

The Story of

# CHRISTMAS

Date: 12.15.24 | Title: Jesus and the Shepherds | Scripture: Luke 2:8-21

## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

### Middle School Students

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.

God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.

God wants us to live for His glory.

God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.

Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies and promises.

### High School Students

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.

God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.

God wants us to live for His glory.

God is a righteous judge.

God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.

Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies and promises.

Jesus gave His life for us on the cross and He is the only way for salvation.



MEMORY  
VERSE

"Don't be afraid! I bring you good news that will be great joy to all people. The Savior- yes, the Messiah, the Lord- has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! Luke 2:10-11

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## BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

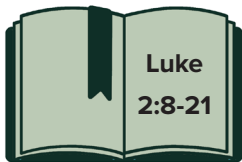
Soon after the birth of Jesus, an angel appeared to shepherds who were out in the nearby fields keeping watch over their flocks. Shepherds were often looked down upon as low-class peasants in Jesus' day. God could have chosen to announce the birth of his Son to someone like the Jewish high priest or the Roman emperor, but He chose humble shepherds. The sight of the angel bathed in God's glory terrified the shepherds. The "glory of the Lord" in this case is a bright light that surrounds the presence of God himself, sometimes it appears as a cloud, sometimes as a bright light or burning fire. The angel tells them not to be afraid. "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people," he says. This good news is the Greek verb form of "Gospel"! He declares that a Savior—the Messiah has been born that day in Bethlehem, King David's ancestral city. These three titles, "Savior", "Christ" and "Messiah" reveal the greatness of Mary's son. The astonishing announcement that this Messiah who has been born as a baby is also the Lord God himself was probably not fully grasped by the shepherds. Luke 2:11 is one of only two places in the Gospels where Christ is referred to as "Savior"- the other being John 4:42 where the men of Sychar confess Him as "Savior of the world".

The shepherds would recognize the Savior by this: They will find a baby wrapped in cloths lying in a manger. Suddenly many more angels appeared- thousands of angels and they were praising God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth to peace to men on whom His favor rests." The angels proclaim the news about Jesus: the eternal, omnipotent Son of God has just taken "the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:7), for "the fullness of time" has now come, and God has "sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law" (Gal. 4:4-5). Jesus is the "Prince of Peace" as prophesied by Isaiah in Isaiah 9:6. God gives the peace of salvation through His Son. (John 14:27).

After the angels leave, the shepherds go into Bethlehem to see the baby. They find Mary and Joseph and Jesus, and they spread the word about what they have heard and seen. Everyone who listens to them is amazed. The shepherds return to the fields praising God just as the angels had done, and Mary treasures these things in her heart. Wonderment at Christ is one of the threads that runs through Luke's gospel (2:19, 33, 47, 48; 1:21, 63; 4:22, 36; 5:9; 8:25; 9:43-45; 11:14; 20:26; 24:12, 41) and Luke often reports how the proper response is praising God (2:28; 1:64; 5:25, 26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15-18; 18:43; 19:37-40; 23:47; 24:52, 53).

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**LOCATE THE SCRIPTURE & TELL THE STORY**



**TELL  
THE  
STORY**



Use the background info for leaders to help tell the story.

**Re-tell the Bible Story:** Have students re-tell the story as best they can.

**Attributes of God:** Determine the characteristics of God that we see in today's story. How can knowing these characteristics of God to be true, change the way we live in Christ?

**Share the GOSPEL:** The "multitude of heavenly hosts" praised God and after finding the baby lying in the manger, the shepherds returned "glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen". These are two wonderful examples of response to the Gospel- the Good News that brings great joy to all people! Today we glorify and praise God for all we have heard and seen! If time allows, listen to Go Tell it on the Mountain by Need to Breathe on the Creek Kids Christmas Spotify Playlist.

Read directly from Scripture, use the message, or the summary provided in the lesson




Put the events in order, draw a comic strip, build it with blocks or playdough, act it out, etc...



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**“Storying” Questions:** As you ask these questions, have your students find the answers in the actual verses of scripture instead of recalling them from your re-telling of the story. We always want to encourage all of our students to go directly to God’s Word over a commentary on or summary of scripture. Use the Bible Study Bookmark Questions as well as these questions to help students understand the text:

1. When Jesus was born, to whom did the angels first announce the good news?
2. What were these shepherds doing?
3. Why was this birth considered “good news”?
4. How did the shepherds respond to the angels’ good news?
5. How did they respond after they saw Jesus?
6. Who did they tell? In what ways is their response a good example for us?
7. How does the story of Jesus’ birth relate to the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? What had God promised after Adam and Eve sinned? In what ways did Jesus fulfill this promise?
8. What does the birth of Jesus show us about God’s faithfulness in keeping His word? What does it show us about His compassion for us?
9. Why did the angels tell the shepherds, “on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased”? What does this mean?
10. How does Jesus bring you peace with God?
11. The shepherds praised God because of the good news they heard and saw. How have you heard or seen the good news of Jesus at work in the hearts of others? What was your response?
12. How does Jesus show us what God is like?
13. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
14. What does this story teach me about myself?
15. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
16. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
17. How does this story help me to live on mission better?

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## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

**ATTENTIVE** - God hears and responds to the needs of his children.

**COMPASSIONATE** - God cares for his children and acts on their behalf.

**CREATOR** - God made everything. He is uncreated.

**DELIVERER** - God rescues and saves his children.

**ETERNAL** - God is not limited by time. He exists outside of time.

**FAITHFUL** - God always keeps his promises.

**GENEROUS** - God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

**GLORIOUS** - God displays His greatness and worth.

**GOOD** - God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

**HOLY** - God is perfect, pure, and without sin.

**IMMUTABLE/UNCHANGING** - God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

**INCOMPREHENSIBLE** - God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

**INFINITE** - God has not limits in His person or on His power.

**JEALOUS** - God will not share his glory with another. all glory rightfully belongs to him.

**JUST** - god is fair in all his actions and judgements. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

**LOVING** - God feels and displays infinite, unconditional affection toward his children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response, or merit.

**MERCIFUL** - God does not give his children the punishment they deserve.

**OMNIPOTENT/ALMIGHTY** - God holds all power. nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.

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## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

**OMNIPRESENT** - God is fully present everywhere.

**OMNISCIENT** - God knows everything, past, present, and future - all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.

**PATIENT/LONG-SUFFERING** - God is untiring and bears with His children.

**PROVIDER** - God meets the needs of his children.

**REFUGE** - God is a place of safety and protection for his children.

**RIGHTEOUS** - God is always good and right.

**SELF-EXISTENT** - God depends on nothing and no one to give him life or existence.

**SELF-SUFFICIENT** - God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

**SOVEREIGN** - God does everything according to His plan and pleasure.

**TRANSCENDENT** - God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

**TRUTHFUL** - Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

**WISE** - God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

**WORTHY** - God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

**WRATHFUL** - God hates all unrighteousness.



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## PRAYER PROMPTS

Thank you for being the “Savior of the World”! Thank you for revealing Yourself to all mankind and offering the peace that comes only through salvation in You. We ask that You would help us treasure these thoughts and ponder them in our hearts. We want to glorify and praise You for all that we have seen and heard!

## IF TIME ALLOWS:

Help the students in your group practice memorizing the books of the Bible:

- Torah: Genesis-Deuteronomy
- History: Joshua-Esther
- Poetry: Job-Song of Solomon
- Major Prophets: Isaiah-Daniel
- Minor Prophets: Hosea-Malachi
- Gospels: Matthew-John
- Paul’s Letters: Romans-Philemon
- General Letters: Hebrews-Revelation

Or play a game of Bible Trivia!

## MISSIONS EMPHASIS:

For the month of December, we will be collecting money for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering. Students can put their donations in the giving funnel in the top of the lobby.

## REVIEW UNIT VERSE:

Work on memorizing this weeks verse with the students in your group. You can use the first letter of each word in the verse to help with this. For example, the unit verse would look like this:

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## Application Questions

LOOK UPWARD



- How does this story apply to your relationship with God?
- What does it teach you about Him- His will and His heart?
- What aspect of His character is He inviting you to experience and enjoy?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your relationship with God?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in your relationship with God?

LOOK INWARD



- How does this story apply to your heart and your own spiritual growth?
- What does it teach you about yourself, your needs, or your goals in life?
- In what aspects of your personal life is God inviting you to grow and mature?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story inwardly?
- How will those around you benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to allow these truths to help you grow spiritually?

LOOK AROUND



- How does this story apply to your relationship with others?
- What does it teach you about how to see others and relate to them?
- What is god inviting you to do differently in your relationships?



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## Application Questions

### LOOK OUTWARD

- How does this story apply to your ministry and mission in life- to your role in God's kingdom, in society, and in the world?
- What does it teach you about God's purposes for the world?
- What part of His mission is He inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your ministry?
- How will the world benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in the world?

### LOOK FORWARD

- How does this story apply to your future, both in this age and in eternity?
- What does it teach you about God's plan for your life, now and forever?
- What aspects of eternity is God inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit in the future by applying these truths now?
- How will God's kingdom benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to impact eternity now with these truths?