



8

The Birth of Christ



Key Passage

- Luke 2:6–11

Lesson Focus

- Jesus was born in a simple way.

Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will color the Mary Coloring Sheet as a review of Lesson 7 and/or play with play dough.



Circle Time

Prayer—Using the Flip Chart Prayer Page, discuss prayer and give each child the opportunity to pray after determining what type of prayer you will offer today.

God's Word—Students will hear how Jesus, though a King, was born in a humble, simple way.

Song—Students will sing songs to help them remember the lesson of the day. Lyrics to the songs are found on the Flip Chart Song Page and the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.



Activity 1: Find the Match Card Game

Students will turn over one card at a time to match the cards illustrating elements from today's lesson.



Activity 2: Manger Dot-to-Dot

Students will complete a dot-to-dot worksheet and color the picture.



Memory Verse Review and Activity

Students will review the memory verse as they play a game and recite/sing the verse. Give them an opportunity to repeat the verse with you or after you individually.



Applying God's Word/Snack

Students will review the lesson while enjoying the snack for the day.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



FOR THE TEACHER

- ☐ Study the Prepare to Share section.
- ☐ Go Before the Throne.



COME ON IN

- ☐ Print one Mary Coloring Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- ☐ Provide play dough if appropriate.

- ☐ Mary Coloring Sheet for each student
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Play dough and cookie cutters



CIRCLE TIME

- ☐ Practice the songs on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.
- ☐ Print one each of the 4 Lesson Illustrations from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use.
- ☐ Bring in a Nativity set to use during this lesson and during Lesson 9. You may want to bring pictures instead if more convenient.

- ☐ Lesson Flip Chart
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Stuffed animal for prayer time
- ☐ 4 Lesson Illustrations
- ☐ Nativity set or pictures: Mary, Joseph, Jesus in a manger, angel(s), and shepherds



FIND THE MATCH CARD GAME

- ☐ Print and cut out two sets of the Find the Match Cards (12 cards total per set) from the Resource DVD-ROM. Print one more set for each student to take home.
- ☐ Put each student's set (two of each card) into a small plastic bag or envelope.

- ☐ One or more sets of Find the Match Cards (12 cards total) for use during the activity today
- ☐ One set of Find the Match Cards (12 cards total) for each student to take home
- ☐ Small plastic bags



MANGER DOT-TO-DOT

- ☐ Print one Manger Dot-to-Dot from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.
- ☐ Optional: Bring in shredded yellow paper or yellow Easter grass to attach to the picture as straw.

- ☐ Manger Dot-to-Dot for each student
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Optional: Shredded yellow paper or yellow Easter grass, glue sticks



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW AND ACTIVITY

- ☐ Bring in a stuffed animal, ball, or other appropriate item for passing around the circle.

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Stuffed animal, ball, or other appropriate item for passing around the circle
- ☐ Optional: Small rewards



APPLYING GOD'S WORD/SNACK

- ☐ Prepare and bring snacks.

- ☐ Student Take Home Sheets
- ☐ Lesson Flip Chart for Review
- ☐ Snacks



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above along with this background.

God's angels were sent to herald the coming of the promised Messiah—first, to the priest Zacharias about his son, John the Baptist, who would prepare the people for the coming of the Lord (Luke 1:13–15), and then to the virgin Mary, who would miraculously conceive a Son. This Son—Jesus, Immanuel, God with us—was the one who would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21–23).

Mary was a young Jewish woman who recognized herself as a maidservant of the Lord and willingly accepted God's plan for her (Luke 1:38). By the world's standards, her credentials should not merit this call from God to be the mother of Jesus. Like all people, she was also in need of a Savior (Luke 1:47), and Jesus, though He honored her, did not elevate her (e.g., Matthew 12:46–50; Luke 11:27–28).

And yet this is how it started. In the little town of Bethlehem, Mary brought forth her firstborn Son, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him—not with kings and royalty—but in a manger used to feed animals, because there were no other rooms for them to stay in (Luke 2:7). This simple birth was not announced to the affluent society of Judea, nor to the Jewish scribes and Pharisees, but instead to simple shepherds living out in the nearby fields (Luke 2:8). The announcement was spectacular. First, an angel of God appeared to the shepherds with the glory of the Lord shining all around. The angel brought good tidings of great joy—that a Savior, who was Christ the Lord, was born. Suddenly, the shepherds witnessed a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:9–14). With haste, the shepherds made their way to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger just as the angel had said (Luke 2:15–16).

This was a humble, earthly beginning for the great Redeemer King—the incarnate God Himself. Some say He couldn't be God—that God wouldn't enter the world that way. Yet Scripture instructs us in many places that this Jesus, the humble Babe, was in fact God. As John begins his Gospel, we read that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He [the Word] was in the beginning with God" (John 1:1–2). God, through the Apostle John, revealed Jesus Christ as God. A little later in his

Gospel, John stated that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14). The Word was God and the Word became flesh. The Word was Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah and Savior.

Again in the Gospel of John, Jesus's disciple Thomas, upon seeing the resurrected Jesus, confirmed Jesus's deity when he proclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28).

Jesus Himself proclaimed that He was God when He told the Jews that He and His Father are one (John 10:30). And when the Jews picked up stones to stone Him, they revealed that they had no doubt that Jesus, being a man, had claimed to be God (John 10:33).

Jesus is fully God and fully human. Jesus knew He was God, yet though He was God, He willingly gave up the heavenly honor, glory, and rights that were His. He took the form of a bondservant and came to earth as a man. He lived in humility and finally humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death on the Cross (Philippians 2:6–8).

Jesus came as a humble servant, and we should follow His example (Matthew 10:24–25). We are called to do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but humbly consider others better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3–5). Believers in Jesus Christ are called to be followers of Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:24; John 10:27). We are called to be conformed to His image (Romans 8:29). And we can be confident that if we are in Christ, He who began a good work in us will complete it according to His will and for His glory (Philippians 1:6).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Stop and think about this for a minute: this Jesus, who was born as an infant and laid in a manger, is the one who made and holds the entire universe together (Colossians 1:15–17). That very striking fact should boggle our minds and give us pause to worship the babe in the manger as the Lord of all. This amazing union of God and man is something that we cannot fully comprehend, but it is clearly taught in Scripture. The doctrine is known as the hypostatic union and describes how Jesus was fully God and fully man. Scripture teaches that Jesus had two natures in one Person—He was 100 percent God and 100 percent man—the God-Man, Jesus Christ. Early in the history of Christianity, this idea was attacked in several differ-

ent ways. Let's briefly review a few of them, pointing out the errors they lead to.

Arianism—Arius taught that Jesus was created by God at a certain point in time. This is similar to the modern view of Mormons. However, Scripture soundly refutes this idea. Jesus has always been fully God (Genesis 1; John 1). He was not created, but was the Creator of all things (Colossians 1:16). If we say Jesus was created, He can't be the Creator. Arianism is a false doctrine.

Docetism—The Gnostics and others in the first and second century taught that Jesus was a divine being who "appeared" (from the Greek *dokein*) to be a man but was not. If we adopt this view, we again find ourselves fighting against Scripture. Jesus had to come in a body and the form of a man so that He could identify with Adam's race, obey the Law as a man, and act as the substitute to appease God's wrath against mankind. The sin of the first Adam was removed by the Last Adam, our kinsman-redeemer (1 Corinthians 15:45–49).

Adoptionism—This view teaches that Jesus was born as a normal human and was adopted as the Son of God at His baptism. This view stands in contradiction to Scripture because it denies the virgin birth and the preexistence of Jesus as the Word that was with God in the beginning (John 1).

All of these views are heretical—they lead to a false view of Jesus and a false view of the salvation He offers. Holding to one of these views, or the many other variations (e.g., Apollinarianism, Modalism, Monophysitism, etc.), leads to a false gospel and damnation for those who persist in these errors (Galatians 1:6–12; 2 John 9).

These false views of Christ's nature arose early in church history. Arianism was part of the Trinitarian Controversy, which led to the Nicene Creed in AD 325, defining the orthodox view of Christ. In part it states: "I believe . . . in one Lord Jesus Christ . . . God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father."

Sadly, many of the false views of Jesus are held by people today. Understanding that Jesus is fully God and fully man is a necessary part of biblical Christianity. Our God humbled Himself to become like one of His creatures who had rebelled against Him and stepped into our lawless world, even being laid as a newborn baby in a feed trough. He came from the glories of heaven to a sin-cursed world to redeem rebels. God became man to bring mankind back to God.

Switching to a less-dangerous type of error, there are a lot of misconceptions about the birth of Christ in the minds of people. Many of these misconceptions

have come from relying on popular media or dramatic recreations of the birth narrative. Have you ever played the innkeeper in a Christmas pageant? Where did your lines come from? Well, they didn't come from the Bible because there is no innkeeper mentioned in the Bible! What about all of the animals? Well, none of them are mentioned in the Bible either. We infer that there were likely animals around since Jesus was laid in a manger, so having animals in a nativity scene is not unrealistic. Well, there were three wise men, right? We will answer that in the next lesson.

Many of these elements make for good drama, but they aren't found in Scripture. Most presentations have Mary barely making it off the donkey she rode from Nazareth before she goes into labor. But Scripture is clear that is not the case. Luke 2:1–7 gives the account. In those verses we read, "So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered." They were already in Bethlehem for some time before the birth, possibly staying with relatives in a crowded house.

All of God's Word is true. And it is important that we study it and use it as our absolute authority. Regardless of whether our misconceptions lead to damnable error or some small misunderstandings, we cannot compromise the truth of the Word of God. We must seek biblical accuracy in order to glean a better understanding of the living Word, who became flesh to dwell among us, who lived a life of perfect obedience, and who died for our sins to redeem us. We can only learn about the Word, Jesus, from God's Word—the Bible. And we must be diligent to do that thoroughly and with discernment.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Jesus, you are the Word made flesh, and I glorify your name. Some people say you were born to die. And while that is true, I also see that you were born to live, so that we, too, could live. Your life, from the very first moment, was an example for us. My desire is to be like you—humble and obedient. Thank you for the grace, truth, and clarity of the gospel. Please move in the hearts of the students in my class to see you for who you really are. Reveal the truth of your Word to them that they may one day come to humble repentance and faith and become new creations in Christ.



COME ON IN

As children arrive . . .

- They will color the Mary Coloring Sheet as a review of Lesson 7.
- If there is time, they can play with play dough.

During this time you should be at the door welcoming the children as they come in and directing them to sit down at the tables and begin the activity. Have an aid/helper ready to engage the children with the activity.



REVIEW

Using the Flip Chart, quickly review the previous lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Flip Chart Pages. Remind the children of each lesson's focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Circle Time

In an orderly manner, have the children assemble in a circle away from the tables—either on the floor or in their chairs. Bring your Lesson Flip Chart, Bible, stuffed animal for prayer time, four Lesson Illustrations, Nativity set: Mary, Joseph, Jesus in a manger, angel(s), shepherds (or pictures of these); and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson.

PRAYER

This prayer time is designed to get children to begin to understand some simple concepts about prayer and to get them to understand that they can pray. Use a special stuffed animal—prayer bear—or appropriate object to pass around the circle as each child gets his/her turn to pray. Only the child with the stuffed animal is allowed to pray or speak during this time. Using the same stuffed animal or other object all year will add continuity and structure to this time.

We start our Bible study with prayer. Let's pray. Turn to the Flip Chart Prayer Page. Briefly review the different types of prayer presented there. Then determine which type you want the children to pray today.

- I love you prayers—Adoration
- I'm sorry prayers—Confession
- Thank you prayers—Thanksgiving
- Please prayers—Supplication

Today Thanksgiving is suggested. You might proceed this way:

Today let's say prayers of thanksgiving—and thank God for the many blessings He's given us. Everything we have comes from God.

The prayers you begin with should be specific to your needs. This will model to the children that you believe God does care about all the details of your life, and you pray to Him about these things. Your example will increase their confidence in praying to God.

➤ Prior to making your transition to Circle Time, we suggest you take time for restroom breaks and hand washing.

➤ Preschoolers need to move. This is a good opportunity to get them to move. Make an orderly transition to the Circle Time. You can have carpet squares if you want to sit on the floor, or help them to move their chairs into the circle.

I'll start. Dear God, you are an awesome God. I want to thank you for ...
(insert personal prayer).

Pass the stuffed animal around the circle giving all the children an opportunity to say a prayer telling God thank you for something special in their lives.

Very good! Now let's put our stuffed animal away, and we'll get into God's Word.

GOD'S WORD

These first five questions will be repeated each week this quarter. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.

- ? Does God know all things? *Yes. Nothing can be hidden from God.*
- ? Can you see God? *No. I cannot see God, but He always sees me.*
- ? Can God do all things? *Yes! God can do all His holy will.*
- ? Where do you learn how to love and obey God? *In the Bible alone.*
- ? Is God's Word true? *Yes! Every Word of God is true.*

The following activity should be repeated at the beginning of each lesson to encourage anticipation and enthusiasm for looking into the Word of God. Use a sticky note to mark today's passage before you begin.

Bible Pass Around

➤ Before Bible Pass Around, place a sticky note in your Bible to mark the first passage to be read.

➤ When the Bible Pass Around Activity is completed, continue with the lesson.

We are going to start out today by looking into God's Word, the Bible. *Hold up Bible.* **God's Word is true, and we can trust what it says. But where should we look? One of you will help me with that. We're going to play Bible Pass Around. Whoever ends up with the Bible must hold it very carefully until it is time to look in it. When it is time to read, you can bring it to me, and we'll open it to see what we are going to talk about! Here's what we're going to do. I want everyone to count with me up to the number** *choose a number. You may also choose to practice the alphabet, recite the books of the Bible, sing one of the lesson songs, or recite the memory verse as you do this activity.* **We'll start right here. Hand the Bible to the first student. As we say each number (or word) you must carefully pass the Bible to the person beside you—remember, we don't want to drop it or tear it. Then when we get to the last number (or word), whoever has the Bible will hold on to it until we are ready to start our lesson. Are you ready? Let's begin.** *You may want to have the student with the Bible stand next to you until it is time to open it. Continue with the lesson when finished with Bible Pass Around.*

Refer to Lesson 7 Flip Chart Page. **Last week we learned of a surprising message about a special baby.**

- ? Who was the baby we talked about? *Jesus.*
- ? Who was the baby's mother? *Mary.*
- ? Yes. And who did God send to tell Mary she would have this baby? *The angel Gabriel.*

That's right! God sent an angel to tell Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus. We even learned a song about that. Let's sing "This Little Baby" together now. *Turn to the Lesson 7 Flip Chart Page. Stand and sing the FIRST and LAST verses of the song together to review Lesson 7.*

This little baby was Jesus! The angel said Jesus would be born in a special way.

? Can you tell me who Jesus was? *God.*

Yes. Jesus is God. And Gabriel, the angel, told Mary that Jesus would be great! He was the one that the people had been waiting for. He would be King forever—His kingdom would never end. How exciting that must have been!

Show Lesson Illustration 1. You would think that the birth of a king would be a huge event! And Jesus was the King of kings and the long-awaited Savior! He was the Messiah, the one that the Old Testament Scriptures talked about. This little baby was the Savior of the world. He would be the one to save us from our sins. Jesus is God! You would think that He would come like a great king with a great big celebration! But that wasn't in God's plan. Turn Lesson Illustration 1 over and lay on the floor.

? So how did Jesus come? What happened when He was born? *Allow discussion.*

? Where do we go to find the answers to our questions about Jesus? *Hold up your Bible. The Bible.*

That's right! The Bible is God's Word. And it is true. We'll start today by opening the Bible to the book of Luke. *Make this a special time as the student brings the Bible, and he/she opens it to where the sticky note is. Show the students where the book is. Let them look at it. Carry it around your circle.*

In the Gospel of Luke we read that Mary and Joseph had to take a long trip from their home in Nazareth to a town called Bethlehem for a census. *Show Lesson Illustration 2 pointing out the two towns.*

A census is when the rulers wanted to find out about the people in their land and count them all. So they told all the people to go back to the towns they were from. Joseph was from Bethlehem, so he and Mary had to go all the way down to Bethlehem. *Show route on map.*

Joseph and Mary HAD to go on this trip. But Mary was pregnant, remember? She was going to have a baby very soon.

? Who would that baby be? *Jesus!*

Right! Now I'm going to read from the book of Luke. Listen so you can hear what happened! *Read Luke 2:6–7 enthusiastically.*

? Have you heard these verses before? *Show of hands.*

? So what happened in Bethlehem? *Luke 2:6. Mary had her baby. Refer to Flip Chart or bring out Mary and Joseph Nativity pieces (or pictures).*

➤ Re-read the verses or the portion of the verse(s) that answer the questions you are asking of the text. The children should hear God's Word and know they can answer questions from it. It is not too hard for them.

Luke 2:6–7

► As you tell of Jesus's birth, bring out the Nativity pieces or pictures you brought in to make a Christmas display.

? What did Mary do with the baby? What did she wrap Him in? *Swaddling cloths.*
Show Lesson Illustration 3. She wrapped Him in cloth to help Him keep warm and quiet.

After Mary wrapped the baby Jesus in swaddling cloths, she laid Him down in something.

? Where did she lay the baby down? *Re-read Luke 2:7. In a manger.*

Right. She laid Him in a manger. *Add the baby and manger Nativity pieces (or pictures) to your display.*

? But, what is a manger? *Allow discussion.*

Show Lesson Illustration 4. A manger holds food for animals. They eat out of it. This manger must have been large enough to use like a cradle for the baby. It may have looked like this.

? But why were they in this room where animals normally stayed? *Allow discussion.*

We can find the answer right here in the Bible. Listen! *Re-read Luke 2:7 emphasizing the answer.*

? Did you hear the answer? Why were they in the place where the animals normally ate and slept? *Because there was no room in the inn.*

There were no other rooms for them. It sure doesn't seem like the forever King should be born in a place where the animals ate! But Jesus came very quietly and humbly. Jesus was born in a simple way. *Show Lesson Illustrations 1 and 3 again.* No one gave a big party for Him. He was born in the place the animals were often kept!

Refer to the Lesson Flip Chart Page. But guess what? God did want someone to know that Jesus was born! Listen carefully. I'm going to read about God's special announcement to some people who were nearby. *Read Luke 2:8-9 emphasizing the answers to the questions.*

? Add the shepherds (or pictures) to your display. Place them away from Mary and Joseph—in the "fields." **Who was out in the fields?** *Luke 2:8. The shepherds.*

? What were the shepherds doing? *Re-read Luke 2:8. Watching over their sheep.*

? And who did God send to tell the shepherds about Jesus's birth? *Re-read Luke 2:9. An angel of the Lord. Add the angel to your display near the shepherds in the "fields."*

An angel of the Lord. Another special messenger from God! You see, the shepherds were not far away. They were taking care of their sheep, like shepherds do! And that is who God chose to tell about the birth of Jesus.

? Do you remember who God sent to tell Mary that she would have a Son? *An angel.*

Luke 2:8-9

Yes. God sent an angel to tell Mary that she would have a Son. And Mary had that Son, Jesus. And now God sent an angel again. This time, the angel brought a message to the shepherds. God wanted the shepherds to know about Jesus!

- ? How did the shepherds feel when they saw the angel? *Re-read Luke 2:9. They were afraid.*

Yes! They were afraid! It was dark in the fields. And I'm sure the angel scared them! Let's see what happened next!

The angel spoke to the shepherds. Listen to this! *Read Luke 2:10–11 with enthusiasm.*

Luke 2:10–11

The angel told them not to be afraid because he brought tidings of great joy!

- ? What was this wonderful news of joy? Listen again. The Bible tells us! *Re-read Luke 2:11. The Savior is born. It is Christ the Lord!*

Jesus, the Savior was born! And God sent an angel to tell the simple shepherds first! Now, even though the people didn't give Jesus a huge party when He was born—the angels had a celebration!

Refer to Lesson Flip Chart Page. Right there in the wilderness for the shepherds to see! The Bible says that suddenly the glory of the Lord was shining all around when the angel came. And then a whole multitude of angels appeared! A multitude is like a huge crowd! Lots of angels came. And they were all praising God saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

- ? What do you think the shepherds did after the angels left? *Allow discussion.*

The Bible says the angels went away. *Remove the angel(s) from your display.* And the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and found the baby Jesus, just like the angel told them. *Move the shepherds near to Mary and Joseph in your display.* They told other people about Jesus, too! And the people who heard what had happened were amazed!

God didn't send His angels to kings, rulers, or religious leaders. The shepherds weren't important, rich people! But God sent His angels to them. Jesus was born in a simple way. He came quietly into the world. But He would change the whole world. Our memory verse tells us how Jesus would do that. Let's say our verse together. *Turn to Flip Chart Memory Verse Page. Recite Philippians 2:8.*

Refer to Lesson Flip Chart Page. Jesus came humbly and simply into the world. And He always obeyed His Father. He wanted to do His Father's will.

- ? Who knows why Jesus came? *Allow discussion.*

Jesus came so He could die for sinners. The Bible says that whoever will turn from their sin and believe in Jesus can have everlasting life with Him in heaven!

Jesus came into this world in a simple way, but He came for a very special reason—this little baby is the Savior of the world.

► The song “This Little Baby” is on the Flip Chart Lesson Page. Continue to teach the entire song. Turn to the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page when appropriate.

SONG

Turn to the Flip Chart Song Page. Let’s sing “This Little Baby” together. Stand up with me. Ready? Sing the song together two or three times. You may want to add some hand motions.

God sent an angel to Mary. And God sent angels to the shepherds! God sent a star to the wise men. We’ll hear about that next week! The birth of Jesus was simple. But God made it very special! This little baby Jesus was the Savior of the world.

Turn to the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page. Our memory verse tells us that Jesus humbled Himself to obey God and die on the Cross. He did that so He could take the punishment for sins! Jesus is the only one who can forgive us of our sins. When we are truly sorry for our sin and turn away from it, Jesus will forgive us. Let’s practice our memory verse now. Sing it with me. Here we go! Sing the Memory Verse Song with enthusiasm!

Repeat songs as time allows. You may want to add hand motions, stomping, marching, or instruments.

Lyrics can be found on the Flip Chart Song Page and the Song Sheet at the end of this Teacher Guide.



Find the Match Card Game

MATERIALS

- ☐ Find the Match Cards set for each student
- ☐ Find the Match Cards sets for activity in class
- ☐ Small plastic bags

INSTRUCTIONS

Print and cut two copies of each card (12 cards total) to play the game during class. If you have a large class, make more sets and supervise the game at each table.

Also, print and cut two copies of each card for each student. Put each set of 12 cards (two of each card) into a plastic baggie or envelope. Encourage students to play the game with family.

Depending on the size of your class, you may want to divide the class into teams or allow the whole class to play together. Give the students a set of cards to take home with them.

Discuss the cards before and during the game. I have cards with pictures of some of the people and things we talked about today in our lesson.

- This card shows Jesus's mother, Mary. The angel told Mary she would have a Son. And she would call His name Jesus!
- Here is Jesus's earthly father, Joseph. God chose Joseph to care for Jesus when He was a young boy.

- Here is the baby Jesus. Jesus was fully God and fully Man. He came to earth in a simple way as a baby.
- This is an angel! God sent His messengers, the angels, to the shepherds nearby. The angels told the shepherds about Jesus's birth.
- And here is a shepherd. God sent His angels to tell the shepherds that Jesus, the Savior, was born in Bethlehem.
- Jesus was born in a place animals were normally kept. He was laid in a manger, which is where the animals ate their food.

We will place the cards face down on the table and take turns trying to find the matches.

Repeat play if time allows. After play, give the students a set of cards.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Jesus, the Savior had come, just like God said He would. He came in a simple way. The birth of Jesus is something to think about. It is true history. God's Word is true. God keeps His promises. God is faithful!



Manger Dot-to-Dot

MATERIALS

- ☐ Manger Dot-to-Dot activity for each student
- ☐ Crayons
- ☐ Optional: Shredded yellow paper or yellow Easter grass to use as straw in the manger
- ☐ Optional: Glue sticks

INSTRUCTIONS

Print one Manger Dot-to-Dot for each student. Help the students find the correct numbers and connect the dots then color the completed picture. Optional: have students glue some shredded paper or Easter grass to the manger as straw.

Jesus was laid in a manger. Let's color this picture today. But before we color it, we have to connect the dots and finish the

picture. So put your crayon on the number 1. Then find the number 2 and draw a line all the way to it. Now, think about what number comes after 2. Keep finding the numbers and drawing the lines, then you will have a complete picture to color.

Supervise the completion of the sheet.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

We talked about how Jesus's birth was very simple. He wasn't born in a palace and laid in a beautiful cradle. The people didn't give Him a party. No, Jesus was born in a place where the animals usually stayed. There was no cradle for Him to sleep in. Mary laid her little baby in a manger—where normally animals would come to eat.



Memory Verse Review and Activity

Philippians 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

MATERIALS

- ☐ Flip Chart Memory Verse Page
- ☐ Stuffed animal, ball, or other appropriate item for passing around the circle
- ☐ Optional: Small rewards

INSTRUCTIONS

We're going to practice our memory verse. I'm going to point to the word pictures and **you repeat after me.** *Using the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page, point to each picture as you say each word and have the students repeat.*

Students will sit in a circle and pass the stuffed animal, ball, or other object as each word in the verse is recited. If needed, use the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page to recite the verse. At the end of the verse, whoever is holding the pass-around item can move to the middle of the circle. Allow that person to recite the verse with everyone's help. Guide the students to go faster and faster, then slower and slower as they pass the object and recite the verse together. You may choose to reward all the students at the end.

Everyone sit in a circle here. We're going to say our memory verse together. I'm going to give one of you this stuffed animal (or other object) and as we say the verse we'll pass the stuffed animal to the next person. When we finish the verse, the person who has the stuffed animal will stand inside the circle, and we will help you say the memory verse all by yourself! Pay attention, we might get tricky and go faster or slower. Ready? Here we go. *You may want to sing the Memory Verse Song instead of saying the verse.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Refer to Lesson Flip Chart Page. Our memory verse tells us that Jesus humbled Himself. Jesus is King, but He came to earth in a very simple, humble way. God, the Father, sent Jesus to be born as a baby, so He could live a perfect life and die on the Cross. Jesus is God. Jesus is the forever King! But He came to die so sinners could be saved! Jesus is the Savior sent from God!



Applying God's Word/Snack

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

After thanking God for your snack, review today's lesson using the Flip Chart.

God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus. And sure enough, one night in Bethlehem, Jesus was born. Now, we know that Jesus is God—He is a great King! But no one gave Him a big birthday party. As a matter of fact, Jesus was born in a place where the animals usually stayed! His cradle was a manger that the animals ate from. Yes, Jesus was born in a very simple and humble way.

But God's angels celebrated! God sent His special messengers—the angels—to tell the shepherds the wonderful news—that the Savior they had waited for was born. The shepherds were simple men who were out in the wilderness taking care of the sheep.

They were the first to hear about Jesus's birth! And after all the angels left, those shepherds hurried to find the special baby who was lying in a manger—born in a simple way.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.

Every year, in December, at Christmas, we hear about how Jesus was born as a baby. A lot of people call this the "Christmas story." But you know what? It's not just a sweet story about a baby. No! This was God, coming to earth to become a man! Jesus humbled Himself and was born in a simple way. Then He humbled Himself and died to save everyone who would ever trust in Jesus! This is not just a nice story—this is important truth from God's Word, the Bible.



Group Prayer Time

- Thank God for sending His Son, Jesus.
- Praise God for giving us forgiveness of sin through Jesus.
- Pray that God will give us hearts to love and obey Him more and more each day.

Do you still have more time? Review the past quarters using the Flip Charts, add another coloring sheet, recite and review the current and past memory verses, sing more songs, bring out play dough. Keep the children occupied with intentional, God-centered activities until their parents come to pick them up.

Song Sheet

PHILIPPIANS 2:8

(To the tune of "Are You Sleeping?")

And being found in

(Are you sleeping?)

Appearance as a ma-an,

(Are you sleeping?)

He humbled Himself

(Brother John,)

Be-came-o-be-di-ent.

(Brother John.)

To the point of dea-eath,

(Morning bells are ringing,)

Even-the-death-of-the cro-oss.

(Morning bells are ringing.)

Phil-ip-pi-ans

(Ding, ding, dong!)

Two verse eight.

(Ding, ding, dong!)

THIS LITTLE BABY

(To the tune of "The Muffin Man")

God sent an-angel-to tell Mary

(Oh! Do you know the Muffin Man?)

That-she would have a ba-a-by.

(The Muffin Man, the Muffin Man.)

She would have a ba-a-by—

(Do you know the Muffin Man)

The Savior sent from God!

(Who lives on Drury Lane?)

God sent angels-to-the she-e-pherds,

The she-e-pherds, the she-e-pherds.

They ran to find the ba-a-by—

The Savior sent from God!

God sent-a-star to the wi-ise men,

The wi-ise men, the wi-ise men.

The wise men-gave-gifts to the ba-a-by—

The Savior sent from God!

This-little-baby was Je-e-sus,

Je-e-sus, Je-e-sus!

This-little-baby was Je-e-sus—

The Savior sent from God!

Think of fun ways to sing. Get children in a circle holding hands. They can go in one direction and at each verse quickly reverse direction. Put one or more than one child in the middle of the circle. Go around them then move in and back out! Get them into a straight line. Have them follow you around the room.

[illegible]