



Use Week of:

## Unit 19 • Session 3

# Jesus Was Born

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

Luke 2

### STORY POINT:

Jesus was born to be God's promised Savior.

### KEY PASSAGE:

John 1:1-2

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.

**INTRODUCE THE STORY**  
(10–15 MINUTES)

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**TEACH THE STORY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)

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**APPLY THE STORY**  
(25–30 MINUTES)

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Additional resources are available at [gospelproject.com](http://gospelproject.com). For free training and session-by-session help, visit [Ministrygrid.com/the-gospel-project](http://Ministrygrid.com/the-gospel-project).

## LEADER Bible Study

After the angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah and predicted the birth of John—the forerunner of the Messiah—he appeared to Mary and predicted that she too would have a baby. This baby would be named Jesus, and He would be God’s Son. “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High ... His kingdom will have no end,” Gabriel said. (See Luke 1:32-33.) Mary visited Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John. Inside the womb, John leaped for joy in the presence of Mary’s unborn baby.

Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth. When Caesar Augustus called for a census, they traveled to Bethlehem—the very place the Messiah was prophesied to be born. (Micah 5:2) There, in a stable, God the Son entered the world as a baby.

Imagine the shepherds’ surprise when an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared. The Bible says that they were terrified! But the angel brought them good news: “Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord” (Luke 2:11). This Savior—the long-awaited deliverer and redeemer—had come.

Not only did Jesus come into the world as the Savior, He came as our King. Some time after Jesus’ birth, wise men came to worship Jesus. They brought Him gifts suitable for a king—gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Jesus is the King who will rule forever, just as God promised King David. (See 2 Sam. 7.)

When you share this story with kids, remind them that Jesus came because we needed Him. The purpose of Jesus’ birth was twofold: to bring glory to God and to make peace between God and those who trust in Jesus’ death and resurrection. Celebrating the birth of Jesus is about rejoicing over the greatest gift we could ever receive. God’s own Son came to earth to be our Savior and our King.

# The BIBLE Story

## Jesus Was Born

*Luke 2*

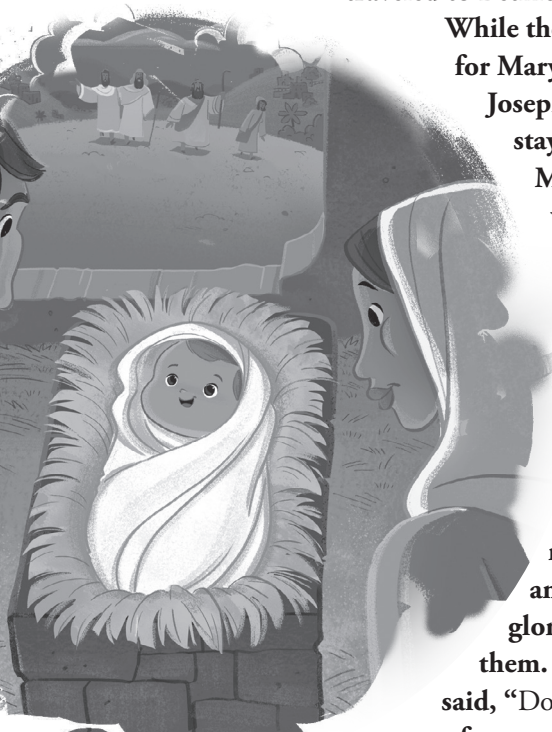
Mary and Joseph lived in the town of Nazareth. During the time Mary was pregnant, the Roman emperor, Caesar Augustus, announced that everyone needed to be registered for a census.

Since Joseph was a descendant of King David, he and Mary traveled to Bethlehem, the city of David.

While they were there, the time came for Mary 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 Him Jesus. Mary wrapped the baby tightly in cloth and laid Him in a feeding trough.

That night, some shepherds were watching over their sheep in the fields near Bethlehem. Suddenly, an angel stood before them and the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terrified! The angel said, “Don’t be afraid! I have very good news for you and for all the people: Today a Savior, who is the Messiah and the Lord, was born for you in the city of David.” Then the angel said, “You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly, a whole army of angels appeared, praising God and



saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people He favors!”

When the angels left and returned to heaven, **the shepherds** decided to go see if the angel’s words were true. They **hurried to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the baby, who was lying in the feeding trough. Then the shepherds went and told others about the baby Jesus.** Everyone who heard about Jesus was surprised and amazed. Mary thought about everything that was happening and tried to understand it. **The shepherds returned to their fields, praising God because everything had happened just as the angel said.**

*Christ Connection: The birth of Jesus was good news! Jesus was not an ordinary baby. He is God’s Son, sent to earth from heaven. Jesus, the promised Savior, came into the world to deliver us from sin and death.*

### **Bible Storytelling Tips**

- **Use props:** As you tell the story, display a nativity scene. Allow kids to move the pieces around as you tell the story.
- **Adjust lighting:** Dim the lights to simulate a nighttime setting. Shine a bright light when describing the angel’s appearance.

# INTRODUCE the Story



**SESSION TITLE:** Jesus Was Born

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Luke 2

**STORY POINT:** Jesus was born to be God's promised Savior.

**KEY PASSAGE:** John 1:1-2

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.

## Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to discuss a time they made and kept a promise.

**SAY** • When we want someone to trust us, we might say that we promise to do something. Although we cannot perfectly keep every promise we might make, God can. He promised to send a Rescuer, and that's exactly what He did. Today we will learn about when Jesus was born.

## Activity page (5 minutes)

- "Not Like the Others" activity page.
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the "Not Like the Others" activity page. Kids will examine each set of three pictures and circle the item that does not belong in the set.

**SAY** • In that last set of pictures, it might have seemed the crown did not belong, but in a way, it could have. Jesus is the King of kings, and Jesus was born in a place where animals such as donkeys or cows are kept. So in a way, a donkey, a cow, and a crown do go together.

## Session starter (10 minutes)

### OPTION 1: Christmas charades

Invite the kids to take turns acting out something they associate with Christmas, such as twinkling lights, snow, cookies, or presents. Challenge the other kids to guess what the volunteer is acting out.

**SAY** • It might seem odd that we are acting out Christmasy things, but it's because today we are learning about Jesus' birth! **Jesus was born to be God's promised Savior.** We usually celebrate Jesus' birth in December at Christmastime, but there's no wrong time to celebrate God's faithfulness to send a perfect Savior to rescue us from sin.

### OPTION 2: Promises, promises

Instruct the kids to stand in a circle. Select a kid to start the game by saying "I promise I can ...," finishing the statement with a cool or unexpected action. Call on other kids to vote whether they think the kid can do it or not. If any kids think he cannot do what he promised, he must either prove he can do it, or sit out. If he can do it, the kids who challenged him must sit out.

**SAY** • That was a fun game, but some of you bluffed! You said you could do something you could not. God always tells the truth. He is always faithful and keeps all His promises. He promised to send a Rescuer, and today we will learn about how He did so.

**LOW  
PREP**

Tip: Guide kids away from secular or fantasy themed Christmas traditions.

## Transition to teach the story

# TEACH the Story



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**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.

## Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

## Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

• camera on a strap

*[Leader enters wearing casual clothing and carrying a camera on a strap.]*

**LEADER** • Hey there, friends! I'm glad you could make it today. Last week I had a photo shoot to get some baby pictures for a friend of mine. Her baby is the cutest little girl, but I had trouble getting her to smile for the camera.

Well, this week, I promised I would try again, and in a few hours, I'm going to keep that promise. My friend and her baby girl are coming back in for round two. As I understand it, she's in a much better mood today, so I think we will get some good photographs.

It's a bit of a bummer that the baby isn't old enough to understand English yet; I have been reading about the birth of Jesus, and I think the story of the first Christmas is so joyful, anyone who

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

understands it can't help but smile when thinking about it! In fact, let's see if that theory holds up. I want to tell you the story of Jesus' birth, and you let me know if it makes you want to smile.

### **Big picture question (1 minute)**

**LEADER** • As we get into Jesus' birth, it's important to remember that Jesus' life as a human had a definite starting point when Mary became pregnant with Him. Even so, God the Son has always existed—since even before the creation of the world. That brings us to our big picture question and answer these last few weeks. ***Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.***

Jesus completely understands our feelings, thoughts, and temptations, because He has lived as a human. He also has all power and majesty and is worthy of all praise because He is God's Son.

### **Giant timeline (1 minute)**

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. •Giant Timeline

**LEADER** • Two weeks ago, we learned that **Jesus' family line proved He is the Messiah**. God had promised to send a Rescuer through Abraham's family to be born into David's family as an eternal King. Last week, we learned about the birth of John, whom God used to fulfill Malachi's prophecy that a messenger would come before the Messiah. **John was born to prepare the way for Jesus**. This week, we will learn why Jesus was born as a human.



- Bibles
- “Jesus Was Born” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Story Point Poster

## Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 2. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Was Born.”

**LEADER** • God always proves Himself faithful. Time and time again, God told His people that the Messiah was coming. Despite their continued sin and inability to obey, God remained faithful and kept His promise to send Jesus.

Despite our inability to ever earn God’s love, He still loves us. God would have been justified and righteous to choose not to save people lost in sin, but instead He chose to send His only Son to become a human like us. Jesus is the King of kings, but He came to earth as a humble baby to ordinary people, and He was visited by lowly shepherds.

Everything about this story seems backwards from what people might have expected. A king born in a manger? The Creator and King of the universe in a helpless human body? *Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.* God’s faithfulness does not have to meet our expectations, and it is always much better than we could imagine. Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve. **Jesus was born to be God’s promised Savior.**

## Christ connection

**LEADER** • The birth of Jesus was good news! Jesus was not an ordinary baby. He is God’s Son, sent to earth from heaven. Jesus, the promised Savior, came into the world to deliver us from sin and death. Although

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

He is fully God, the Bible tells us that He humbled Himself to become fully human. He humbled Himself not just to become human, but to die the death we deserved. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sins and gives us eternal life with Him.

### Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 19, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about how we know Jesus is God’s Son. Guide them to discuss whom they can tell about Jesus, God’s Son.

• “Unit 19, Session 3”  
Questions from Kids  
video



### Missions moment (3 minutes)

Display the “Brazilian Flag” printable and distribute copies of the “Brazil Facts” printable to four volunteers. Instruct them to take turns reading the facts, pausing when they get to the blank so kids can call out the word they think fits in the blank.

• “Brazilian Flag”  
printable  
• “Brazil Facts”  
printable

#### **LEADER • Jesus was born to be God’s promised Savior.**

That’s what missionaries want people all over the world to know. The Bible teaches us that we should go and tell all people about the Savior. That’s why missionaries go to places like Brazil.

Pray for missionaries in Brazil or the missionaries your church supports.

### Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 1:1-2. Sing the key passage song.

• Key Passage Poster  
• “The Word Was God  
(John 1:1-2)” song

**LEADER •** Jesus’ life as a human started when the Holy Spirit put Jesus in Mary’s womb, but God the Son has always existed. Our key passage helps us

understand that Jesus—the Word—is God the Son and was with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit all along, even in the very beginning.

### **Sing (4 minutes)**

• “Take It to the Lord”  
song

**LEADER** • Jesus completely understands our struggles and gives us the power to love and obey God. He is the best friend we could ever have.

Sing together “Take It to the Lord.”

### **Pray (2 minutes)**

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

**LEADER** • Father, thank You for sending Jesus. We know that we do not deserve Him. Thank You that Jesus humbled Himself to be born as a human and even to die as we deserve to die. Help us honor You and obey You out of love each day. Amen.

### **Dismiss to apply the story**

## 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.

# APPLY the Story



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**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.

## Key passage activity (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster

Lead the kids to say the key passage with you a few times. Then cover or hide any posters displaying the verses and say them again, skipping a single word and replacing it with a clap. Ask the kids which word you skipped. Then say the passage and replace two words with claps. Provide an opportunity for kids to supply the missing words. Continue in this way until you clap the entire key passage and kids say it from memory.

**SAY** • Our key passage comes from the Book of John. John explained that the Word was with God and was God. This helps us understand that Jesus is God the Son, and He has always existed with God the Father. Even though Jesus' life as a human had a definite beginning, Jesus has no beginning and no end.

## Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

• Bibles, 1 per kid  
• Story Point Poster  
• Small Group Timeline and Map Set  
(005802970, optional)

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Luke 2. Ask the kids which division Luke is in. (*New Testament, Gospels*) Ask them to name the other three books in this division. (*Matthew, Mark, John*) Remind the kids that the Gospels tell of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Why did Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem? (*to be registered in the census, Luke 2:1-5*)
2. Why was Jesus laid in a manger? (*There was no guest room available, Luke 2:7*)
3. Who were Jesus' first visitors? (*shepherds, Luke 2:8,16*)
4. Why is Jesus' birth so incredible? *Guide kids to discuss both the unusual circumstances of Jesus' arrival—such as the angel choirs proclaiming His birth—and the miraculous nature of Jesus' full divinity being wrapped in full humanity. Remind kids that Jesus the Messiah had been promised to come for thousands of years, and God is faithful.*
5. Why is it important that Jesus came as a human baby? *Help kids understand that God's plan to destroy sin required a perfect sacrifice. Jesus' birth as a human meant that He could grow up and lay down His life for us. He could live the perfect human life we are unable to live and die the kind of death we deserve. Jesus' full humanity is why He could die to save humans.*
6. Why is it important that Jesus remained God? *Explain that Jesus' nature as fully God is what allowed Him to bear the weight of God's punishment for sin in a human body. The complete power of God in Jesus also gave Him the power to reject temptation and live a perfectly sinless life.*

**SAY • Jesus was born to be God's promised Savior.** He was born fully human and did not stop being fully God. Jesus is the only Savior; no one is like Him. Jesus grew up, never sinned, and died for our sin. On the third day, He rose again to defeat sin and death.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

## Activity choice (10 minutes)

- various beads
- colored string or yarn
- scissors

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment found in Teach the Story.



### OPTION 1: Beaded jewelry

Invite kids to make beaded bracelets or necklaces. Cut a length of string or yarn for each kid, about 5 inches for a bracelet, or 12 for a necklace. Let kids choose from a variety of beads to make their own pattern or design. Direct them to string their beads. Help them tie knots to finish the necklaces and bracelets.

Encourage kids to give the jewelry they made to others and tell those people about Jesus. If possible, allow them to make a second piece of jewelry to keep. As they work, remind them of missionaries in Brazil who tell artists and craftsmen about Jesus.

**SAY** • Arts and crafts are very popular in Brazil. Many artists enjoy painting, making things out of clay, weaving baskets, and making colorful jewelry. Beaded jewelry is common and is often sold in markets. A great way to live on mission is to use your artistic talents to glorify God and tell others about Jesus. You can do that right in your own hometown, too!

### OPTION 2: The minute game

Gather the kids together and instruct them to stand up. Challenge them to sit down when they think exactly one minute has elapsed. Use a stopwatch and keep track of who sits closest to a minute without going over. Play additional rounds using different lengths of time.

**SAY** • In that game, we didn't know exactly when a minute would be up, but we had the ability to count seconds to try and come close. Waiting for something can be especially hard if you don't know when it will happen.

**LOW  
PREP**

· stopwatch

Imagine God's people, who had been waiting for thousands of years. They did not know exactly when the Messiah would come, but they knew God would be faithful. When Jesus was born, it was somewhat unexpected. If it hadn't been for the angels proclaiming the news to shepherds, only Mary and Joseph would have even known the Messiah was there! But all that waiting was worth it when **Jesus was born to be God's promised Savior.**

### **Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)**

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- paper
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

*Tip: Give parents this week's Big Picture Cards for Families to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.*