

A colorful illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, Mary is shown in profile, holding the infant Jesus wrapped in a white cloth. Joseph stands to the right, looking on. A donkey and a sheep are visible on the left. A lantern hangs from the wooden ceiling of the stable. The background shows a night sky with stars and a distant town.

ORIS

CHRISTMAS BONUS SESSION

PRESCHOOL  
**WORSHIP GUIDE**



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.





# THE GOSPEL

## GOD'S PLAN FOR PRESCHOOLERS

While preschoolers might not be ready to respond to the gospel, use this guide to help young minds begin to grasp big truths about Jesus and the kingdom of God.



Ask: "Who is in charge at home? Who is in charge over the whole world?" Explain that God made everything! He is King over everything, and He is in charge.



Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell preschoolers that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin makes God sad.



Explain that God must punish sin. He loves us, and He sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus came to take away the punishment for sin.



Ask: "Do you like gifts?" Explain that Jesus gives us the best gift. He never did anything wrong, but He was punished in our place. Jesus wants to take away our sin because He loves us.

Pray for the salvation of your preschoolers. As you faithfully teach the Bible, you are planting gospel seeds in children's hearts. Ask God to grow the preschoolers into children who love and trust in Jesus.

CHRISTMAS BONUS SESSION

# JESUS IS OUR GREATEST GIFT

LUKE 2



**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Jesus was born! This was very good news! Jesus was not like other babies. Jesus is God's Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven. Jesus came into the world to rescue us from our sins.

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why does sin separate us from God? Because God is holy.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Psalm 34:17

**STORY POINT:** Jesus was born.





## PREPARE

IN ADVANCE TO TEACH THE SESSION

## LEADER Bible Study

In the Gospel accounts of Christ's birth, the miraculous plans of God coincide with the seemingly mundane events of humanity to reveal the promised Messiah. God used modest means to bring about the divine incarnation of His only Son who would deliver us from the death we deserve.

Where was Jesus' birth prophesied in the Old Testament? How does His birth make a way for people to receive the gift of eternal life?

Jesus' genealogy, found in Matthew 1, demonstrates how the long-awaited Savior can be traced back to Abraham. Later, in verse 23, we read the prophecy first relayed in Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: See, the virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel." In today's passages—written about 700 years after the words of Isaiah—an angel of the Lord appeared first to Mary, then to Joseph, and later to the shepherds in the field, announcing this newborn baby as the Savior of the world. These ordinary people experienced God's great power at work through the miraculous birth of Jesus.

Consider the grandness of the nativity story. Reflect on the wonder of Jesus coming to earth in such lowly form. The humble birth of Christ would lead to His humbling death: crucified and left to die among wretched sinners. Yet this would not be the end of His story—nor for those who trust in His name! In three days, Jesus would rise from the grave, and by faith in His finished work on the cross, we can be reconciled to God as recipients of His grace.

Pray for the boys and girls who will gather to be taught this spectacular passage of Scripture. May they find their place within God's redemption story, placing true faith in the Savior born to bring us eternal life. May they turn from their sins and call upon Immanuel, our "God with us" forever. And like the shepherds in today's passage, may you faithfully share this good news, giving praise to the God of our salvation for the great gift we have in Jesus!



## PREPARE

### THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



## LEARN

10–15 MINUTES

Teach preschoolers the story of the gospel



## LOVE

20–25 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to love the God of the gospel



## LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead preschoolers to live the mission of the gospel



## PREPARE

IN ADVANCE TO TEACH THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep these items on hand for each session: Allergy Alert, Bibles, construction paper, copy paper, washable markers, crayons, scissors (adult use), blunt-tipped scissors, glue sticks, glue, blocks, baby dolls, play dough, world map or globe, snack food, paper cups, and napkins.



### LEARN

#### Welcome and worship with song

- ☐ "God Helps People" song

#### Tell the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ "Jesus Is Our Greatest Gift" video (optional)
- ☐ storytelling tips props (optional)
- ☐ box
- ☐ gift wrap paper
- ☐ tape

#### Review

- ☐ Giant Timeline

#### Respond through song and prayer

- ☐ "He Has Become My Salvation" song
- ☐ "You Must Be Holy" song



### LOVE

#### Roll the cube

- ☐ cardboard box
- ☐ clear packing tape

#### Decorate a tree

- ☐ "Truth Tree" printable, 1 per child
- ☐ copy paper, green
- ☐ small stickers (optional)

#### Retell the story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ nonbreakable manger scenes
- ☐ illustrated children's Bibles or storybook Bibles

#### Match and tell

- ☐ gift bows, assorted colors, 1 per child
- ☐ gift bag



### LIVE

#### Learn the Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

#### Practice the Key Passage

- ☐ Key Passage Marker
- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "The LORD Hears (Psalm 34:17)" song
- ☐ tape

#### Find the gift

- ☐ gift bags, 3



LEARN

## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# LEARN the Bible Story

### 1 WELCOME AND WORSHIP WITH SONG

Greet preschoolers with a smile. As preschoolers arrive, sing a song such as “God Helps People,” or another upbeat Christmas worship song of your choice to engage and welcome preschoolers. Lead motions enthusiastically and encourage preschoolers to join you. Between songs, help the preschoolers think through what it means to worship God and why we often use music to help us do so. Take time to talk about any lyrics that might be challenging to understand.

### 2 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Prior to the session, write Jesus on a piece of paper. Place it in a box and wrap the box like a Christmas gift. Display the gift for preschoolers to see. Ask them to name what they think is in the box. Mention that the gift inside the box is the greatest gift. Open the box and reveal the name Jesus.

**SAY** “ Today we are celebrating Christmas. Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of God’s Son, Jesus. Jesus is our greatest gift. Let’s listen to this true story from the Bible together. ”

Open your Bible to Luke 2. Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bold version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

### JESUS IS OUR GREATEST GIFT

“ Mary was engaged to be married to Joseph. **One day, an angel told Mary she was going to have a very special baby. The angel explained, “This baby will be God’s Son.” Then an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel said, “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. Her baby was put there by the Holy Spirit. Name Him Jesus because He will save His people from their sins!”**

During the time Mary was pregnant with Baby Jesus, **a ruler named Caesar Augustus wanted a list of all the people who were living in the land. He sent out an order: “Everyone must return to his hometown to be counted!”** Since Joseph was part of King David’s family, **he and Mary traveled to Bethlehem, the city of David.**

**While they were there, Mary was ready to have her baby.** Mary and Joseph looked for a safe place to stay, but every place was full. So **Mary and Joseph found a place where animals were kept, and that is where Mary had her baby. Joseph named the baby Jesus. Mary wrapped Him in cloth and laid Him in a manger.**

That night, **some shepherds were watching their sheep out in the fields. All of a sudden, an angel stood before them. A bright light shone around the**

### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Use manger scene figures:** Set up manger scene figures as you tell the story. Invite different preschoolers to add the figures to the scene as they are mentioned.

**Play it out:** Provide Bible-times clothing for preschoolers to wear. Invite them to play out the story as you tell it. If you have a large group, retell the story a few times so everyone can play a part.



## LEARN

### THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

shepherds, **and they were scared!**

But **the angel said, “Do not be afraid! I have good news for you: Today a Savior, who is the Messiah and the Lord, was born for you in the city of David.” Then the angel said, “Go find the baby. He will be wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger.”**

**Suddenly, many angels appeared. They praised God and said, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people He favors!”**

When the angels left, **the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem to find Baby Jesus. They found Him, and then they told others about Him.** Everyone who heard about Jesus was surprised and amazed. Jesus’ mother, Mary, thought about everything that happened and tried to understand it. The shepherds went back to their fields. They praised God because everything had happened just like the angel had said. ”

Christ Connection: Jesus was born! This was very good news! Jesus was not like other babies. Jesus is God’s Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven. Jesus came into the world to rescue us from our sins.

### 3 REVIEW

Point to the Giant Timeline as you review today’s Bible story. Ask the following review questions.

1. What did you like about the Bible story? (Answers will vary.)
2. What were some things in the Bible story that made you happy or sad? (Answers will vary.)
3. What did the angel tell Mary and Joseph? (Don’t be afraid. Mary will have a baby, God’s Son. He is to be named Jesus.)
4. What did the angels do when they appeared before the shepherds? (They praised God.)
5. How was Jesus different from other babies? (He is God’s Son.)
6. **Why does sin separate us from God? Because God is holy.**

**SAY** “ Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem, and while they were there, Mary had her baby. There were no rooms available for them, so they stayed in a place where animals were kept. Mary wrapped Jesus in cloth and laid Him in a manger. Angels visited shepherds to tell them the good news that **JESUS WAS BORN**. The shepherds went to find the baby. After they found Him, they told everyone that **JESUS WAS BORN**. They praised God for this great gift. Jesus was special. He was not like other babies—He is God’s Son! Jesus came to rescue us from our sins. He is our greatest gift! ”

### 4 RESPOND THROUGH SONG AND PRAYER

**SAY** “ Jesus was born! This was very good news! Jesus was not like other babies. Jesus is God’s Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven. Jesus came into the world to rescue people from their sins. ”

Sing “He Has Become My Salvation” or another worship song of your choice as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “You Must Be Holy.” Collect an offering.

**SAY** “ God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to earth. Because of Him, we can be rescued from our sins. He truly is our greatest gift. Thank You, God, for Jesus. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

## LOVE God because of what we learned

Choose the activities that best fit your group, space, available resources, and time constraints. Set up activities in one of these ways: as a group—all at the same time, in small groups that rotate through each activity, or set up as centers—allowing preschoolers to browse and choose.

### 1 ☐ FIND BABY JESUS



Hide a baby doll in your room. Invite preschoolers to look for the baby. When the baby is found, lead preschoolers to gather in the middle of the room. Encourage them to say, “Jesus was born.” Repeat the activity as time allows. Give preschoolers the opportunity to hide the baby doll while others close their eyes.

**SAY** “**JESUS WAS BORN.** An angel appeared to a group of shepherds to tell them the good news. The angel told the shepherds to find the baby. The shepherds went to Bethlehem and found Jesus. They told everyone the good news and praised God for the birth of His Son.”

### 2 ☐ ROLL THE CUBE

Seal a cardboard box with clear packing tape. Write the following actions on different sides of the box or on sheets of paper cut to fit the size of the box sides: “Baa” like a sheep; Shout the name Jesus; Rock a baby in your arms; Travel around the room; Open and close hands like a twinkling star; Tell a friend, “Jesus is born!” If using paper, tape one paper to each side of the box. Invite a child to gently roll the cube. Read the action on the top where it lands. Encourage the child who rolled the cube to lead preschoolers to do the action together. Continue playing until everyone has a turn to roll the cube and lead an action.

**SAY** “Today we are celebrating that **JESUS WAS BORN.** Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. Mary had a baby, and Joseph named Him Jesus. An angel appeared to shepherds nearby to tell them the good news. The shepherds found Jesus and then told everyone that **JESUS WAS BORN.**”

### 3 ☐ DECORATE A TREE

Print and cut apart the “Truth Tree” printable, one per child. Distribute a sheet of construction paper, a glue stick, and a set of “Truth Tree” strips to each preschooler. Assist preschoolers in placing the strips in order, shortest to longest. Glue the strips in a tree formation with the shortest on top and the longest on the bottom. Use crayons or markers to decorate the tree and add a trunk at the bottom. Preschoolers can also decorate the tree with stickers if available. (Note: This printable could also be decorated like a birthday cake.)

**SAY** “There are many things people do to celebrate Christmas. You might see trees decorated with ornaments and lights. The trees you made celebrate the true meaning of Christmas—**JESUS WAS BORN.** God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth as a baby. Jesus came to rescue us from our sins.”





LOVE

## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### 4 ☐ RETELL THE BIBLE STORY

Set out several nonbreakable manger scenes. Encourage preschoolers to use the figures to retell the Bible story. Provide the Bible Story Picture Poster, illustrated storybook Bibles, or children's Bibles for preschoolers to look at as they recall the Bible story.

**SAY** “ We can tell everyone the story of Jesus’ birth. We can practice retelling the story so we can know how to share this good news with people we meet. Just like the shepherds told people about Jesus after they saw Him, we can tell others about Jesus too. Jesus is our greatest gift, and we can tell everyone that **JESUS WAS BORN!** ”

### 5 ☐ MATCH AND TELL

Gather gift bows in assorted colors, one bow per child. Make sure there are at least two of each colored bow you use. Lead preschoolers to choose a bow. On the count of three, invite preschoolers to find someone with a matching bow. When they find a match, encourage preschoolers to share the good news that **JESUS WAS BORN**. Invite each child to say, “Jesus was born,” to the friend with the matching bow. Place the bows back in the bag and play again.

**SAY** “ At Christmas we celebrate the birth of God’s Son, Jesus. This is good news we can share with everyone we meet. Jesus is our greatest gift. God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth as a baby. Jesus came to rescue us from our sins. This is news worth sharing! ”



## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

# LIVE for God out of love

### 1 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER

**SAY** “ Why does sin separate us from God? Sin separates us from God **because God is holy**. God is not like us; God is perfect. When God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth as a baby, Mary and Joseph knew He would not be like anyone else. Because Jesus is God, He is holy. God sent Jesus to provide the way for us to no longer be separated from God. Through Jesus’ death on the cross and resurrection, we can have a right relationship with God forever. ”

### 2 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE

Prior to the session, gather wooden or large interlocking blocks (at least one block per word of your preferred version of the key passage). Cut paper to fit on one side of each block. Tape the papers on the blocks. Write one word of the key passage on each block. Place the Key Passage Marker at Psalm 34:17. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Line the blocks up in verse order as you say each word. Lead preschoolers to repeat the verse after you several times. Allow preschoolers to create a simple stable or barn with the blocks. As they build, talk about the key passage.

**SAY** “ Because we are sinners, we need a rescuer. God sent His Son, Jesus, as a baby. **JESUS WAS BORN** in a barn and laid in an animal feeding trough, or manger. When He grew up, He died on a cross for our sins and came back to life. Jesus is our rescuer! Because of Him, we can have a right relationship with God forever. ”

Sing the key passage song “The LORD Hears (Psalm 34:17)” together.

### 3 PRAY

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have. Pray for them.

**SAY** “ God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to earth. Thank You for our greatest gift—Jesus! Help us remember that You are the reason we celebrate Christmas. Amen. ”

### ☐ FIND THE GIFT

Write Jesus on a sheet of paper. Place the paper in one of three gift bags. Number the bags 1, 2, and 3. Display the bags in front of preschoolers. Mention that one of the bags contains the greatest gift. Instruct one child to choose a numbered bag that she thinks the special gift will be inside. Open the bag and see if the Jesus paper is inside. If it is, pull out the paper and invite boys and girls to shout, “Jesus was born.” Lead preschoolers to close their eyes and place the paper back in one of the bags. If the paper is not in the bag, choose another child to pick a bag. Continue as time allows.

**SAY** “ Jesus is God’s Son. He is our greatest gift. Jesus came to earth as a baby. We get to celebrate Jesus’ birth at Christmas. Merry Christmas to each of you! ”