special outreach parties or dinner in houses or restaurants, and have special Christmas Eve services with the church full of people. Some who go to the church believe in Jesus and some do not.

In many countries it is very hard to tell people that Jesus is God’s Son. God makes it possible for missionaries to tell them about His Son during Christmas. Pray for these countries and all over the world that many people will hear that Jesus is God’s Son and believe. Pray that the governments will continue to allow Christians to tell the people around the world. Thank God that we can tell everyone that Jesus is God’s Son here in the United States.

—Information provided by the International Mission Board.

Point to the kingdom of Bhutan on the map and ask: “Do the people who live in Bhutan decorate for Christmas? *(Yes, but only a few little things.)* Do the Christians go into the streets and sing song about God at Christmas?” *(No, they have to be very quiet and only go to each others’ houses and there they sing and pray to God.)* Point to Pakistan and continue: “In Pakistan, can the Christians tell people who do not know Jesus that He is God’s son?” *(Yes, in December they can and a lot of people who do not know Jesus ask questions.)* Point to China and continue: “Can you think of ways that the missionaries in China tell people that Jesus is God’s Son?” *(They have parties, go to schools, have dinners, and go to church on Christmas Eve.)* Remind the preschoolers that in the United States we can tell people about Jesus anytime we want. But in many countries they cannot even mention Jesus’ name to the people who live in

those countries. We need to thank God for allowing people all over the world tell other people that Jesus is His Son.

THE TOURNAMENT

Games and Activities (10–15 minutes)

The games are designed to help the preschoolers understand that Jesus is God's Son. If your meeting is less than 1½ hours, choose one or two of these games.

Tag the Sheep

Choose two children to be shepherds and all other children will be the sheep. The sheep will crawl on the floor making sheep sounds. When the coach says go, all the sheep will stand up and run to the pen. The shepherds will try to tag the sheep. If a sheep is tagged, he should move to the opposite side of the room from the pen. When the last sheep is tagged, the game starts over and the last two sheep tagged will become the shepherds. Play as long as time allows or until all the children have had a chance to be the shepherd. Talk about how the angels told the shepherds that God had sent a special baby, Jesus. When the shepherds heard what the angel said they left the fields to go see the baby. Say the Bible phrase: "Jesus is God's Son."

Pass The News

Guide the preschoolers to form groups of six. Ask them to hold hands to form a circle and then let go of their hands. Distribute a beanbag to each group. Say: "We are going to play 'Pass the News.' The child with the beanbag will pass it to the child to her right and say, 'Jesus is God's Son.'" Tell the children to continue passing the beanbag and saying the Bible phrase until the beanbag reaches the first person. Then reverse the direction the beanbag is passed. As the game progresses, change the way the beanbag is passed to make it a little more difficult. Instead of just handing the beanbag, a child can gently toss the beanbag to the next person or pass the beanbag behind her back or under her leg. Remind the children to continue saying, "Jesus is God's Son."

Follow the Shepherd

Choose one child to be the shepherd. Ask all the other children to sit in a chair. Say: "You are going to play 'Follow the Shepherd.'" The shepherd will walk around the circle clapping his hands. The shepherd will choose a child to follow him by tapping her on the knee. She will get up and clap her hands just like the shepherd. When everyone is following the shepherd, I will say go, and everyone, including the shepherd, will run and try to find a seat. The child who does not find a chair will be the new shepherd." Play the game until every child has a chance to be the shepherd or as time allows. Continue: "God sent His Son as a baby. He gave us a special gift. We need to remember that Christmas is about Jesus' birth." Say together the Bible phrase: "Jesus is God's Son."

Provide:

- 10-foot rope

To Do:

- Place the rope in a square on one side of the room for the sheep pen.

Option: Painter's tape can also be used to make a pen.

Provide:

- Beanbag for every 6 children

Provide:

- 1 chair per child minus one

To Do:

- Place the chairs in a circle with the seats facing out.

COOL DOWN

Refreshments and Conclusion (10–15 minutes)

Provide:

- "Allergy Alert Sign" (CD Item 1)
- Haystack snacks made during STRETCHING
- Napkins
- Cups
- Juice
- CD 1
- CD player
- Manger scene figures used in WARM UP

To Do:

- Post the allergy sign before the meeting. List the food served for snack.
- Cue CD 1 to "Who Is That Baby" (track 39).

1. Serve a snack and pray. Make sure boys and girls wash their hands before eating their snacks. Pray, thanking God for the snacks and for sending Jesus.

Distribute the haystacks the children made during STRETCHING. Ask two children to give each child a napkin and a cup, and a coach to pour the juice. As the children enjoy their snacks, say: "When Jesus was born, Mary laid him in a manger. A manger is a box where the hay for animals is kept. Our snacks look like stacks of hay. Jesus' mother, Mary, made a bed of hay where Baby Jesus could sleep. Remember 'Jesus is God's Son.'"

2. Close the meeting. Gather all take-home items and place them near the door. While you wait for parents, sing the song "Who Is That Baby." Show the children the different manger scene figures and ask them to describe each figure. For example, a child could say something like, "Baby Jesus is God's Son." As parents pick up their child, ask him to repeat the Bible phrase: "Jesus is God's Son. Luke 1:35."