



Use Week of:

Christmas • Session 3

Jesus Was Born

BIBLE PASSAGE:

John 1

STORY POINT:

Jesus came to bring us life.

KEY PASSAGE:

2 Peter 1:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

- Countdown
- Introduce the session (2 min.)
- Big picture question (1 min.)
- Giant timeline (1 min.)
- Tell the Bible story (10 min.)
- Christ connection
- Group demonstration (5 min.)
- Review (4 min.)
- Key passage (5 min.)
- Group game (5–10 min.)
- Sing and give offering (3–12 min.)
- Missions moment (6 min.)
- Announcements (2 min.)
- Prayer (2 min.)
- Additional idea

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LEADER Bible Study

God's plan all along was to send His Son into the world to save sinners. At just the right time, God the Son "emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity" (Phil. 2:7). The birth of Jesus was a miracle.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke begin by giving details of the Messiah's birth: Mary became pregnant by the Holy Spirit and gave birth to a son. The baby was God's Son, and He had an earthly father—Joseph. As the angel had instructed, Joseph named the baby Jesus.

The apostle John began his Gospel in a different way. John 1:1 parallels the words of Genesis 1: "In the beginning ..." In the beginning, God spoke creation into existence. Everything was created through God the Son. (Col. 1:16) John names Jesus as "the Word." (John 1:3)

John 1 provides a bigger picture to accompany the story found in Luke 2:1-20. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). As you teach kids about Jesus' birth, help them realize why Jesus came. Jesus did not enter an already good world that simply needed some guidance and improvement. He came into a dark world cursed by sin to a people who were spiritually dead.

Jesus' birth is good news for people who need a Savior. In God the Son's becoming a human, Jesus brought life and light to people who were dead in sin. Jesus came to give life to all who believe. He brought light into darkness and showed us what God is like.

Invite kids to celebrate the birth of Jesus, which brought joy and peace to a desperate and chaotic world. Pray that God would prepare the hearts of all children—from babies to preschoolers to older kids—to hear and believe the truths about Jesus and welcome Him into their lives and Lord and Savior.

The **BIBLE** Story

Jesus Was Born

John 1

John, one of Jesus' disciples, wrote to tell people about who Jesus is. **John wrote that the Word—Jesus—existed in the beginning, before the world even began. The Word has always existed with God, and the Word has always existed as God. He was with God in the beginning. When God spoke at creation, all things were created through His Word.** Not one thing was created apart from Him.

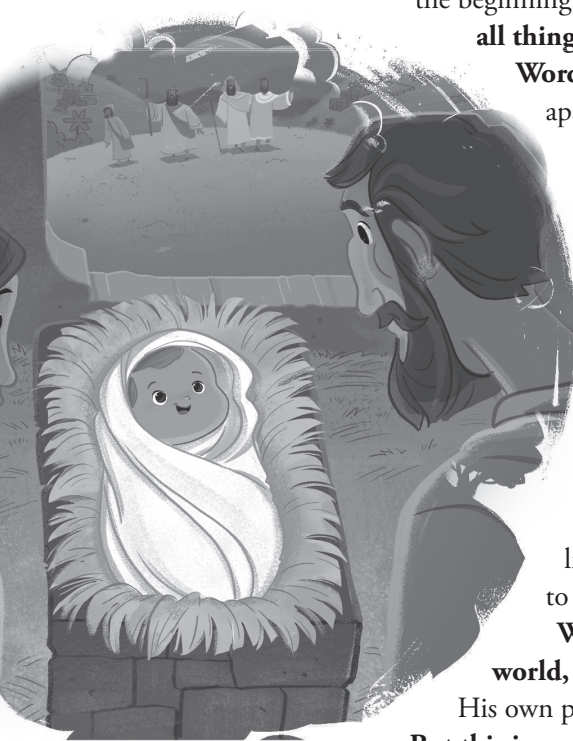
The Word brought life into the world and light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness could not hide it.

God sent a man named John the Baptist to be a witness to the light. John was not the light, but he came to tell people about the light so they might believe. The true light was coming into the world to give light to everyone.

When Jesus came into the world, people did not recognize Him. His own people did not accept Him.

But this is good news: to everyone who did accept Him, He gave them the right to be part of God's family—to be children of God.

The Word became a human and lived among us. People saw His glory—the glory of the one and only Son of God. He was full of grace



and truth. **John the Baptist told people that even though Jesus came into the world after him, Jesus is greater because He existed before John.** People received blessings from Jesus, grace upon grace. Long ago, God gave people the law through Moses, but now He has given us grace and truth through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God, but Jesus—God’s one and only Son—has shown us what God is like.

Christ Connection: The birth of Jesus was good news! Jesus was no ordinary baby. He was God’s Son, sent to earth from heaven. Jesus came into the world as a human to bring us life. He brought light into darkness and showed us what God is like.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use space:** Start on one side of the room. When you reach the part of the story where Jesus came to earth, move to the opposite side of the room.
- **Use lighting:** Tell the story in a dim room. When you reach the part of the story about Jesus being a light in the world, use lighting effects to brighten the stage.

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Born

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 1

STORY POINT: Jesus came to bring us life.

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Peter 1:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

Countdown

- countdown video

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

- leader attire

Introduce the session (2 min.)

[*Chief Richards is on the phone when Samuels rushes in looking worried.*]

RICHARDS • Uh huh, thank you. That's great news! Thank you so much! [*hangs up and sighs relief*]

SAMUELS • Was that the hospital?

RICHARDS • I was just hanging up with Erica Wilson's husband. He says Erica just woke up and is alert and talking!

SAMUELS • Wow! That's amazing! I'm so happy to hear that. This week was so hard as we waited to hear any news.

RICHARDS • I know. I've been praying and hoping. But God answered our prayers. It's been really gloomy since her accident. But now that we know Eric's is going to be okay, I feel like the darkness has lifted. It's like a bright light is shining down!

SAMUELS • I know what you mean. She has another chance at life! I'm reminded of the time when the good news was given that Jesus came to earth. John wrote all

about it. He wanted to tell the world that a bright light was shining in the darkness. That light was Jesus. And we're going to be learning all about it this week.

RICHARDS • Did you know in all our sadness about Erica, the topic of this week's story was the one thing that has given me hope? And now that we know she's going to be alright, it makes this week's story so much clearer. Is it okay if we dive in now? I feel like I can't wait to hear the good news of the gospel all over again!

SAMUELS • I totally agree. I'm so happy and relieved with the news about Erica. But hearing about the good news of Jesus' birth is the best news of all!

Big picture question (1 min.)

RICHARDS • *How does the Holy Spirit help Christians?*

The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory. Before the Holy Spirit came, Jesus had to come. Jesus' light shines in the darkness. Jesus gives new life when people trust Him to be their Savior.

SAMUELS • God gives the Holy Spirit to everyone who believes in Jesus. They are given power to live a life that pleases God. This is what brings God glory. The Holy Spirit lets Christians know when they have sinned. And because Jesus shows us what God is like, Christians know how to live a life pleasing to him.

Giant timeline (1 min.)

RICHARDS • **God kept His promise to send the Holy Spirit** to Christians. This was important because

• Big Picture Question
Poster

• Giant Timeline

Jesus gave His followers the work of sharing the good news of the gospel. With the Holy Spirit's help, Jesus' disciples could obey His command to do just that.

The Holy Spirit gave Peter power to heal a man.

The religious leaders tried to stop Jesus' followers from spreading the gospel but Peter and the other disciples refused to stop telling others the good news about Jesus. This good news is the power of salvation!

SAMUELS • The gospel is good news because Jesus came to bring us life. God sent His Son to earth to bring light into the darkness and show us what God is like. We'll hear more about when Jesus came to earth soon.

Tell the Bible story (10 min.)

Open your Bible to John 1. Use the Bible storytelling tips provided with the Bible story script to help you tell the story, or watch the Bible story video "Jesus Was Born."

SAMUELS • There are so many fun ways to announce the birth of a baby. From pink or blue cupcakes to confetti or extravagant announcements involving cute animals, the news of a baby's birth never gets old. When Jesus came to earth as a human baby, God had the greatest birth announcement ever.

RICHARDS • John wrote to tell people who Jesus is. He explained that Jesus is the Word of God. The Word existed since the beginning! The Word became flesh and lived among us. People were able to see God's glory because Jesus showed them what God is like.

SAMUELS • Even though no one has seen the Father, we can look at Jesus and see what God is like. But some people didn't recognize Jesus as the Son of God when

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- "Jesus Was Born" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Main Point Poster

He came to earth. That still happens today. There are people who simply can't understand how God could come to earth. Other times, people refuse to believe Jesus is God's Son. **Jesus came to give us life.**

RICHARDS • We can share this good news of the gospel with those who don't believe. We can tell them the good news John shared when he said everyone who accepts Jesus will have the right to become children of God. They can be a part of God's family.

SAMUELS • If you have had difficulty believing Jesus is God, I encourage you to listen to John's words. The Word – Jesus – brought life into the world for all people. Jesus is the light of the world. He can show you what God is like. I pray you will have faith and believe!

Christ Connection

RICHARDS • The birth of Jesus was good news! Jesus was no ordinary baby. He was God's Son, sent to earth from heaven. Jesus came into the world as a human being to bring us life. He brought light into darkness and showed us what God is like.

SAMUELS • God the Son has always existed, even before time began. Jesus entered into the world to defeat sin and give people a chance to begin a new life with Him. This is the gospel! It is the very good news of Jesus Christ! Because of Jesus, we can now have a relationship with God. Jesus was born as a baby so that He could later die as a man. If Jesus never came into the world, we wouldn't be able to celebrate the gift of salvation He has brought.

Tip: Consider using your Bible and the gospel poster provided to explain to kids how to become a Christian. Anytime you invite kids to respond in a large group setting, make sure you have counselors available to speak with kids individually to answer questions.

- small print Bible
- magnifying glass

Group demonstration (5 min.)

Select one volunteer to come to the front to read John 1:1 from a small print Bible. Have the volunteer stand a foot or two away from the leader as the teacher holds the Bible up for her. Next, give the volunteer a magnifying glass and allow them to read John 1:1 again.

RICHARDS • What was it like when you attempted to read John 1:1 the first time? (wait for response) What was it like after you used the magnifying glass? (wait for response) What was different? Could you see the words more clearly?

SAMUELS • Though it was difficult to clearly see the words the first time, the truth on the pages never changed.

RICHARDS • Jesus has always been God. This truth has never changed. The religious leaders didn't recognize Him. It was difficult for them to see Jesus as God. In his letter, John wrote that Jesus has always existed. John told the world that before time began, Jesus has always been. In this demonstration, you needed the magnifying glass to see the words clearly. Using it made them come into focus. The message in the print has never changed. In the same way, when we look at Jesus, He shines his light so people can see God clearly. No one has ever seen God, but Jesus shows us what God is like. He is the unchanging, everlasting Word of God! If you want to see God, look to Jesus!

Review (4 min.)

SAMUELS • Let's review what we learned from our story.

1. Who wrote that Jesus is the Word? (*John, John 1:1, 17*)

2. What did John come to do? (*John came as a witness to testify about the light, John 1:7*)
3. How did Jesus' own people treat Him when He came into the world? (*His own people did not receive Him, John 1:11*)
4. What did the Word do? (*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, John 1:14*)
5. What does this story teach me about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, or the gospel?
6. What does this story teach me about myself?
7. Are there any commands in this story to obey?
How are they for God's glory and my good?
8. Are there any promises in this story to remember?
How do they help me trust and love God?
9. How does this story help me live on mission better?

Key passage (5 min.)

SAMUELS • Because of Jesus, we have everything we need to live in a way that is pleasing to God. This is because we have the Holy Spirit's power working inside us.

RICHARDS • Jesus gave His followers a command to share the gospel before going to heaven. He wanted everyone to know and follow God. God sent believers the Holy Spirit to make it possible for us to do this. He has given believers power and everything we need for this life. What's more, believers are able to bring God glory when we obey Jesus' command.

Read 2 Peter 1:3 and encourage the kids to read along in their Bibles. Display the key passage poster for kids to read. You may also sing "Life and Godliness (2 Peter 1:3)."

• Key Passage Poster
• "Life and Godliness (2 Peter 1:3)" song

- doll
- receiving blanket
- baby bottle

Group game (5–10 min.)

BABYSITTERS

Form teams with three players each. Teams will stand in an assembly line. Be sure space is left between each player. When you say “go,” the first player must swaddle the doll. He will pass the baby to the next player who will mime feeding the doll using the bottle. He will count out loud to 10 before passing the baby to his teammate. The last teammate will burp the baby for a count of 10 before walking the doll slowly across the finish line, as though trying to move the doll without waking it. The first team to finish wins. Play as many rounds as time will allow.

SAMUELS • Jesus is God. However, He came to earth and was born as a human baby. That means Jesus needed to be swaddled, fed, and burped like any other baby! Jesus did not stay a baby, though. Jesus grew up and lived a perfect life. Then He died on the cross for our sins.

Sing and give offering (3–12 min.)

- “This Is Where the Mission Begins” song and other songs of your choice

RICHARDS • Jesus is God! He became flesh and lived with us. He came to die for our sins so now we can live with God forever! Our mission is to tell the world about Jesus.

Sing “This Is Where the Mission Begins,” choose from the songs provided this quarter, or sing other songs as time allows.

- “Lottie Moon Photos” printable
- “Lottie Moon Fact Strips” printable (optional; see Unit 28 Session 2)



Missions moment (6 min.)

Show the pictures from the “Lottie Moon Photos” printable. You may choose to review the facts from the printable used in Unit 28 Session 2 Missions Moment.

LEADER • Lottie Moon lived over 100 years ago. These pictures of her can help us remember her and the work she did for Jesus. Lottie died on Christmas Eve in 1912 after serving in China for 39 years. She knew that **Jesus came to give us life** and she wanted the people of China to have the eternal life that Jesus offers.

Announcements (2 min.)

SAMUELS • As soon as my shift is over, I'm going to head down to the hospital. I can't wait to see Erica for myself. I'm thrilled that she is healing well!

RICHARDS • And I'm thrilled too. You should encourage Erica with the great news of Jesus' birth we discussed today. Let's remember and celebrate this good news as we turn now to hear this week's announcements.

Make any announcements from your kids' ministry.

Prayer (2 min.)

RICHARDS • Thank You Jesus for loving the world and being born. You became flesh and lived with us. Your light shines in the darkness of this world. Thank You for being our light! Thank You for helping us know more about what God is like when we look at You! Amen.

Additional idea

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Clear a space of obstacles and dim the lights. Select one child to be *It*. *It* will move about the room attempting to tag other players. Players must freeze when tagged. Select another child to be the *light*. The *light* will have a flashlight

• flashlight

Tip: Encourage kids to walk to avoid falling or collision injuries in the dim room.

which she may use to unfreeze players by shining it at their feet.

SAMUELS • John wrote to tell the world who Jesus is. He wrote that Jesus existed in the beginning, even before the world began. The Word has always existed with God. When Jesus came into the world, John wrote that the Word became flesh. He said the Word brought life into the world and light for all people. Without Jesus, this world is dark. Jesus is the light and the light shines in the darkness! That game should have helped remind you that Jesus is the light of the world. His light shines into the darkness! We can share this good news and tell the world about our great Light and Savior, Jesus Christ!

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.