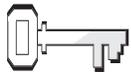


Spread the Joy



References

Luke 2:15-20; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 47, 48



Memory Verse

"When they had seen him, they spread the word" (Luke 2:17, NIV).

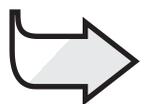


Objectives

The children will:
Know that they worship Jesus when they share their joy about His birth.

Feel joyful that Jesus came to save us, and that we can tell others this good news.

Respond by telling someone about Jesus' birth and what it means to us.



The Message

I worship God when I joyfully tell others about Jesus.

Monthly Theme

Worshipping is sharing our love for Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After the angels go back to heaven, the shepherds leave immediately for Bethlehem and find Baby Jesus in a manger. After seeing Jesus for themselves they "spread the word" about their experience with the angels and Baby Jesus. All who hear are amazed. Mary treasures these things and ponders them in her heart.

This is a lesson about worship.

The shepherds left the ground made holy by the angelic visitors and went to see for themselves He of whom the angels sang. We too should have the worship experiences of listening, seeing Jesus for ourselves, and then spreading what we receive after seeing Him.

Teacher Enrichment

"Heaven and earth are no wider apart today than when the shepherds listened to the angels' song. Humanity is still as much the object of heaven's solicitude as when common men of common occupations met angels at noonday, and talked with the heavenly messengers in the vineyards and the fields. To us in the common walks of life, heaven may be very near. Angels from the courts above will attend the steps of those who come and go at God's command" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 48).

"What a birth announcement! . . . First the shepherds ran to see the baby; then they spread the word. Jesus is *your* Messiah, *your* Savior. Do you look forward to meeting him in prayer and in his Word each day? Have you discovered a Lord so wonderful that you can't help sharing your joy with your friends?" (*Life Application Study Bible*, Notes and Bible Helps on Luke 2:8-15 [NIV] [Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005], p. 1665).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 10.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Animals, Animals</i> B. <i>God's Graffiti</i>	paper, pen large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10, pencils, markers, crayons
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbooks Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!" manger cutout for each child (see p. 144)
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	stable scene with hay, etc.; Bible-times costumes for shepherds, angels, Joseph, Mary; swaddling clothes (cloths) for "Baby Jesus"; parents with a newborn (if possible) or a male baby doll; children to act out the story; sheep (stuffed toy, papier mâché, or drawn on poster board and cut out); <i>Sing for Joy</i> songbook baby in cloths from "Experiencing the Story," memory verse written on small piece of paper Bibles, five slips of paper, chalkboard or dry-erase board, chalk or dry-erase markers
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Through Their Eyes</i>	large cardboard box, pieces of cardboard or soft wood, hay or straw, glue, crayons, markers, scissors, photocopies of line drawings of cows, horses, donkey, Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, sheep, shepherds, angels (see p. 137)
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Jesus' Birth Announcement</i>	paper, crayons, markers, pencils

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- paper
- pen

A. Animals, Animals

In advance, write the following words on slips of paper, one word on each. Fold the papers and put them in a bowl or basket.

cow horse goat chicken duck donkey sheep

Form seven groups. Have a child from each group, one at a time, take a paper and share it with their group. Each group is to act or sound like the animal while the rest of the class tries to guess what they are. (Small class, each child takes a paper.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Have you ever been in a barn or a stable? What are some of the sights, smells, and sounds you would find there?** (hay, straw, animal noises, etc.) **Would you like to live in a barn or stable? Why? Have you ever discovered something in a barn that you just couldn't wait to tell someone about? Let's read today's memory verse together.** Find and read Luke 2:17 aloud. Then ask: **Who do you think this verse is about? Yes, it tells about some people who visited a stable and saw someone special, then told everyone about it. Our message for today tells us . . .**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10
- pencils, markers, crayons

B. God's Graffiti

The children are to continue adding pictures, color, and praise to the wall banner started in Lesson 10.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you like our banner now?** (It's getting prettier, etc.) **Today's message is about joyfully sharing what Jesus' birth means to you. Write on your banner what His birth means to you. Write praises to God for sending Jesus to our world. Then let's say our message together:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study, and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

Favorite Christmas Carols (*Sing for Joy*, nos. 70-84)
"Come and Praise the Lord Our King" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 5)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **Now we have a chance to joyfully give God a money gift. This helps make a way to tell others about Jesus.**

You Need:

- container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!"



Prayer

Give each child a manger cutout. Ask them to write on one side of the manger the name of someone who needs prayer. Ask for volunteers to pray out loud for all the names listed.

You Need:

- manger cutout for each child (see p. 144)

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- stable scene with hay, etc.
- Bible-times costumes for shepherds, angels, Joseph, and Mary
- swaddling clothes (cloths) for "Baby Jesus"
- parents with a newborn (if possible) or a male baby doll
- children to act out the story
- sheep (stuffed toy, papier mâché, or drawn on poster board and cut out)
- *Sing for Joy* songbook

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, shepherds

Props: manger scene, Bible-times costumes, parents with a newborn (if possible) or a baby doll, sheep

This is a continuation of last week's "Experiencing the Story." Prompt the "actors" at the appropriate times. Again, you might want to invite the kindergarten class to watch your story time. At the designated places in the story, have the children sing carols. Start with the shepherds in the field with their sheep. Have the stable scene with Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus in another part of the room.

Read or tell the story.

[Shepherds are still sitting in the field after the angels left.] What wonderful news the angels had brought to the shepherds! What a choir they had heard! The shepherds couldn't sit still any longer. The angel had told them to find the Baby. They must go NOW! *[The shepherds get up and start walking to the stable. Everyone else sings together "O Children, Come Quick," verses 1 and 3 (Sing for Joy, no. 79).]*

The shepherds searched for the Baby. At last they found Him! *[Shepherds arrive at stable and look very happy.]* They entered the stable quietly and cautiously. Imagine how they felt when they got close enough to see just what the angels had said they would see. There was a newborn baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a feed box (also called a manger), on top of fresh hay!

Quickly they must have told the

exciting story *[shepherds gesture excitedly to Mary and Joseph]* about the angel choir and how thrilling it was, and that they believed this Baby was God's Son, their Savior! The Bible says that Mary treasured the news. *[Children sing together "Mary Had a Baby" (Sing for Joy, no. 80).]* *[Mary clasps her hands and smiles.]*

The shepherds probably wanted to touch this special Baby. Maybe they held their hands up to their faces in awe. *[Shepherds hold their hands over their faces.]* Or maybe they jumped for joy and slapped each other on the back as they smiled at the Baby. *[Shepherds jump for joy and (gently) slap each other on the back.]* They realized how blessed they had been to be visited by angels.

Leaving the stable *[shepherds leave the stable]*, they told everyone that the Savior of the world had just been born—a baby who was God's Son! It was just too exciting to keep to themselves. *[Sing together "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" (Sing for Joy, no. 83).]*

Lots of people heard about the Baby *[shepherds walk around the room, gesturing as if they are talking to people]*, but very few visited Him for themselves. *[Shepherds stand to the side while you finish the story.]* What would you have done?

To worship God may mean that we tell others about Him, as the shepherds did. Or we may praise Him silently for His love, as Mary did. Let's worship God and tell others how much He loves us. *[Sing together "Wonderful, Wonderful" (Sing for Joy, no. 39).]*

Debriefing

The angels and the shepherds couldn't wait to tell others about the birth of Jesus. If you had been there, what would you have done? We can be just like them, excited to share

what we know about Jesus with our friends.

How do you feel about Jesus' birth? (excited, happy, thankful) **Will you tell others about Jesus' birth?**
Remember our message:



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Memory Verse

In advance, have the memory verse ("**When they had seen him, they spread the word**" [Luke 2:17, NIV] written and hidden in the swaddling clothes of the "baby."

Hold the baby doll, unwrapping some of the clothing to reveal the paper, then read the memory verse aloud. Say: **Our memory verse tells what happened after the shepherds saw Baby Jesus. Let's say it together.**

Form two groups facing each other. Have the first group say the first phrase ("**When they had seen him**"), then the other responds, "**they spread the word.**" Repeat several times, then reverse the phrases. Finally, have all the children say the entire verse.

Bible Study

In advance, print the following baby names and matching texts, one each on five pieces of paper.

You Need:

- baby in cloths from "Experiencing the Story"
- memory verse written on small piece of paper

You Need:

- Bibles
- five slips of paper
- chalkboard or dry-erase board
- chalk or dry-erase markers

Samuel	(1 Samuel 1:20)
Isaac	(Genesis 21:1-3)
John	(Luke 1:57-60)
Moses	(Exodus 2:1-4, 10)
Jesus	(Matthew 1:21)

Then write the following columns where all can see:

Mothers	Babies
Hannah	Moses
Jochebed	Jesus
Elizabeth	Isaac
Mary	Samuel
Sarah	John

Distribute the papers and say: **Find out about some other babies God sent for a special purpose.** Have the children take turns reading the Scripture reference on their "baby." Briefly discuss God's purpose in each baby's life. Ask: **Which baby goes with which mother?** As the children respond, draw a line to match the mother with the right baby.

Debriefing

Say: **Jesus was sent for the greatest purpose of all—to save you and me and everyone else in the world from sin. You have a bright future because of Baby Jesus' birth. Do you want to tell others about it?**

The angels were so excited that they couldn't wait to announce Baby Jesus' birth. What can you do to announce Jesus' birth to someone? (Sing about it, talk about it, write about it, etc.) **Remember our message:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- large cardboard box
- pieces of cardboard or soft wood
- hay or straw
- glue
- crayons, markers
- scissors
- photocopies of line drawings of cows, horses, donkey, Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, sheep, shepherds, angels (see p. 137)

Through Their Eyes Nativity Diorama

Have the children color and cut out the photocopies. (See page 137.) Then have them arrange straw or hay in the box so that it looks like a barn. Attach the animals with tape at various places in the barn scene. Make a few feeding troughs from the cardboard pieces or soft wood. Place them near some of the animals. Add the other cutouts.

Point to the cutouts of the donkey, Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, sheep, shepherds, and angels. Have the children choose a cutout and tell about Jesus' birth from the viewpoint of the character they chose. Finally, ask them to tell what Jesus' birth means to them personally.

If possible, place the completed diorama in a place where others may enjoy it.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Why do others need to know that Jesus came to earth? How do you feel about telling them? How do you choose to tell others about Jesus' birth?** (Encourage children to explain how they will share what they have learned about Jesus.) **Remember:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- crayons, markers, pencils

Jesus' Birth Announcement

Using paper, markers, and pencils, have the children create a baby announcement that they will share with their friends. The announcement should include the following information:

- Who? Baby Jesus
 What? A Savior
 When? Bible doesn't say, but it's celebrated during Christmas season.
 Where? Bethlehem
 Why? To save the whole world from sin
 How? God made it happen.

Debriefing

Ask: **To whom will you give your announcement?** (Wait for responses.) **What will you say about the birth of Jesus?** (Allow the children to share.) **Let's pray that Jesus will give you just the right words to tell others about His birth. Remember our message:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Let's say that again.

Closing

Pray that Jesus will give each child the right words to tell others about His birth in the new week.

Spread the Joy

References

Luke 2:15-20; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 47, 48

Memory Verse

“When they had seen him, they spread the word” (Luke 2:17, NIV).

The Message

I worship God when I joyfully tell others about Jesus.

One night Grandma was telling Sabine about the day Sabine was born. “When you were born, I lived far away from your mom and dad. When your dad phoned me and said, ‘You have a new granddaughter!’ I was so excited. I wanted to get on a plane and come to see you right away. I couldn’t wait!”

In our Bible story some people couldn’t wait to see another newborn baby. Let’s see what it’s all about.

The bright choir of angels had faded into the distance. The shepherds were in the dark again, alone with their sheep. They looked at each other. All thoughts of being with the sheep were gone. Such wonderful news! With angels telling them to find Baby Jesus, they had to go now!

The shepherds hastened to Bethlehem. “Lying in a manger,” the angel had said. That meant a stable. A place where animals were sheltered. Listening at every stable, the shepherds searched for the Baby. At last they found the right place.

The shepherds entered the stable quietly. Can you imagine how they felt? Curious? Would they see an ordinary child? They saw just what the angel had said they would—a newborn baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger, on top of fresh hay!

They had to explain why they were there. Quickly they must have told the exciting story about the shining angels. They must have told about the angel choir and the beautiful song. Did they say that they believed this Baby was God’s Son, the one who was their Savior? Mary and Joseph must have had questions.

The Bible says that Mary treasured the news the shepherds brought. She must have loved God even more for His way of encouraging her. The shepherds’ story must have helped Joseph believe God’s word too.

Do you think the shepherds wanted to touch this special Baby? Maybe they held their hands up to their faces in awe. Or maybe they slapped each other on the back as they smiled at the Baby. They must have realized how blessed they had been to be visited by angels.

We don’t know how long the shepherds stayed in the stable. But we do know that they bowed down and worshipped Baby Jesus. They knew He was their Savior!

Perhaps they left Bethlehem a little before dawn, as people were beginning to move about. Or perhaps others were finishing a night’s work of some kind. The Bible says the shepherds “spread the word.” They told everyone they met about seeing the Baby, God’s Son. And “all who heard it were amazed” (Luke 2:17, 18, NIV). The shepherds returned to their sheep, praising God. They had seen the Messiah, just as they had been told.

And what of Mary and Joseph? How did they feel? “Mary treasured . . . all these things” and thought of them often (Luke 2:19). What would the future hold? How would she and Joseph raise this Child—the Son of God?



Him, as the shepherds did. Or we may thank Him silently for His love, as Mary did. But we can't worship God until we know for ourselves how much He loves us. Then we can worship Him by telling others about Jesus' birth and about how wonderful He is.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, with your family visit a place where animals are kept. Find a place to sit and read your Bible story together.
- Read Luke 2:17 together. What "word" did the shepherds spread? Have you "spread the word"?
- Sing "Now Is Born the Divine Christ Child" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 78). Then thank God for Jesus' birth.

Sunday

- Together with your family, read and discuss Luke 2:15, 16.
- For Part 2 of your "TV newscast," make more pictures covering Jesus' birth. Today, draw and color pictures of the shepherds (1) traveling to Baby Jesus; and (2) at the stable. Write "The shepherds are looking for Jesus" on the first picture and "The shepherds find Baby Jesus" on the second. Glue or tape your pictures to the picture strip that you made last week.
- Say your memory verse without help.
- Sing "Away in a Manger" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 73 or 74). Ask Jesus to help you tell others about Him.

Monday

- Make a megaphone by rolling a piece of paper into a cone. Decorate it with angels. Use it to call your family to worship.
- With your family, read Luke 2:15, 16 again.
- Share with a friend Jesus' birth announcement that you made in Sabbath School. Tell what Jesus' birth means to you. (Or make a card about Jesus' birth. It should include: Who was born, where, when, and why.)
- Teach your memory verse to your family. Then thank God for each person.

Tuesday

- During family worship, read and discuss Luke 2:17-19.
- Make a picture for your "TV newscast." Show

the shepherds praising God and telling everyone about Baby Jesus. Write your memory verse on it. Join the picture to those made Sunday.

- Thank God for Bible stories about Jesus.

Wednesday

- Make a tambourine to help you praise God. Place two paper plates together and punch holes around the edges. Weave some ribbon or yarn through the holes, leaving a small space. Pour in some dry beans. Then finish weaving and tie the ribbon.* Write "Praise God!" on your tambourine. Decorate it with angels and glitter.
- Say your memory verse; then play your tambourine and sing about Jesus' birth.

Thursday

- Read Luke 2:20 for family worship.
- For worship, show your "TV newscast" about Jesus' birth, Part 2. You can review last week's pictures and finish with this week's pictures. Have soft music playing as you do your newscast.
- Say your memory verse together, then thank Jesus for His love.

Friday

- With your family, have a birthday party for Jesus. Invite a friend who might not know Jesus. Decorate a birthday cake with "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" Sing "Happy Birthday to You" to Jesus. Read Luke 2:8-16.
- Take turns telling what Jesus' birth means to you.
- Sing "Silent Night, Holy Night" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 76). Say your memory verse. Then pray that Jesus will come again soon.
- If possible, sing Christmas carols to your neighbors and give them a small gift from your family.

*Adapted from *Bible Story Crafts and Projects Children Love* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1995), p. 62.