



Use Week of:

Christmas • Session 3

Jesus Was Born

BIBLE PASSAGE:

John 1

STORY POINT:

Jesus came to show us what God is like.

KEY PASSAGE:

2 Peter 1:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(15–20 MINUTES)
PAGE 34



TEACH THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 36



EXPERIENCE THE STORY
(20–25 MINUTES)
PAGE 38



Leaders, grow on the go! Listen to session-by-session training every week on Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or LifeWay's Digital Pass:
ministrygrid.com/gospelproject | gospelproject.com/podcasts

LEADER Bible Study

God's plan all along was to send His Son into the world to save sinners. At just the right time, God the Son "emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity" (Phil. 2:7). The birth of Jesus was a miracle.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke begin by giving details of the Messiah's birth: Mary became pregnant by the Holy Spirit and gave birth to a son. The baby was God's Son, and He had an earthly father—Joseph. As the angel had instructed, Joseph named the baby Jesus.

The apostle John began his Gospel in a different way. John 1:1 parallels the words of Genesis 1: "In the beginning ..." In the beginning, God spoke creation into existence. Everything was created through God the Son. (Col. 1:16) John names Jesus as "the Word." (John 1:3)

John 1 provides a bigger picture to accompany the story found in Luke 2:1-20. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). As you teach preschoolers about Jesus' birth, help them realize why Jesus came. Jesus did not enter an already good world that simply needed some guidance and improvement. He came into a dark world cursed by sin to a people who were spiritually dead.

Jesus' birth is good news for people who need a Savior. In God the Son's becoming a human, Jesus brought life and light to people who were dead in sin. Jesus came to give life to all who believe. He brought light into darkness and showed us what God is like.

Invite preschoolers to celebrate the birth of Jesus, which brought joy and peace to a desperate and chaotic world. Pray that God would prepare the hearts of all children—from babies to preschoolers to older kids—to hear and believe the truths about Jesus and welcome Him into their lives as Lord and Savior.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Was Born

John 1

John was one of Jesus' disciples. After Jesus went back to heaven, John wrote to tell people about Jesus. John called Jesus "the Word." John said the Word was there in the beginning, before the world even began. The Word has always been with God, and the Word is God. When God spoke to create the world, all things were created through the Word.

John was saying all these things about Jesus.

John wrote that God sent a man named John the Baptist to get people ready for Jesus. John the Baptist told people about Jesus so they would believe He is God's Son.

People did not know who Jesus was when He came into the world. He was born in Bethlehem to a young woman named Mary. An angel told shepherds about Jesus' birth. The angel said, "I have good news for you! Today a Savior was born. He is the Messiah God promised!"

Jesus grew up and His own people did not welcome Him or love Him. But everyone who did welcome Him and love Him, He invited them to be part of God's family—to be children of God. What good news!

Jesus is the Word who became a human and lived on earth. People saw His glory as the one and only Son of God. Long ago, God gave people



the law through Moses, but now He has given us grace and truth through Jesus.

No one has ever seen God, but Jesus—God’s one and only Son—has shown us what God is like.

Christ Connection: Jesus was born! This was very good news! Jesus was not like other babies. Jesus is God’s Son. God sent Jesus to earth from heaven. Jesus came into the world to show us what God is like.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Set up a manger scene:** Invite preschoolers to work together to set up a plastic or wooden manger scene. Open your Bible to John 1. Show boys and girls where the story is found in the Bible. Move around to each child and ask him to point to John’s name at the top of the page. While telling today’s Bible story, point to the Baby Jesus, Mary, angel, and shepherd manger scene figures when mentioning them in the Bible story.
- **Use the timeline:** Point to “Jesus Was Born” on the Giant Timeline or Small Group Timeline. Point out the break in chronology from the previous session. Explain that Christmastime is when believers around the world celebrate Jesus’ birth.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Born

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 1

STORY POINT: Jesus came to show us what God is like.

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Peter 1:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

Welcome time

- "The Good News of Christ" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "The Word Became Flesh" activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Invite preschoolers to connect the dots to reveal a Bible.

SAY • After Jesus went back to heaven, one of Jesus' disciples, John, wrote to tell people about Jesus. John called Jesus "the Word," like we call the Bible God's Word. Jesus is the Word who became a human and lived on earth. Listen to today's Bible story from the Book of John to learn more about why God sent Jesus to earth.

LOW PREP

Carols:

- "Away in a Manger"
- "Silent Night"
- "Joy to the World"
- "O Come All Ye Faithful"
- "The First Noel"

Sing Christmas carols

Invite preschoolers to tell you their favorite Christmas carols. Allow children to take turns leading the group in singing their favorites. Lead the group in singing your favorite Christmas carol that focuses on Jesus.

SAY • The reason we celebrate Christmas is because of Jesus. God sent His one and only Son to earth from

heaven. Jesus was born as a baby. This is very good news! **Jesus came to show us what God is like.** Today's Bible story is about how God made the way for us to be part of His family through Jesus.

Set up a manger scene

Gather several child-friendly manger scene figures. Look at today's Bible story picture poster. Invite preschoolers to compare Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus to the manger scene figures. Lead preschoolers to arrange the figures so they are worshiping Baby Jesus. Offer a few toy farm animals for preschoolers to add to the scene. If possible, consider taking digital photos of children as they arrange the figures. Share images with a child's family. Always follow your church's policies regarding taking and sharing photographs of children.

- unbreakable manger scene figures
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- toy farm animals

SAY • Today's Bible story is about when Jesus was born. We celebrate Christmas to remember Jesus' birth. God chose a young woman named Mary to be Jesus' mother. Joseph was her husband. An angel told shepherds to go to Bethlehem to find Jesus, the Messiah, where they worshiped Him. Listen to the story to find out what Jesus came to the world to do.

Transition to teach the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, turn the lights off and on, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Sing or play a favorite Christmas carol about Jesus as children move to Bible study.

- countdown video (optional)

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Born

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 1

STORY POINT: Jesus came to show us what God is like.

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Peter 1:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at John 1 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • The Book of John was written by one of Jesus' disciples. After Jesus went back to heaven, John wrote to tell people about Jesus. John's words in the Bible are true because he wrote what God wanted him to write. The Bible is God's Word.

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Jesus Was Born" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • John wrote about how God sent His one and only Son, Jesus, into the world. People did not know who Jesus was when He came into the world. His own people did not love Him, but Jesus invites everyone who does love Him to be part of God's family—to be children of God. No one has ever seen God, but **Jesus came to show us what God is like.**

Practice the key passage

Write phrases from the key passage on masking tape and affix them to blocks. Place the blocks in several gift bags to resemble presents. Place the key passage marker at 2 Peter 1:3. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Invite children to open the gifts. Read the phrases. Challenge children to arrange the blocks in order and say the passage.

SAY • God's power in Jesus gives us everything we need to live for Him. Jesus came from heaven, so He was not like other babies. Jesus is God the Son.

Sing the key passage song, "His Divine Power," and the theme song, "The Good News of Christ."

- Bible
- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- "His Divine Power (2 Peter 1:3)" song
- "The Good News of Christ" song

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Jesus, God's only Son, lived a perfect life for God's glory. With the help of the Holy Spirit, believers in Jesus can also live for God's glory. ***How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.***

- Big Picture Question Poster



Missions moment

SAY • We have been learning about Lottie Moon, a missionary to China. Lottie knew **Jesus came to show people what God is like.** She wanted the people of China to know and love Jesus.

Show the pictures of Lottie Moon and read the facts about her to preschoolers. Close in prayer for people around the world who need to hear the good news about Jesus.

- "Lottie Moon" printable

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Jesus Was Born

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 1

STORY POINT: Jesus came to show us what God is like.

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Peter 1:3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

LOW PREP

- construction paper
- scissors (adult use)
- marker
- tape
- Bible
- "The Good News of Christ" song (optional)
- "His Divine Power (2 Peter 1:3)" song (optional)

Go on an ornament walk

Cut construction paper into circles to resemble Christmas ornaments. Be sure to make at least one for each child. Write the letter *J* on three ornaments. Form a circle path with the ornaments on the floor and tape them in place. Direct each child to stand on an ornament. Walk clockwise around the circle while clapping and chanting the story point. Vary the game by walking when music is played and stopping when it is paused. After each turn, look to see which three children are standing on a *J*. Open a Bible to the Book of John and show the letter *J* on the page.

SAY • What sound does the letter *J* make? Today's Bible story is from the Book of John. John starts with a *J*. John wrote about a man whose name also starts with a *J*: John the Baptist. John the Baptist helped the people get ready for Jesus so they would recognize Him when He came. Jesus begins with a *J* too! God sent Jesus to earth from heaven. **Jesus came to show us what God is like.**

- baby dolls
- baby blankets
- doll clothes
- baby bottles
- toy baby doll accessories

Care for babies

Set out baby dolls, baby blankets, doll clothes, baby bottles, and other toy baby doll accessories. Invite preschoolers to play out caring for babies.

SAY • Jesus came to earth as a baby, but He was not like other babies. Jesus is God's Son. Jesus is the Word who became a human and lived on earth. People saw His glory as the one and only Son of God. **Jesus came to show us what God is like.**

Make a picture frame

Prepare a "Christmas Picture Frame" for each child. Invite preschoolers to decorate their frames with manger scene stickers, sequins, foam shapes, or markers. Attach adhesive-backed magnet strips to the back of the frame. If you took a child's photograph earlier in the session while playing with the manger scene, print a copy to give to a child's family.

SAY • You can look at your picture in your Christmas picture frame and remember that God sent Jesus to earth because He loves you. **Jesus came to show us what God is like.** Jesus' disciple, John, wanted people to know that Jesus was with God in the beginning. When the time was right, God sent Jesus to be born as a baby. Many people, including the shepherds, were happy that a Savior had been born. But not everyone was happy. Some people did not welcome Him or love Him, but the ones that did, God invited to be part of His forever family.

- "Christmas Picture Frame" printable, 1 per child
- heavyweight paper
- scissors (adult use)
- manger scene stickers
- sequins
- foam shapes
- glue stick
- markers
- adhesive magnet strips
- photographs of preschoolers (optional)
- tape (optional)

Tip: Follow your security church's policy for photographing children.

Draw in baby lotion

Post an allergy alert. Squeeze lotion onto a tray. Encourage a child to feel the lotion and smooth it into a thin layer. Encourage her to draw pictures with a finger or make designs in the lotion. Challenge a child to print a letter that is used to spell her name. Invite the child to smell the lotion and describe its fragrance.

- Allergy Alert
- trays or baking sheets
- baby lotion

SAY • Babies need a lot of special care. Sometimes a parent will rub lotion on a baby's skin after his bath. Even Mary's baby, Jesus, needed to be cared for. But Jesus was not like other babies. Jesus is God's Son. God sent Jesus to earth. **Jesus came to show us what God is like.** If we want to know what God is like, we can find out by learning about Jesus.



Taste Lottie's tea cakes

Post an Allergy Alert. Use the recipe provided on the "Lottie's Tea Cake Recipe" printable to prepare tea cakes for preschoolers to enjoy. You may also serve store-bought sugar cookies. Show preschoolers the recipe.

SAY • When Lottie Moon first went to China, many children were afraid of her because she was not Chinese. She made tea cakes, which are like sugar cookies, and gave them to her neighbors so that they would not be afraid of her. Over the years, she made thousands of tea cakes and told thousands of people about Jesus. **Jesus came to show us what God is like.** Jesus is God's Son.

- Allergy Alert
- "Lottie's Tea Cake Recipe" printable
- homemade tea cakes or store-bought sugar cookies

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Serve sugar cookies for snack if you did not already serve Lottie's Tea Cakes. Provide frosting and Christmas-themed sprinkles for a child to add to his cookie. Talk about how Christmas cookies make us think about why we celebrate Christmas, that **Jesus came to show us what God is like** by coming to earth and living among people.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. Who wrote the Book of John? (*Jesus' disciple, John*)
2. Why did God send John the Baptist? (*to help people get ready to believe Jesus is God's Son*)
3. Who was Jesus' mother? (*Mary*)
4. Who came to see the Messiah God promised after an angel told them about Jesus' birth? (*some shepherds*)
5. Who did Jesus come to show us? (*God*)
6. ***How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- sugar cookies (optional)
- frosting (optional)
- Christmas-themed sprinkles (optional)
- plastic knife (optional)

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "The Good News of Christ" song
- "His Divine Power (2 Peter 1:3)" song
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers