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Jesus Is Born!

Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

Theme: God sent His Son as a baby to save the world

1st-3rd Grade (Ages 6-8)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "Jesus Is Born!" (Luke 2:1, 20 | Theme: God sent His Son to save us!) Opening (Engage & Share): Begin with a simple song, story, or puppet show about Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem. Ask: "Who do you think the baby in the manger is?" (Wait for responses, then gently share: "Today we'll learn why God sent Him, He loves us so much!") Keep energy high with gestures (e.g., pretend to hold a baby, cheer like angels). --- Lesson (Explain & Explore): Start with a handprint baby craft (draw a handprint on paper to symbolize Jesus' small but mighty arrival). Explain: "Long ago, God had a special plan, He sent His only Son, Jesus, as a baby to be born in a stable. Mary and Joseph traveled far, and angels appeared to shepherds: 'Don't be afraid! Jesus is here to save you!'" Use the manger to discuss how Jesus was very small but His love was big. Ask: "How can we show others we care, like Jesus did?" (Offer simple ways: sharing, praying, or helping a neighbor.) --- Application (Reflect & Act): End with a "Baby Jesus' Gift" activity: Have kids imagine how they'd show kindness like Jesus (e.g., drawing a card to a family, singing a song). Encourage them: "Jesus' gift was to love us forever, now it's our turn to love others!" Share that they can pray tonight to thank God for Jesus' birth. Leave a small angel candle or star-shaped paper as a reminder to keep trusting in Him. --- Why This Works for Volunteers: - Keep it visual (crafters, puppets, or a live baby doll for Bethlehem scene). - Repeat key messages (e.g., "God loves us" via angel song or shepherds' actions). - End with action, kids leave with a tangible takeaway (craft + prayer prompt) to share at home. Bonus: Play "Joy to the World" on a loop, simple hymns are comforting for little ones!

Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, low-prep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

The Birth of Jesus

Long ago, in a small town called Bethlehem, a very important story began. A man named Joseph and his wife, Mary, were both faithful followers of God. Mary was expecting a baby, but she was also a virgin, a girl who had never had a baby before. The angel Gabriel had told her that the baby would be the Son of God, and she would call him Jesus. Joseph, too, was filled with excitement and worry. He loved Mary and wanted to raise the baby safely.

When Mary's time came, she traveled to Bethlehem with Joseph. Since they were poor, they had to stay in a stable, a place where animals kept their food and rest. There, Mary gave birth to Jesus, who lay in a manger, a feed trough for animals. The night was cold, but Jesus was wrapped in soft cloths, and Mary and Joseph took care of Him. The animals, too, were there, and they were all amazed at what had happened.

Later, three wise men from far away came to see Jesus. They had seen a special star in the sky that led them to Bethlehem. They brought Jesus gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, to show their love and respect. But they didn't know how to find Joseph and Mary at first, so they asked about the baby who would be born King of the Jews.

When the wise men left, God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream. The angel told him to keep Jesus safe from a king who wanted to harm Him. Joseph obeyed and moved his family to a safer place, far away from the king's palace. God was protecting Jesus, just as He always protects His children.

This story tells us that Jesus was born for us. He came to be our Savior, to love and save all people. Just like the animals in the stable, we too can be thankful for His birth and trust Him as our Lord and King. By believing in Him, we can be filled with peace, hope, and love!

Key Verse

Luke 2:11 , 'Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.'

God sent a special baby to help us! This verse tells us that a long time ago, in the city of David, a very special baby was born. His name is Jesus, and He is the Messiah, the one God chose to save us from problems. God knew we needed a friend who could help us feel safe and loved, so He sent Jesus into the world. Jesus wasn't just any baby. He was God's own gift to all people, like a hug from heaven. His coming means we can trust God more, because He loves us even when we make mistakes. The verse says "today," which means His birth happened long ago, but His love is still with us today! How can we remember this? When you feel scared or alone, remember Jesus came to be your friend. You can pray to Him, just like Mary and Joseph did when they met Him. You can also share His good news with others by being kind and helping others, just like Jesus taught us to do. The angels even sang "Good news! A Savior has come!" (That's Luke 2:10, another verse about Jesus!) So every time you do something kind or thank God, you're remembering His big love for you. Would you like to share something you're thankful for today? That's like telling Jesus, "I love you too!"

Activities

Activity 1:

Kids will create a colorful paper star to represent the star that guided the wise men to Jesus' birthplace, then share how they can be "light-bearers" like Jesus.

1. Introduce the Story (2 min): Read Luke 2:10-12 together. Ask, "Who saw the star, and what did it mean?" Let kids share their ideas.
2. Cut and Glue (3 min): Give each child a star cutout. Have them glue a small piece of red paper in the center (for the star's light) and add gold or blue paper around it to make it shimmer.
3. Color and Decorate (4 min): Let kids color their stars with crayons and add glitter if available. Ask them to think of ways they can "shine" like Jesus, like being kind, sharing, or praying.

4. Discuss and Share (2 min): Ask, "How can we be like the star that guides others to Jesus?" Let kids place their stars on a table or board as a reminder to share God's love.

Activity 2:

Kids will act out the night Jesus was born while listening to key details, then play a game to remember the story's main points.

1. Act It Out (5 min): Explain that Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger. Have 3-4 kids pretend to be Mary, Joseph, shepherds, and baby Jesus. Act out the scene step-by-step:
2. "Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem."
3. "They find no room, so they place Jesus in a manger."
4. "Shepherds arrive and see the star!"
5. "The angels sing and tell the good news!"
6. Write the Story (3 min): Before the game, write 3-4 key points on index cards (e.g., "Jesus was born in Bethlehem," "He was in a manger," "Angels sang!"). Hide them around the room.
7. Memory Game (4 min): Kids take turns picking a card and acting out the story part that matches it (e.g., if they pick "Jesus was in a manger," they hold a stuffed animal in a "hay" pile). The group cheers for correct answers!
8. Apply the Lesson (3 min): Ask, "Why is it important that God sent Jesus to be born like this?" Share that Jesus came to be our Savior and friend, just like the angels told the shepherds.
9. Both activities use simple materials, encourage movement and creativity, and help kids connect the story of Jesus' birth to their own lives.

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for early elementary children (ages 6-8) about Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1-20), designed to spark thoughtful responses and connect the story to their lives:
- Imagine you were a baby Jesus!
- In the Bible story, baby Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, a small feeding trough. What do you think it would have been like to be born in such a special place? Why do you think Mary and Joseph were so excited to tell everyone about Jesus? How would you feel if you were told that a baby you loved was the King of all kings? What would be your first thought? Think about how Jesus is different from other babies.
- Why did Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem?
- The Bible says that when Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem, they had no place to stay except in a stable with animals. Why do you think God led them there? What does this tell us about how God sometimes surprises us with big plans? If you had to travel with Mary and Joseph, what would you bring with you? How would you feel if you were told your home was going to be a stable? What can we learn about trusting God when things don't go as expected?
- What happened when Mary and Joseph found Jesus?
- After traveling all night, they searched for Jesus in the temple. Why do you think the shepherds and wise men also came to see him? What made them so special? In our story, shepherds were the first to tell others about Jesus. Who do you think are your "shepherds" today, people who care for you and share good news? How can you tell someone that Jesus is special, like the shepherds did? What can we do to spread God's love, just like the shepherds did?
- How can we be like the shepherds today?
- The shepherds were the first to worship Jesus and tell others about him. If you were a shepherd, how would you show kindness to animals or people? What would make you feel brave enough to share God's love with someone new? The shepherds left their jobs to come to Bethlehem. What is something brave you could do to serve God or

help others this week? What can we learn about being open to God's call in our lives?

- These questions encourage kids to explore emotions, wonder about the world around them, and think about how they can live like Jesus. Would you like any adjustments to better fit your lesson plan?

Prayer Focus

Prayer for Jesus' Birth , A Time of Wonder and Thankfulness Dear God, today we remember how you sent Jesus into our world as a baby in a manger. We know that Jesus was so special because he was born to help all people, just like you love us. Help us to feel excited and thankful for his birth, just like the shepherds and wise men did when they saw the star and heard the angels' good news. We pray that we can be like Mary, who listened carefully and believed in God's amazing plan. Help us to be open to hearing God's love and kindness, just like the shepherds listened to the angels' message. We also want to be like the shepherds, who shared their joy with others. May we tell others about God's love and kindness in our own ways. Dear Jesus, as you grew up, you knew how to be kind, brave, and loving. Help us to be like you every day, always trying to do what's right, even when it's hard. We trust in you, just like the shepherds trusted the angels when they didn't understand everything at first. Help us to believe in you and to share our faith with others. Thank you, God, for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Help us to remember his birth and to live with joy, kindness, and love, just like he did. Amen. --- (This prayer includes simple words, a focus on key characters from Luke 2, and practical ways to apply their examples, listening, sharing joy, and trusting God.)

>> Missions Spotlight

The shepherds were the first to hear about Jesus' birth. Today, nomadic and herding peoples around the world , from the Maasai in East Africa to the Mongolian herders in Central Asia , connect deeply with the shepherd story. The Good Shepherd came for ALL His sheep.

-> To the Cross

Jesus was born in a stable, laid in a feeding trough. The Creator of the universe came as a helpless baby. Why? So He could grow up and go to the cross to save us. The manger and the cross are connected , He was born to die for us.