Introduction: Check for understanding using “Think-Pair-Share” technique.

Think-Pair-Share: Raise the following questions to your group members: “Think back to a time when someone promised you something but failed to fulfill that promise. How did it make you feel? Do you have a tendency to doubt God’s promises? Why?” Then say something like the following: “Think for 30 seconds about these statements. Now I want you to discuss this in pairs with a person on your left or right who is not your spouse.” (Pause for 60 seconds.) Call on 3-4 pairs to share one idea.

Point 1: Use song to help your group members see the significance of the birth of Jesus.

The Christmas carol, “Joy to the World,” is sung every year. Our familiarity with it can cause us to miss the important message. Read—or if you feel up to it, sing—the first verse:

    Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
    Let earth receive her King;
    Let every heart prepare him room,
    And heaven and nature sing,
    And heaven and nature sing,
    And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Ask, “How can we receive our King and prepare room in our hearts for the Him?” Allow 2-3 students to respond.

Point 2: *Help your group observe a major theme through an analysis exercise.*

Here we see the relationship between God’s strength and power and His love and mercy. He is the “mighty Savior.” Divide the whiteboard into two columns. For the first column, write “mighty,” and for the second column, write “Savior.” Lead your group in listing some descriptive words for each category.

Then ask the following questions:

- What would happen if someone had tremendous power but no love?
- What if the opposite were true?

Point 3: *Capture the point by comparing expectation with reality.*

When the angels tell the shepherds about the birth of Christ in Luke 2:12, they inform the shepherds that the child would be in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. God the Son came to the world in a most unlikely way. This is what Philippians 2:7 means where Paul stated that the Son “emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity.”

Then ask the following questions:

- Why do you think it is important that Jesus was born into such lowly circumstances?
- What does Jesus humility tell us about Him?

Conclusion: *Challenge group members to live the session.*

Ask group members to spend a few minutes thinking over the session and have them identify 1-2 areas where the Holy Spirit might be drawing them to repentance. Instruct them to spend a few minutes in prayer, thanking God for His saving provision, blessing, faithfulness, and love.
Teaching Tip of the Week

“What are they thinking about?” Every teacher should have this in mind when they walk into the classroom. If a teacher thinks their students are always ready to learn and fully engage with the session, they are naïve. Students might be thinking about problems with their family, their job, the beautiful weather, bills, or any number of things. The first task of a teacher is to “prime the pump” of learning by getting them to want to learn about the subject at hand. The student needs to know in the first minute or two the value of the session for their lives. If you can’t get them engaged early, they probably won’t assimilate the session.