

The Christmas Promise

Reflect on the Word

BIBLE STORY

Jesus Is Coming!
Luke 1:26-38

BIBLE TRUTH

Jesus is God's Son.

This lesson will help preschoolers know God promised to send His Son, Jesus and look forward to Christmas because they can celebrate Jesus' birthday.

This lesson will help kindergartners thank God for the gift of Jesus, God's Son.

VERSE-A-MONTH

"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son"
(John 3:16).

LESSON HELPS

HELPING HAND
 Tips for teachers.

DIGGING DEEPER

Important biblical and theological insights.

Faith Words

Foundational words of the faith.

Look for and encourage excitement in your preschoolers as Christmas draws near.

Be a model of thankfulness during this Christmas season. Children learn by example, and they rarely see this attitude in our culture.

In the popular mind-set of the first century, the Messiah would be a powerful political ruler who would overthrow Israel's oppressors. He would lead a military revolt that would establish Israel forever, judge the wicked, and declare peace for Israel. Every woman knew that Israel would certainly honor the woman who birthed the Messiah.

The Messiah whom God provided was not what people expected. Rather than receive honor, Mary was mistreated for being an unwed mother. Her betrothed nearly divorced her because he believed her to be unfaithful. She later watched as her son, rather than

defeat the oppressors, died on one of their crosses.

Jesus was not who the Jewish people expected. He was not a military leader. Rather than judge the wicked, He ate with them in their homes. Instead of destroying the Roman oppressors, He healed members of their household. Then, to top it all off, Jesus died on a Roman cross rather than set up a kingdom.

There are times in every person's life when he or she receives what is needed rather than what is wanted. The people wanted someone to defeat the Roman government, judge the wicked, and bring the kingdom of God on earth for their time. Jesus was not what they wanted, but He was what everyone needed.

Jesus is still what every person needs. Jesus is the fulfillment of God's greatest promise. God promised to rescue fallen humanity. While Jesus did not bring an earthly kingdom, He did bring God's spiritual kingdom to earth. People can experience the kingdom of God (His forgiveness, healing, and empowerment) here in this life because Jesus brought the kingdom of God with Him.

Christmas is a perfect day for giving each other gifts. We must be careful that giving gifts does not become the primary focus. But what better occasion to give gifts than the day when God gave His greatest gift to us?

BASIC LESSON PLANNER

1. Choose preschool or kindergarten. Check the appropriate box.
2. Go step-by-step through each section of the lesson. A=3 steps. B=3 steps. C=3 steps.
3. If you would like additional lesson options, turn to pages 10 and 11.
4. Look at each activity to find needed supplies.

Activity Category	Activity	Preschool (P)	Kindergarten (K)	Resources
Attention Getters	1-Remembering Who Christmas Is About	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources, Item 2
	2-Say and Sign Bible Verse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources, Item 1
	3-The Greatest Gift	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bible Explorations	1-Bible Story Transition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources, Item 3A
	2-Tell the Bible Story	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources, Items 3A and 3C
	3-Bible Story Review Questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Connections To Life	1-Preschool Connections Sheets 1/1b	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Preschool Connections, Sheet 1/1b
	1-Kindergarten Connections Sheet 3/3b	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kindergarten Connections, Sheet 3/3b & sticker from center insert
	2-Pudding Paint Promises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	3-Connecting with God Through Prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Remembering Who Christmas Is About **5 MIN.**

Before class, Punch out the six pictures and the bulletin board title from Item 2. Cover the bulletin board with paper and add an attractive border. Place the title at the top.

In class, Hold up the picture of the child who is distracted by decorations and candy (fig. 1). Say, **What is this child doing? Do you think this child knows what Christmas is about? Do you know what Christmas is about? Let's help this child to learn who Christmas is about.** Put the picture on the bulletin board.

Preschool option, Point to the picture of the distracted child. Say, **This child has candy and decorations. But there's more to Christmas than candy and lights. Christmas is the time we celebrate Jesus' birthday.**

Kindergarten option, Say, **What is your favorite part of Christmas?** Help children remember that Christmas is a time to celebrate Jesus' birth. Say, **Jesus is the most wonderful gift of all!**

Say and Sign Bible Verse **5 MIN.**

Before class, Hang the poster on the wall.

In class, Refer to the poster and read the Bible verse aloud doing the sign language for the children. Repeat the verse several times and ask the class to join you as you say and sign the verse.

Preschool option, Teach the children the Bible verse by having the children repeat after you a few words at a time. Say, **Who loves the world? God wants you to know that He loves you very much.**

Kindergarten option, Say the verse several times without signing. Add signs one at a time as you say the verse together. Say, **God wants you to know that He loves you very much. Let's find out more about God's amazing love.**

The Greatest Gift **5 MIN.**

Before class, Place a light, nonbreakable item in the shoe box. Wrap the shoe box with festive Christmas paper.

In class, Pass the box around so each child has an opportunity to hold (but not open) the box. Say, **We celebrate Christmas because God gave us a very special gift. What do you think that gift is?**

Preschool option, As the children pass around the box, say, **At Christmastime, we give gifts to show others love. God gave all people a very special gift because He loves us. Let's listen to today's Bible story to find out about God's special gift.**

Kindergarten option, Have children pass the present around the circle as you play a Christmas song on the CD player. Instruct children that they should stop passing the present when the music stops. Ask the child holding the gift, **What is the best Christmas gift you can imagine?** Stop the music strategically to allow each child to have a turn. **At Christmastime, we give gifts to show love. God gave all people a very special gift because He loves us. Let's listen to today's Bible story to find out about God's special gift.**

You'll need

- Resources, Item 2
- Red or Green paper and border
- Scissors
- Stapler, Plasti-Tak, or removable tape

Attention Getters

15 MIN.



As children arrive, allow them to do activity centers as suggested in the unit pages. When you are ready to begin, do the three *Attention Getters* activities on this page before moving to *Bible Explorations*. Each *Attention Getters* activity can be used with preschoolers or kindergartners.



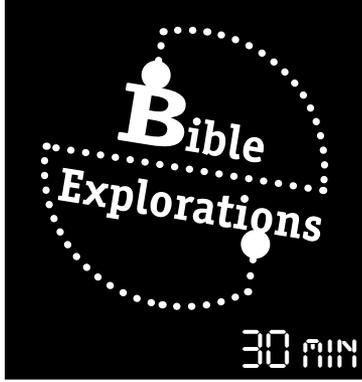
You'll need

- Resources, Item 1

You'll need

- Empty shoe box
- Christmas wrapping paper, ribbon, bow
- Light, nonbreakable item, such as a stuffed animal
- CD player with Christmas music

Go to page 10 for additional *Attention Getters* options.



Transition children to the Bible story time, tell the Bible story, and ask the review questions. If needed, retell the Bible story to children for understanding.

Faith Words

Christmas: *Christmas* is a special time when Christians celebrate the birthday of Jesus, God's Son.



Kindergartners ONLY!

Photocopy onto colored paper and cut out the **Faith Word** card for **Christmas** from page 88 and the kindergarten sight word **news**, from page 89. Invite two kindergartners to hold these word cards during the Bible story. When **Christmas** is said in the story, the child holds up the word card and the kindergartners repeat, **Christmas**. Each time you read the sight word, stop and have the children read it along with you.

Go to page 10 for an optional Bible story activity.

Preschool Bible Story Transition **5 MIN.**

Before class, Punch out figures 1 and 2. Bend the tabs so the figures can stand unsupported.

In class, Say, **This is Mary (fig. 1). This is Gabriel (fig. 2). Gabriel is an angel. God sent Gabriel to tell Mary**

some important news. Let's listen to find out what the important news was.

You'll need

- Resources, Item 3A

Kindergarten Bible Story Transition **5 MIN.**

In class, Say, **This is Mary (fig. 1). This is Gabriel (fig. 2). God sent the angel, Gabriel, to give Mary a message. God's message was a promise to show how much He loves the world. Let's listen to find out what the**

important promise was. Choose volunteers to hold up the two word cards.

You'll need

- Resources, Items 3A
- **Faith Word** card **Christmas**
- Kindergarten Sight Word card **news**

Tell the Bible Story **20 MIN.**

JESUS IS COMING!, (*Stand Item 3C on a table top.*) Gabriel came to Mary to give her a message from God. (*Add figs. 1 and 2.*)

You'll need

- Resources, Items 3A & 3C
- **Faith Word** card **Christmas**
- Kindergarten Sight Word card **news**

God had important **news** for Mary. God sent an angel named Gabriel to tell Mary the important **news**. Gabriel went to her and said, "Greetings, you are very special! The Lord is with you."

This made Mary worried. She wondered what the angel meant. The angel said to her, "Do not

be afraid, Mary. I have some good **news** for you. You have been chosen by God. You will have a baby boy. This baby is God's Son! You should name this special baby Jesus. Jesus will be great. Some people will call Jesus the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will make Him the King over everything, His kingdom will never end. This is God's promise to you, Mary."

"How can this be?" Mary asked the angel.

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you. God will be near you. Your baby will be called the Son of God."

The angel continued, "Do you remember your cousin, Elizabeth? Everyone thought she was too old to have a baby, but she is going to have one very soon! She is pregnant now. Nothing is impossible with God."

Mary answered, "This is good **news**. I love God and I will do whatever God asks me to do!" Then the angel left her. (*Remove fig. 1.*)

This is when the first Christmas began.

Bible Story Review Questions **5 MIN.**

Ask Preschoolers,

1. Who was Mary?
2. What did Gabriel tell Mary?
3. What was Mary told to name her baby?

Ask Kindergartners,

1. Who sent the angel Gabriel to Mary?
2. The angel told Mary that Jesus would be the Son of whom?
3. What did Mary tell the angel she would do?

Preschool **OR** Kindergarten
Connections **5 MIN.** **Connections** **5 MIN.**

In class, Punch out the birthday cake on sheet

1. Color the top half of the craft sticks to look like candles. Glue the bottom half of the craft sticks to the back of the cake so candles appear to be sticking out of the cake. Say, **Christmas is the time of year we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Happy Birthday, Jesus!**

You'll need

- *Connections*, Sheet 1
- Glue stick
- Craft sticks
- Crayons

In class, Give each child Sheet 3. Have children fold the sheet in half so the wrapping paper is on the front and the name is on the back of the card. Color and decorate the card. Say, **God wants us to know how much He loves us. Jesus is His gift of love to the world!** Hand out stickers of Baby Jesus to the children and show them where to put the sticker. Say, **Jesus is God's gift to you!**

You'll need

- *Connections*, Sheet 3
- Sticker from center insert
- Crayons
- Glitter-glue, stickers, ribbon, other decorations, opt.

Pudding Paint Promises **5 MIN.**

Before class, Prepare the vanilla instant pudding according to directions. Separate the pudding into small Ziploc bags. Add several drops of food coloring to bag and mix up to create vibrant, colorful finger paints.

In class, Say, **Today we have learned about God's promise to come to earth as a baby. God's promise was a wonderful gift of love.** Give each child a piece of paper. Cut off a small corner of the Ziploc bags and squeeze a little of each color on every child's paper. Say, **Use the finger paints to paint a picture of a gift.**

Preschool option, As children paint, say, **God promised to send the gift of His Son, Jesus.** Help children say, **Thank You, God, for Jesus!**

Kindergarten option, Say, **You can paint a picture of Jesus, a gift, and you can even paint a "J" for Jesus on your paper.** After they've finished painting, they can lick the pudding from their fingers. Say, **Jesus is God's Son. Thank You, God, for sending Jesus!** Lead the children to say together, **Thank You, God, for Jesus!**

Connecting with God Through Prayer **5 MIN.**

In class, Ask children for prayer requests or praises. Write these on index cards and place them in the "Prayer Box." Explain to the children that we can talk with God about anything. God loves us and God promises to be with us.

Pray, **Thank You, God, for Your promise of Jesus. Help us to remember You love us. Amen.**

Kindergarten Enrichment, Go around the room and allow children to pray, "Thank You, God, for Jesus."

You'll need

- "Prayer Box" (shoe box, mailbox, etc.)
- Index cards
- Pen

You'll need

- Vanilla instant pudding
- Food coloring
- White art paper
- Smocks
- Ziploc sandwich bags
- Scissors
- Baby wipes (to clean hands)

Connections To Life

15-20 MIN

Connect this lesson to life for children. Do one activity sheet, one additional activity, and end with a time of prayer.



Sometimes, we are too quick to use the word "Lord" to refer to God or Jesus. In the Early Church, "Lord" referred to the ruler of the land, such as Caesar. This showed who they were loyal to. This "Lord" was who they were faithful to. Be sure not to brush over this word with young children. If you use it, explain what you mean by it. For example, when saying, "Jesus is Lord," define it to mean, "Jesus is our Friend and Savior. He is the One we choose to love and obey. We are faithful to Him in what we do and say."

You'll need

- Take-home items for each child (including *Celebrate*, and unit items)

60-65 MIN.

60-65 min. is your total lesson time. Add or take away activities to adjust your class time.

Go to page 11 for additional *Connections to Life* options.



Snow Angels (P or K)

In class, Have the children lie with their backs on the floor and pretend to make snow angels. Tell the children that angels are messengers from God. They spread blessings, news, and promises from God. Say, **In our story today we will learn about an angel who brought a special promise to a woman named Mary. You can make real snow angels whenever it snows, or you can pretend to make snow angels anytime, just like we did today. But whenever you think about angels, remember God’s promise to send His Son Jesus. God sent Jesus because He loves us very much!**

Play-Doh Promise? (K)

You’ll need

- Play-Doh

In class, Divide the class into two groups. Distribute the Play-Doh. Ask, **What messenger did God send to give Mary a special promise?** (*The angel named Gabriel*) Instruct one group to form a model of what they think the angel Gabriel may have looked like. Ask, **Who did Gabriel promise to send?** (*Baby Jesus*) Instruct the other group to make a representation of Baby Jesus in the manger with the Play-Doh. Say, **Thank You, God, for Your promise of Jesus.**

Bible Story

God Is Love—The Promise of a Savior

Luke 1:26-38

(This story is reminiscent of “The House That Jack Built” in that the story adds and repeats. Each time you get to the line “God is love,” pause and encourage the children to repeat the line with you.)

God is love.

God sent an angel to give Mary a promise because, **God is love.**

The angel told Mary she was going to have a baby, after God sent an angel to give Mary a promise, because **God is love.**

Mary learned her baby would be God’s Son from the angel who told Mary she was going to have a baby, after God sent an angel to give Mary a promise, because **God is love.**

Mary was amazed when Mary learned her baby would be God’s Son from an angel, who told Mary she was going to have a baby, after God sent an angel to give Mary a promise, because **God is love.**

Mary accepted God’s promise as soon as Mary was amazed when Mary learned her baby would be God’s Son, from an angel, who told Mary she was going to have a baby, after God sent an angel to give Mary a promise, because **God is love.**

The angel left Mary once Mary accepted God’s promise, as soon as Mary was amazed, when Mary learned her baby would be God’s Son from an angel, who told Mary she was going to have a baby, after God sent an angel to give Mary a promise, because **God is love.**



“Thank You, God!” Cards (K)

You'll need

- Construction paper
- Crayons or markers
- Marker board or chalk board

Before class, Write the words THANK YOU on the board for the children to copy.

In class, Give each child a piece of construction paper. Say, **Look at the words on the board.**

It says **THANK YOU**. When you receive a gift from someone, it's always polite to write a thank-you card to show that you appreciate the gift. We can make thank-you cards for God to show Him how glad we are that Jesus was born! You can copy the words from the board, or you can draw a picture on your thank-you note to God. After the children finish the thank-you notes, have them cheer together, **THANK YOU, GOD!**

Jesus Gift (K)

Before class, Use strips of wrapping paper to cover the matchbox. Tie the curling ribbon around the box and curl for a bow on top. Leave the ends free to allow the box to slide in and out. (Glue a magnet on the back.) Cut the paper in squares so they can be folded to fit inside the boxes.

In class, Allow the children to color a picture of Baby Jesus on the paper square. Say, **Jesus is the greatest gift ever given. Thank You, God, for the wonderful gift of Jesus.** Children can put their picture of Jesus in the gift box (magnet) to remember that Jesus is a gift. Encourage them to give the gift to someone and share the good news that God sent Jesus to be the Savior for all people.

You'll need

- Small matchboxes, 1 per child (remove the matches)
- Wrapping paper • Scotch tape
- Curling ribbon • Paper • Crayons
- Magnets, 1 per child, opt. • Glue

