

An illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, Mary is shown in profile, looking down at the baby Jesus who is lying in a wooden manger filled with straw. Joseph is standing next to her, looking on. A donkey and a sheep are visible on the left. A lantern hangs from the ceiling, and a city is visible in the background under a starry night sky.

05

CHRISTMAS BONUS SESSION

KIDS
WORSHIP GUIDE



the **GOSPEL**PROJECT.



THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR US

The gospel is the good news, the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.

CHRISTMAS BONUS SESSION

JESUS IS OUR RESCUER

LUKE 2



CHRIST CONNECTION: The angels told the shepherds the birth of Jesus was good news for all the people. Anyone who believes the good news that Jesus lived, died, and rose again for their sin will be saved.

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 10:31

EXPECTED RESPONSE: Joy



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

PLAN the Session

1. Read the Leader Bible Study and review the session plan.
2. Check out the session-by-session training available on Ministry Grid.
3. Pray for yourself, your group, and the other leaders and kids in your ministry.

LEADER Bible Study

We celebrate the birth of Jesus this week. As you ponder this familiar story, try to see these truths with fresh eyes. Let the truth of God's rescue plan wash over you anew and focus your heart on hearing from Him this week. Consider the following teaching points and reflect on the questions to help you prepare your own heart to teach.

The birth of Jesus is good news for all people. The birth of Jesus marks the arrival of God's ultimate gift to humanity. It's the fulfillment of a promise to bring salvation and hope to everyone, regardless of their background or status. Jesus came to offer grace, peace, and redemption to all people, making the good news accessible to everyone who will receive it. What are some ways you can reflect God's love for all people in your daily interactions?

Jesus is fully God and fully human. Jesus is uniquely both fully divine and fully man. As God, He holds all authority and power, yet as a man, He experienced the full range of human emotions and struggles. This dual nature enables Him to empathize with our weaknesses while also providing the strength and authority only God can offer, making Him the perfect mediator between humanity and God. How does the humanity of Jesus challenge you to walk more closely with Him in your own human experiences, knowing He truly understands what you face?

Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise. Jesus is the culmination of God's redemptive plan, the fulfillment of centuries of promises made to His people. From the prophets to the law, God foretold a Savior who would bring salvation, and in Jesus, we see those promises come to life. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus accomplished what was promised—bringing reconciliation and hope to all who trust in Him. How can you live with greater expectation, knowing that Jesus has fulfilled God's promises, and how does that affect your hope for the future?

Guide kids to understand the joy and peace that come from knowing Jesus. They need to hear the gospel as good news for them right now, not just for their eternity with God. Lead kids to see how much God loves them, and how He demonstrated that love through the birth of Jesus.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



LEARN

20-30 MINUTES

Teach kids how and why we worship



LOVE

25-30 MINUTES

Lead kids to love God by worshiping Him



LIVE

10 MINUTES

Lead kids to live worshipful lives for God



PREPARE

FOR THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



LEARN

Countdown

- ☐ countdown video

Worship through Music

- ☐ "Crown Him with Many Crowns," "Holy God (Holy, Holy, Holy)," or other high-energy worship songs of your choosing

Introduction and Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus Is Our Rescuer" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Group Demonstration

- ☐ "Rescuers" printable



LOVE

Group Activity

- ☐ balls, 2

Respond in Worship

- ☐ "Worthy of All Praise," "Live Like Him," or other slower worship songs of your choosing
- ☐ offering basket or collection box (optional)



LIVE

Key Passage

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "For the Glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31)" song

Additional Activity

- ☐ sticky notes



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN through Worship

1 COUNTDOWN

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as worship time begins.

2 WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC (5–10 min.)

Choose a few high-energy worship songs—such as “Crown Him with Many Crowns” or “Holy God (Holy, Holy, Holy)”—to sing with your group of kids. Lead motions enthusiastically and encourage kids to join you. Between songs, help the kids think through what it means to worship God and why we often use music to help us do so. Take time to talk the kids through any lyrics that might be challenging to understand.

3 INTRODUCTION AND BIG PICTURE QUESTION (3 min.)

SAY “Hello, friends! I love gathering each week to learn from God’s Word together and respond to Him in worship. Here’s a question to get us started. What is something that brings you joy? **[Allow responses.]** Maybe it’s playing with your best friend or eating a big bowl of ice cream. Maybe you feel joy when you get to snuggle with your parents at bedtime or listen as someone reads you a story. There are many things that bring us joy. Joy is a gift from God! Today we will hear a story about the greatest source of joy: Jesus.

We have heard many stories from the Bible in the Old Testament, and we’ve learned that the whole Bible points to the truth that **JESUS IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH WHO CAME FROM HEAVEN TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** Today we’re going to hear the story of Jesus being born. Maybe you’ve never heard this story before. Or maybe it feels like you’ve heard it a thousand times! Either way, God always has something that He wants us to learn when we read from His Word.

Before we dive in, let’s remember our big picture question. **How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.** As you listen to the story, think about how the angels and shepherds glorified God. Let’s open our ears and our hearts to see what God wants to teach us today through His Word. ”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

4 TELL THE BIBLE STORY (10 min.)

Open your Bible to Luke 2. Tell the Bible story using the script provided, or flesh out the “Kids Sermon Outline” in the margin to teach a more in-depth message. You may choose to play the Bible story video “Jesus Is Our Rescuer.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS IS OUR RESCUER

“An order went out that each person in the Roman Empire should go to his own town to be counted. So, Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the family line of David. Mary, who was engaged to Joseph and was pregnant, traveled with him.

While they were in Bethlehem, she gave birth to her firstborn son. There was no guest room available for them, so she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger.

Some shepherds were out watching their sheep in the fields nearby. An angel of the Lord stood before them, and glory shone all around them. They were terrified! But the angel said, “Don’t be afraid! I’m here to tell you good news of great joy for all the people. Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you. He is the Messiah, the Lord. You will know you have found him when you see a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger.”

Then many angels appeared, and they all began praising God. They said, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!”

When the angels had left, the shepherds said, “Let’s go to Bethlehem right away to see what the Lord has told us through the angels!”

The shepherds hurried and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. They shared what they had heard from the angels, and everyone was amazed. Then the shepherds returned to their fields, glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard that day. ”

KIDS SERMON OUTLINE

The birth of Jesus is good news for all people

(Luke 2:8-20): The birth of Jesus brought joy for all people.

Jesus is fully God and fully human

(Luke 2:1-7): Jesus is the Son of God, born as a baby to Mary and Joseph.

Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s promise

(Luke 2:21-38): It was God’s plan from the very beginning for Jesus to come to the world as the Messiah.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “What an amazing story! Did anything surprise you? [Allow responses.] Where was Jesus born? [Read Luke 2:6-7.] Jesus was born in Bethlehem. The King of kings was born in a stable surrounded by animals, and His first bed was a feeding trough. Does that surprise you? We might expect the King of Heaven to be born in a palace. But Jesus didn’t come so He could be a rich king in a huge palace. Jesus came to bring peace to all people. Who were the first people to hear about Jesus’ birth? [Read Luke 2:8.] The angels told the shepherds that the birth of Jesus was good news for all the people. If you were a shepherd, how would you respond? Let’s keep reading and find out what these shepherds did. [Read Luke 2:16-18; 20.] The shepherds went to see Jesus and they left praising God. God had kept His promise to send the Rescuer into the world. Here was the king God’s people had been waiting for for generations. The shepherds were filled with joy and went away praising God.

Jesus came to live the perfect life we can’t live. He died the death we deserve. And He defeated death when He rose from the dead. Jesus has won the battle against sin and evil. He has done all the work and offers us life with God forever. Anyone who believes the good news that Jesus lived, died, and rose again for their sin will be saved. This is good news for you and me today and is a message that brings us great joy! ”

6 GROUP DEMONSTRATION (5 min.)

Prior to the session, print off the “Rescuers” printable. Show the pictures of the doctor, lifeguard, firefighter, and police officer. Have the kids tell you what each person is and then see if they can tell you what they each have in common. Guide them to see that they all help save people from danger.

SAY “All of these people are examples of rescuers. They rescue or save people from danger. We can be thankful for people like firefighters and police officers who rescue us from physical danger, but we are all in need of an even greater rescuer. We need to be rescued from the sin within us. That’s not something you can do with a fire hose or a dose of strong medicine. We need an even greater Rescuer. **JESUS IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH WHO CAME FROM HEAVEN TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.**

Jesus came to set us free from sin, yes, but He also came to bring us peace with God and joy that cannot be taken away. Jesus offers us new life with God, and a new way to live right now. As part of God’s kingdom, we can learn what it means to live like Jesus. Of course, we cannot be perfect this side of heaven, but as Christians journey with Jesus, they can learn and grow, becoming the people He designed them to be. We don’t have to jump through hoops or say a complicated prayer to receive Jesus as the greatest gift. We just need to tell God that we need His help and want to be close to Him, and ask Him to forgive us. He forgives us and heals our hearts. ”



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE with Worship

1 DISCUSSION (10 min.)

Consider forming smaller groups to discuss the following deep questions. Encourage kids to be honest about their feelings and help them learn to process them in healthy ways.

1. **What did we discover about God in this passage?** God loves us and wants to bring joy and peace to our hearts through faith in Jesus. Jesus is lowly and kind, showing what kind of servant King He is by being born in a humble stable and sending angels to the shepherds. Jesus is for all people, not just the wealthy and powerful. He can relate to our human struggles because He is fully man.
2. **The birth of Jesus is a reason for joy and celebration! But joy may not be the first response you had to this story. What are some other feelings you have when you think about Jesus coming as our Rescuer?** You may feel surprised at how humble Jesus is as a king who came to serve us by giving us His life. Help kids think about and describe other feelings they may have. Provide a safe place for kids to discuss emotions and remind kids that their feelings are real and valid, even if they don't match what others feel.
3. **What are some ways a person might demonstrate joy?** Joy is something that's hard to hide! A joyful person smiles and laughs. They are often energetic and are eager to help others in need. A joyful person experiences peace with God even when they go through difficult situations. Joy is not the same thing as happiness, because joy is not circumstantial. We can have joy even when we feel sad. Joy is not just an emotion; it's also a way of being. We experience joy in the hope we have that God is with us and He will one day remove all pain and suffering from the world.
4. **Can you think of other times you have felt those feelings? Would anyone like to share their stories?** Help kids talk through other situations where they have felt joy or another emotion mentioned in the first question. Be prepared with examples from your own life.
5. **Can you think of a time when you felt really joyful? What made you feel that way? How can joy help us through tough times?** The joy which comes from knowing Jesus goes deeper than any other earthly things that bring us happiness. Sometimes life gets hard, like when we feel sad, angry, or scared. But when we know Jesus, we can still have joy even in those tough times. Jesus reminds us that God loves us, that He's always with us, and that we can trust Him no matter what happens. This is the kind of joy that helps us keep going, even when we feel down.

After the kids have had time to discuss, direct their attention back to the main worship leader for the group activity. If you formed smaller groups, you may choose to regather as a larger group depending on your ministry context.

2 RESPOND THROUGH PRAYER (3 min.)

Guide kids to find a partner and give each kid an index card and pencil. Encourage them to write their name at the top and one prayer request they have this week. Give options such as a test, a difficult relationship with a sibling, an argument with a friend, or sickness. Give them a few minutes to write their request, then share with their partner. Guide kids to spend a minute or so praying for each other. Encourage them to think about the ways God brings joy to their lives.

3 GROUP ACTIVITY: PEACE PASS (5–10 min.)

SAY “ We’ve learned so much today from our Bible story! Let’s play a game to help us remember an important truth from God’s Word. ”



LOVE

THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

Help the kids form two teams and lead them to line up. Give the first kid on each team a lightweight ball. The goal is to pass it down the line gently without dropping it. However, they can't use their hands—they must pass it using their heads, shoulders, or elbows. If it drops, they have to pause and say, "Let's bring peace!" Then, they work together to get it back on track and try again.

SAY 🗨️ How many of you have a brother or sister? Do you ever fight with them? When you're fighting does someone ever come in and help everyone calm down? Sometimes, we need someone to step in and bring peace to a tense situation. If you are fighting with a sibling, your mom or dad might step in to help find a resolution. How can we help bring peace to others when we're playing or working together? [Allow responses.] Getting along can be hard. That's one of the effects of sin in our hearts. We don't love people the way God created us to love. We need someone to step in and help. God Himself would come to earth as a human baby to heal our hearts and show us the way. Jesus was born to rescue us from sin, and everyone who follows Him finds peace with God and with other people. God wants us to know, love, and glorify Him. **How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.**

We don't fight with God like we fight with our siblings or friends. God doesn't make annoying faces at us or throw toys at us. And we don't irritate God by poking Him in the seat next to us in the car. We don't fight with God in those ways, but the Bible tells us that we are enemies of God. We need someone to make peace between God and us. But who can do that? Only Jesus can accomplish a task like that. In fact, that's why Jesus came to earth. Jesus came to bring peace to all people. 🗨️

4 RESPOND IN WORSHIP (3 min.)

Choose slower worship songs—such as "Worthy of All Praise" or "Live Like Him"—that will help your kids reflect on the concepts they have learned about during this session. Encourage kids to respond however they feel God leading them, whether in prayer, quiet thought, or song.

SAY 🗨️ Jesus is the greatest gift! But why? **JESUS IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH WHO CAME FROM HEAVEN TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** Sin is when we do, say, or think things that go against what God has said is best for us. Sin disconnects from God, and we can't do anything to fix it. But here's the good news: God loves us even when we don't love Him. You can't do, say, or think enough bad things to make God stop loving you. Need more proof? Listen to this! [Read John 3:16.] Let's respond to God in worship and thank Him for His great love for us! 🗨️

As you continue playing music, allow the kids a few minutes to pass an offering basket, bring offerings to a collections box, or collect offerings in another way.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE in Worship

1 KEY PASSAGE (5 min.)

SAY “ Our key passage reminds us that everything we do can point others to Jesus and show them how amazing He is. When we share the invitation to know Jesus, we’re doing something that brings glory to God, because it’s His plan for us to invite others to meet Jesus and experience His love. In everything we do—whether we’re playing, talking, or even eating—we can bring glory to God by sharing His love and showing others who Jesus is. ”

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31 and encourage the kids to read along. Display the key passage poster for kids to read. You may also sing the key passage song, “For the Glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31).”

2 APPLICATION (2 min.)

Spend some time following up with the kids to see if they were able to complete the application challenge from the previous session. Encourage each kid for his or her efforts, and remind kids to keep seeking ways to worship God each day.

SAY “ Thanks for participating in our challenge last week! We learn so much about who God is and what He is like each week when we meet. And we can keep learning throughout the week, too. We do application challenges to help us put into practice the things we’re learning. Let’s try this challenge until we meet next time.

This week, make a list of all the things that bring you joy. Add to your list throughout the week as you notice or remember other things that bring a smile to your face. Thank God for the blessings He has given you and remember the greatest gift of all is the invitation He gives you to know Jesus. ”

3 PRAYER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (2 min.)

SAY “ Father, thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior and for inviting us to know Him. Help us to remember that Jesus is the greatest gift, and that we can share this good news with others just like the shepherds did. Thank You for loving us and giving us peace and joy through Jesus. Amen. ”

Make any announcements from your kids ministry before dismissing. If there’s significant time between dismissal and pickup, consider using the additional activity to keep the kids engaged. You may also substitute the additional activity for the group activity.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

INVITATION TO JOY

Distribute the sticky notes and markers. Let kids write a truth they have learned from the Bible. Examples include Jesus is the Rescuer, Jesus brings peace, We can know God, Jesus sets us free from sin. Place the sticky notes on the wall. Kids will grab another note off the wall then sit down in a circle to share what the note says.

SAY “ These are all great truths. God invites us to know Him by reading His Word and talking to Him in prayer. Think back to the story. What was the invitation that God sent to the shepherds through the angel? God told the shepherds about His Son, Jesus, being born and invited them to come and see the baby. The shepherds answered God’s invitation to come and see the baby Jesus. Not only did they go to see Him, but they also told everyone about what they had seen. The shepherds knew that it was good news that Jesus had been born, and they wanted to share it with their friends!

Did you know that God gives us the same invitation today? The news that the angels shared with the shepherds is for us, too! God invites us to come and meet His Son, Jesus. The angel told the shepherds that Jesus was a Savior for all people. The invitation is to come to Jesus because it is through Jesus that we can know God! God sent Jesus into the world so He could take our sins on Himself and suffer the punishment that we deserve. ”