



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 RESCUER

LUKE 2



**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Jesus was born! This was very good news. Jesus was not like other babies; He is God's Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven to save people from their sins.

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

**KEY PASSAGE:** 1 Corinthians 10:31

**STORY POINT:** Jesus came to rescue us from sin.





IN ADVANCE TO TEACH THE SESSION

## LEADER Bible Study

The announcement of the birth of Jesus came in a completely unexpected way. Instead of announcing the birth of the Savior in the halls of power or the seats of religion, God chose for a group of shepherds on the outskirts of Bethlehem to be the first to hear of Christ's birth. The announcement from angels to the shepherds watching over their flocks was significant not only because of the message they gave, but also for the people to whom it was given.

Shepherds spent their days on the fringes of society taking care of animals. Living on the outskirts made it difficult for these shepherds to make it to synagogue and participate in the daily spiritual life of their community. Because these shepherds constantly worked with livestock and were regularly exposed to manure and dead animals, they would have been considered unclean according to Jewish law.

It was no accident that God choose often overlooked and outcast shepherds as the ones to whom the angels would give the announcement of Jesus' birth. This announcement was a powerful statement about the nature of the kingdom of God. God's kingdom is for all people, and no one is outside of God's plan to know of His love.

The long expected announcement was remarkable. Jesus had been born in the city of David for all people. Three significant titles are used here to describe why this is good news for all people. First, Jesus is the Savior—the one who rescues people from sin. Next, He is the Messiah, the Anointed One of God who came to lead God's people into God's kingdom. Finally, He is the Lord, the ruler of all the universe.

The shepherds' response to this glorious news included curiosity, awe, and obedience. This Christmas, may we do everything we can to see Jesus, adore Him for who He is, and boldly proclaim the truth that Jesus is Savior, Messiah, and the Lord.



### 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

- ☐ "Obey God" song

#### Tell the Bible story

- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ "Jesus Is Our Rescuer" video (optional)
- ☐ storytelling tips props (optional)

#### Review

- ☐ Giant Timeline

#### Respond through song and prayer

- ☐ "Anytime, Anywhere" song
- ☐ "Because He Loves Us" song



### LOVE

#### Wrap Baby Jesus

- ☐ 12-inch pieces of yarn, 1 per child
- ☐ jumbo craft sticks, 1 per child

#### Play a rescue game

- ☐ buckets, 2
- ☐ table tennis balls, at least 3
- ☐ wrapping paper tubes

#### Gather and count

- ☐ small manipulatives like counting bears or cubes

#### Make manger scene puzzles

- ☐ "Manger Scene Puzzle" printable on cardstock, 1 per child
- ☐ zip lock bags, 1 per child



### LIVE

#### Learn the Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

#### Practice the Key Passage

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

#### Make an instrument and sing

- ☐ empty water bottles, 1 per child
- ☐ small jingle bells (must fit through mouth of the bottle)
- ☐ crinkle cut paper in red and green
- ☐ pom-poms in red, green, silver, or gold



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 an action song such as “Obey God,” to engage and welcome them. 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

Talk about situations where something or someone may need to be rescued, such as someone who got lost in the woods or a kitten stuck in the top of a tree. Introduce the story point that **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.**

**SAY** “ These are all rescue stories! Did you know that the Christmas story is also a rescue story? **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** We sin when we choose to disobey our parents, hurt our friends, or tell a lie. Our sin has consequences. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for our sin. Listen closely to learn more. ”

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 RESCUER

“ During the time Mary was waiting for Baby Jesus to be born, the emperor of Rome sent out an order: “Everyone must return to his hometown to be counted!”

**Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem. While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. Mary and Joseph looked for a safe place for Mary to have her baby, but every place was full. So, Mary and Joseph found a place where animals were kept, and that is where Mary had her baby, Jesus. She wrapped Him in cloth so He would be snug and warm, and she laid Him in a manger.**

**In the same area, some shepherds were watching their sheep out in the fields. All of a sudden, an angel of the Lord stood before them and a bright line shone around them.**

**The angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid! I have very good news for you: Today a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord, was born for you in the city of David. Go find the baby. He will be wrapped in cloth and lying in a feeding trough.”**

**The shepherds went straight to Bethlehem to find Baby Jesus. They found Him, and they told others what the angel had said about Him.**

### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Use visuals:** As you tell the story, show a picture of a manger and a cross. Use these visuals to highlight the fact that Jesus was born to be our Rescuer.

**Use a manger scene:** Follow your church’s safety procedures, walk to a manger scene set up at your church, or use a small nonbreakable manger scene to help tell the story.



## LEARN

### THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

**Then the shepherds returned to their fields, praising God because everything had happened just as the angels said. ”**

Christ Connection: Jesus was born! This was very good news. Jesus was not like other babies; He is God's Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven to save people from their 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. Whose birth do we celebrate at Christmastime? (Jesus)
4. Why do we celebrate Jesus's birth? (Because **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.**)
5. How can we glorify God this Christmas season? (Sing praises to Him, obey Him, pray to Him, tell others about Him)
6. **How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.**

**SAY** “ Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem to be counted. While they were there, Jesus was born. Mary wrapped Him in cloth placed Him in a manger. **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** An angel came to some shepherds and told them to go to Jesus, and they did. The shepherds told others the good news of Jesus and praised His name! Jesus was not like other babies; He is God's Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven to save people from their sins. ”

### 4 RESPOND THROUGH SONG AND PRAYER

**SAY** “ It is time to praise and glorify God because Jesus was born! This was very good news. Jesus was not like other babies; He is God's Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven to save people from their sins. ”

Sing “Anytime, Anywhere” as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing “Because He Loves Us.” Collect an offering.

**SAY** “ God, thank You so much for sending Jesus from heaven to earth to rescue us from our sin. This Christmas season, help us glorify You for this amazing gift. Help us share this good news with our friends and family. Amen. ”



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: 1) as a group, all at the same time, 2) in small groups that rotate through each activity, or 3) set up as centers, allowing preschoolers to browse and choose.

### 1 ☐ SPELL GOOD NEWS



Prior to the session, write the letters that spell GOOD NEWS on individual sheets of paper. Demonstrate to preschoolers how to place blocks on top of each letter to trace its shape.

**SAY** “ You spelled the words GOOD NEWS with blocks. Do you remember what the good news was in our Bible story today? [Allow responses.] We learned the good news that Jesus was born! God sent Jesus to earth from heaven. **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** We can glorify God by loving and obeying Him because of this wonderful, good news! ”

### 2 ☐ WRAP BABY JESUS

Distribute a jumbo craft stick and washable markers to each child. Lead the children to draw a face at the top of the stick to make Baby Jesus. Next, give each child a 12-inch piece of yarn. Help him wrap the yarn around the craft stick. Encourage the children to keep wrapping the yarn around the craft stick until the middle is covered and the yarn is used up. Take each child’s wrapped craft stick and put a small drop of glue to secure the end of the yarn. Glue a loop of yarn at the top of the stick to make an ornament.

**SAY** “ Look what you made! Who did you wrap with the yarn? [Allow responses.] Yes, Baby Jesus. After Jesus was born, Mary wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger. A manger is a feeding trough for animals. God sent Jesus from heaven to earth. **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** Isn’t that amazing? God deserves all the glory. **How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.** ”

### 3 ☐ PLAY A RESCUE GAME

Before the session, use scissors to cut wrapping paper tubes into two u-shaped halves, then cut the halves into one-foot sections. Prepare enough for each child to have one section. Guide children to take their tube and stand in a line, side-by-side. Place a bucket with table tennis balls at one end, and an empty bucket at the other end. Challenge children to hold up their section of the wrapping paper tube with the rest of the children to make a path, so the ball can travel down and land in the empty bucket. Encourage the children to play this game by trying to “rescue” as many balls as possible by allowing the balls to roll down the path and into the other bucket.

**SAY** “ What a fun game! You rescued the balls. Do you remember from our Bible story who needs rescuing? [Allow responses.] We all need rescuing from our sin. **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** This good news is really something to celebrate! ”





LOVE

## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### 4 ☐ GATHER AND COUNT

Scatter 10–20 counting manipulatives (cubes, bears, buttons, or craft pom-poms) around the room. Encourage the children to count the manipulatives without moving them, and then come back to tell you how many there are. As the children report how many they’ve counted, comment that the children have reported different amounts. The second time, scatter the same number of manipulatives around the room and encourage the children to gather the manipulatives in one spot, and then count them together. Point out that gathering the manipulatives gave you the correct number.

**SAY** “The first time we counted the items, we got different numbers. Why do you think that happened? [Allow responses.] It was hard to keep track of what you had counted. The second time when we gathered and counted, we got the correct amount. This reminds me of our Bible story when the Roman emperor asked all the people to go to their hometown to be counted. That is why Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem. Bethlehem was the city where Baby Jesus was born! **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.**”

### 5 ☐ PUT TOGETHER MANGER SCENE PUZZLES

Distribute a “Manger Scene Puzzle” printable and safety scissors to each child. Lead children to cut out their puzzles. Assist younger preschoolers as needed. Allow children to practice putting their puzzles back together. Give each preschooler a zip lock bag for their puzzle pieces.

**SAY** “You did great putting these manger scene puzzles together. What do you notice about this picture? [Allow responses.] This picture shows that Jesus was born in Bethlehem and laid in a manger. God sent Jesus from heaven to earth. **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM OUR SIN.**”



## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### **LIVE** for God out of love

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#### **1 LEARN THE BIG PICTURE QUESTION AND ANSWER**

**SAY** “What have we been learning about today? [Allow responses.] That’s right, we are learning about when Baby Jesus was born. **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** Because of this rescue and sacrifice, God deserves all the glory! **How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.**”

#### **2 PRACTICE THE KEY PASSAGE**

Before the session, use painters tape to make horizontal lines on the floor for each word of the key passage. The lines should sit at a distance so that preschoolers can safely jump from one line to the next. Place the Key Passage Marker at 1 Corinthians 10:31. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Instruct preschoolers to line up at the first tape line. Guide the preschoolers to jump from line to line as they say each word of the key passage.

**SAY** “Our key passage tells us to do everything for the glory of God. We should glorify God because **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.**”

Sing the key passage song “The Glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31)” together.

#### **3 PRAY**

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

**SAY** “God, Thank You so much for today! Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to rescue us from our sin. We are so grateful for Your love for us and plan to rescue us. Help us respond by giving all the glory to You. Amen.”

#### **4 ☐ MAKE AN INSTRUMENT AND SING**

Distribute an empty water bottle to each child. Encourage children to fill the bottle with jingle bells, crinkle cut paper, and craft pom-poms. Screw the lids on the water bottles and cover them with tape. Encourage the children to shake the bottles and sing “Away in a Manger” and other Christmas hymns or worship songs.

**SAY** “What beautiful music and singing! Worship through song is one way we can glorify God. We glorify God because He sent Jesus to earth from heaven to save people from their sins. **JESUS CAME TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.**”