

City SG—December 12th, 2021

Today's Bible Story: Because of Christmas Day (Jesus Is Born/Shepherds Visit) • *Luke 2:1-20*

Today's Bottom Line: Celebrate because God sent a Savior.

Monthly Memory Verse: *God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIRV)*

1. Box Toss

What You Need: "John 3:16 Labels" prepared box (1 per Group); Bibles; and timer on a watch or smartphone

What You Do:

- Give each kid a Bible.
- Ask kids to open their Bible to the book of John, while helping your kids find it if they need help.
- Review that John is the last of the group of four books in the Bible that talk about Jesus' time on Earth.
- Ask, "Can anyone remember the chapter and verse of this month's memory verse?"
- After listening to their responses, help the kids turn to John 3:16.
- Remind kids that John 3:16 describes God's amazing plan for us.
- Help the kids identify four key parts of God's plan by asking the following questions:
 - In God's plan, who does He love? (*the world, all of us*)
 - In God's plan, what did God give? (*Jesus to die in our place so we could be forgiven*)
 - In God's plan, what do we need to believe? (*that Jesus is God's Son who died for us*)
 - In God's plan, what do we need to receive? (*the free gift of God's forgiveness and eternal life*)
- Direct the kids to sit in a circle.
- Give one of the kids the prepared box.
- Instruct the kid to find the first part of John 3:16 on the box and read it aloud.
 - ***If your kids struggle with reading you can read each section out loud to your kids.***
- Once the part of the verse is read, direct the kid to toss the box across the circle to another kid.
- Direct the next kid to find the next phrase of the memory verse.
- Give them one rule: Kids can't catch the box a second time until everyone has had it once.
- After the entire verse has been said, instruct the kids to do it again.
- Time the kids to see if they can do it in less than 30 seconds.

What You Say:

"The Bible is God's big story. Every book is important because it all speaks to who God is. But of all the verses in the Bible, John 3:16 gives us lots of reasons to see why Jesus came to Earth on the very first Christmas! Jesus is the best gift EVER!"

2. Gift Bow Grab

What You Need: Bible and gift bows (1 Bag of 5 bows per Group)

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
- Place the gift bows in the middle of the circle.
- Explain that you will *slowly* read a question about today's Bible story.
- When a kid thinks they know what the question *will be*, instruct them to grab a bow.
- As soon as a bow is grabbed, stop asking the question.
- If the kid who grabbed the bow first can finish the question correctly, give them a point.
- If the kid can answer the question as well, give them another point.

- If the kid who grabbed the bow doesn't finish the question correctly, instruct them to put the bow back. Then you pick up where you left off, letting the rest of the group have a chance to grab the bow and finish the question.
- Use the following review questions:
- Who was Mary's husband? (*Joseph*)
- Who issued a decree? (*Caesar Augustus*)
- What was the decree issued by Caesar Augustus? (*people had to go to their hometown to be counted in a census*)
- Where did Mary and Joseph have to go to be counted? (*Bethlehem*)
- Where did Mary and Joseph have to stay when they were in Bethlehem? (*place where animals live*)
- Where was Jesus placed after He was born? (*feeding trough/manger*)
- In our Bible story, what were the shepherds doing? (*keeping watch over their flocks*)
- How did the shepherds feel when the angel appeared? (*afraid*)
- Where did the shepherds find Jesus? (*lying in a manger*)
- Who did the shepherds find with Jesus? (*Mary and Joseph*)
- Who first appeared to the shepherds? (*an angel of the Lord*)
- Who joined the angel and sang praises to God? (*heavenly host—a bunch of angels*)
- Who did the shepherds tell about Jesus? (*everyone they saw*)
- What book of the Bible is our story from today? (*Luke*)
- After the review game, ask kids to share their favorite part of the Christmas story and why they like it most. [**Make it Personal**] (**Share your favorite part and why, too.**)

What You Say:

"Even though we hear the story of Christmas every year, it never gets old. You and I know some really great news that everyone should hear. God loves the world so much that He gave us His only Son. Jesus was born so we could have a relationship with God that will last forever. When the shepherds heard this news, they ran to see the baby, Jesus. After they saw Him, they ran to tell others as quickly as possible. And just like the shepherds, God wants us to **[Bottom Line] celebrate because God sent a Savior**. Let's be as eager as the shepherds to tell others about the incredible gift God gave us when He sent His Son, Jesus. Is there someone you can tell the story of Christmas to this week?" (*Pause for responses.*)

3. Ring the Tree

What You Need: Hula hoop and Tree bowl (1 per group), prizes

What You Do:

- Direct the kids to stand in a wide circle.
- Place the tree bowl with prizes in the middle of the circle.
- Hand a hula hoop to a kid.
- Instruct the kids to take turns rolling the hoop across the circle to try to land it around the bowl.
- If they succeed, let them choose one prize from the bowl.
- Make sure everyone gets an equal number of turns and each kids gets a prize.

What You Say:

"Getting a hula hoop to go the right direction then stop in exactly the right place at exactly the right time was a tricky task. **[Transition] In today's Bible story, the shepherds were in the right place at the right time to hear about the best Christmas gift EVER! JESUS!**"

4. Tic-Tac-GLOW!

What You Need: Floor tape, and glow sticks in two different colors (10 of each color per group)

What You Do:

- Tape two large tic-tac-toe grids on the floor.
- Tell kids that, "We are going to have some fun celebrating Jesus' birthday with a Glow Stick game of Tic-Tac-Toe! We can light up our world for Jesus, just like the Angels did on the very 1st Christmas!"
- Invite the kids to take turns challenging one another to a game of "Tic-tac-glow" with one color glow stick as the O's and one color as the X's.
- Switch kids at the different boards to make sure everyone has at least one turn.

What You Say:

"Today, we celebrate Jesus and all the amazing things He has done for us! You can glow for Jesus every day! Merry Christmas! Happy Birthday Jesus!"

5. Pray and Dismiss**What You Say:**

"God thank You that You always have a plan! Today, we celebrate You and the plans that You have for us this Christmas, and for the rest of our lives. Thank You for the plan You had so many years ago when You gave us your One and only Son, Jesus. We love You. In Jesus Name. Amen!"