

"The Birth of Jesus Christ"

Luke 2:1-20 KJV

Bible Lesson & Activities for Children



THE **SUNDAY SCHOOL** STORE

The Birth of Jesus Christ



Who's the star of the show? This is a question that might come up frequently in our lives. When it comes to the holidays, we easily let things distract us and take over our attention, neglecting the whole focus of Christmas. Even in something like a Christmas musical program or pageant, kids can jostle for "lead roles" and wonder who the star is. However, the star of a Christmas program isn't any of the bedsheet-clad children...In fact, it's usually not reenacted by a person at all. Rather, it is (or SHOULD be) Jesus! This lesson reminds children that Jesus needs to be the star of our lives, too. He should be the central figure of all that we are and all that we do, on Christmas Day and every day!

So often we want to be the main feature: the hero of sports, the star of programs, the top student, the boss at a workplace...In Christ we see a suffering servant. To be lifted high, He was brought low. He came to Earth not as a conquering king, but as an infant. His birth is the fulfillment of God's covenant promises, given throughout the Old Testament. In Jesus, we see our hope and salvation, now and always!

Passage: Luke 2:1-20

Target Audience: Kindergarten-6th grade

Materials Needed: Construction paper, markers, stickers, scissors, tape/glue, popsicle sticks, paper plates, paper bags, coffee filters, paper towel tubes, string, pipe cleaners, decorations (all optional, depending which activities you choose to use). Object lesson props can include items that might go with a Christmas play or Nativity set, or an actual small Nativity Set.

More Resources Online

- Watch the [video demonstration of the object lesson](#)
- Watch the [video example for the craft projects](#)
- Watch the [video Bible story "God's Story: Jesus is Born"](#) from *Crossroads Kids Club*
- Watch the [video Bible Story "The Story of Christmas"](#) from *Saddleback Kids*
- For more free Bible illustrations, visit [Christian Clip Arts](#) and [Ministry-To-Children's Coloring Pages](#)

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Object Lesson (5 minutes)



Greet children, and discuss the excitement of Christmas...

Hello, children of God! Well, it's Christmas! Are you excited? What do you like about Christmas? What are some things you do at this time of year? There are many fun and wonderful holiday traditions we might follow. One thing I enjoy doing, actually, is participating in a Christmas play or Nativity program. I've done quite a few of those over the years, and they can be a lot of fun. Have you ever been in a Christmas musical or program? What kind of part did you have?

Who do you think is the most important part in a program like that? Who is really the star of the show? *As you discuss roles, hold up items that might accompany them, such as a shepherd's staff, animal, star, or other items.* Is it Mary? Or the shepherds? How about the actual star itself? Who has the key lead role? Well, hopefully you can guess, but the most critical part of the whole Christmas story is none of those...the star of the Nativity is, of course, our Savior, Jesus! That's the whole reason for celebrating Christmas!

Sometimes, even if know this, it can be easy to forget. We can get caught up and distracted by all of the excitement that comes this time of year. We have parties, programs, lights, presents, and all sorts of other things that sort of make us neglect or drift away from the most important thing of all. We have Christmas because we remember that God gave us the greatest gift ever: Jesus reminds us that the Lord fulfilled His promises to redeem the world. God had planned it that way from the very beginning, and at Christmas He sent us His Son to rescue us from sin and death.

Christmas isn't the only time we can tend to get distracted. There are a lot of moments in our lives when we might get too busy or too focused on things other than the most significant and central thing: our faith. It's important to constantly come back to that. At Christmas, we come back to the birth of Jesus and how He came to us and will come again. At Easter, we celebrate His sacrificial death and resurrection. But any day, and in many ways, we rejoice that He saves us and is present with us. Jesus should be the star of our lives! Let Him rule in your hearts and shine brightly in all that you do.

Let's say a prayer to thank God for His Son, and ask for help in keeping Him the star of our lives...

Prayer:

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for the joy of Christmas

And for sending your Son to us

Please help us to focus on Him

And keep Christ the star of our lives.

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

Game & Activities Suggestions (10 minutes)



This lesson focuses on the story of Nativity, and the joy of Christmas! Jesus sent His Son the greatest Christmas gift ever, and we should remember that He is the star of our

lives. To get started, select from one of the following openers, or select another of your own choosing!

- Unwrap it challenge: Life is full of difficulty, and this game offers a fun challenge. Provide students with wrapped candies (Hershey's kisses, fun sized chocolates, etc.), and invite them to open them, but with a catch: students must wear large mittens while unwrapping!
- Marshmallow relay: just for winter-themed fun...have students cross the room back and forth in a relay race, using a spoon to scoop up marshmallows and transfer them to bowls or cups. Award points for speed as well as marshmallow count.
- The light of the world...Jesus came as the true light of all things, shining in the darkness. If you have a room that can get quite dark, have students search for items in the dark room, using the light of small flashlights. Observe the difference it makes to turn on the lights. Jesus turns on the lights for us!
- Who would you be in the story? Discuss the different "characters" that we encounter in the Nativity, and what they might represent. Invite students to consider who they might be (an angel to tell the good news, a humble shepherd, academic Magi, trusting Mary, etc...hopefully not Herod!).

- Guess that hymn...play several classic Christmas hymns and carols and see if students recognize what they are. Bonus points if they can sing along. Carol Karaoke!
- Unique Nativity: Provide students with unique objects (pinecones, cups, socks, clothespins, slices of bread, etc.) and have them use them to create their own special version of a Nativity scene.

Explain that today's lesson is about the greatest story of all...God sent us His son, Jesus! As we look again at this wonderful narrative, consider angles you might not have noticed before.

Ask: What do you know about the birth of Jesus? What do you think it would be like to be in Bethlehem that night?

Main Bible Teaching (15 minutes)



This lesson contains the well-known and oft-read Nativity story, but it never gets old! You could act out with students or puppets, take turns reading, or read the verses out loud and pause for explanatory notes. Choose whichever order of passages seems best to you. **Note:** This lesson naturally goes well with Christmas, but the message is not just for Christmas Day or Advent season. It applies at any time of our lives!

Luke 2:1-5 KJV And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (2) (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) (3) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. (4) And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) (5) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

This could be a confusing introduction. It's enough to point out that the people in charge of government wanted to count everyone for taxes and ordered all the people to go to the town their families had come from. The significant thing here is that Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem. This was no coincidence. God had planned this all along and had even had prophets tell others that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

Ask: Do you know where your family or ancestors came from? Does it matter in shaping who you are?

Luke 2:6-7 KJV And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. (7) And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Imagine traveling a long distance, only to arrive at your destination and have no place to stay. We tend to get cranky enough if our hotel check-in time gets moved. Mary and Joseph did not have cars or planes. They had to travel on foot (or with animals to ride), and the journey was dangerous and frightening. But Bethlehem was quite crowded, and when they got there, they couldn't find any lodging. So, they had to go to a stable, which was probably like a cave. There Mary gave birth to Jesus and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes.

Ask: What would you expect for a king's birth? A palace or fancy hospital? Probably. But that was not how Jesus was born. However, He did get a pretty special fanfare...

Luke 2:8-14 KJV And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9) And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. (10) And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. (11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. (12) And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. (13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, (14) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Explain that shepherds were not the most popular people. They were kind of a lower class in society, especially considering they hung out with sheep all day, and probably didn't

get to bathe too often! But God chose to announce the birth of the savior to these simple, humble field workers. Angels came and sang the good news of the Savior! The first people to hear of Christ's Nativity were not priests or kings, but simple shepherds. And they believed it! Well, you would think they'd believe it, with an angel chorus...but they were eager to see this newborn Messiah.

They were scared at first, but the angels assured them of great things to look to! Just as the angels and shepherds shared good news, we can tell others of God's great works, too! We trust Him to provide for us, and pass on His good news to others, too.

Ask: What do you think you would do if you received a message like that from Heavenly angels? What do you normally do when you receive good news?

Luke 2:15-20 KJV And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. (16) And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. (17) And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. (18) And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. (19) But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. (20) And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

The shepherds had to go see this wonderful promise fulfilled. They were eager and excited to witness the Savior, and they worshiped Him, even as a baby. We see here that Mary treasured this. It must have been wonderful for her to realize that Jesus truly was a Messiah, and to see how He was impacting people, even on the first night of His life. It was also probably a big responsibility for her to consider raising the Son of God! The

shepherds continued to spread the news of the Holy birth, though. We are called to do that, too!

Ask: What is the most important part of the Christmas story?

It's easy to see here that Jesus is the star of the show. But is He always the star of our show? Sometimes we get distracted by all the other "stuff" that happens around Christmas time. It's important to put Christ first and foremost, not just during the Holidays, but every day of the year. He should be ruler of our hearts and lives because He loves us and rescues us! Merry Christmas!

Pray: Say a prayer thanking God for sending Jesus to be the true star of Christmas, and of our lives. Ask for help in putting Him first and foremost always.

Craft Activities (15 minutes)

Christmas is a joyful, blessed, marvelous time and day to celebrate. It can be easy, though, to get wrapped up in holiday hubbub and forget where our focus should be. As we anticipate and rejoice in the birth of Jesus, we should also think about the blessing of why He came and what it means for us. These fun crafts are great for anytime around Christmas, offering unique takes on the story of the Nativity. A “Star of Bethlehem Scene” uses various media to set up the scene of the story in the stable. A “Messianic Parenthood Puppet” uses a reversible paper bag puppet and Jesus element to tell the tale.

Verses or Captions to Consider... (Luke 2:1-20)

- *Unto us a son is born...*
- *Jesus...the star of my life!*
- *Jesus is the star of the story!*
- *Jesus is born!*

Craft One: "Star of Bethlehem Scene"

You will need:

- Paper plates
- Scissors
- Markers and/or crayons
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Glue, tape, or stapler
- Clothespins and/or cupcake liners
- Extra decorations as desired



Procedure:

1. Decorate a paper or cardstock sheet with basic background elements and verses or captions to prepare for a Nativity scene.
2. Decorate popsicle sticks or clothespins to serve as components of the story.
3. Place a star, stickers, and other decorations in the scene. Hang, if desired, to recount the story and celebrate the star!

Craft Two: “Messianic Parenthood Puppet”

You will need:

- Markers/crayons
- Construction paper or card stock
- Decorations (stickers, glitter, etc.)
- Scissors
- Paper bags
- Paper towel tube
- Tape or glue



Procedure:

1. Decorate a paper bag to fit the character of Mary, with paper or cloth clothing and facial features as desired.

2. On the other side of the bag, create a “Joseph” after the same manner.

3. Add verses or captions.

4. Decorate a toilet paper tube as Jesus, wrapped in streamer “swaddling” if desired.

5. Place the baby with either side of the puppet and use to reenact the Nativity story.

Luke 2:6-7 KJV

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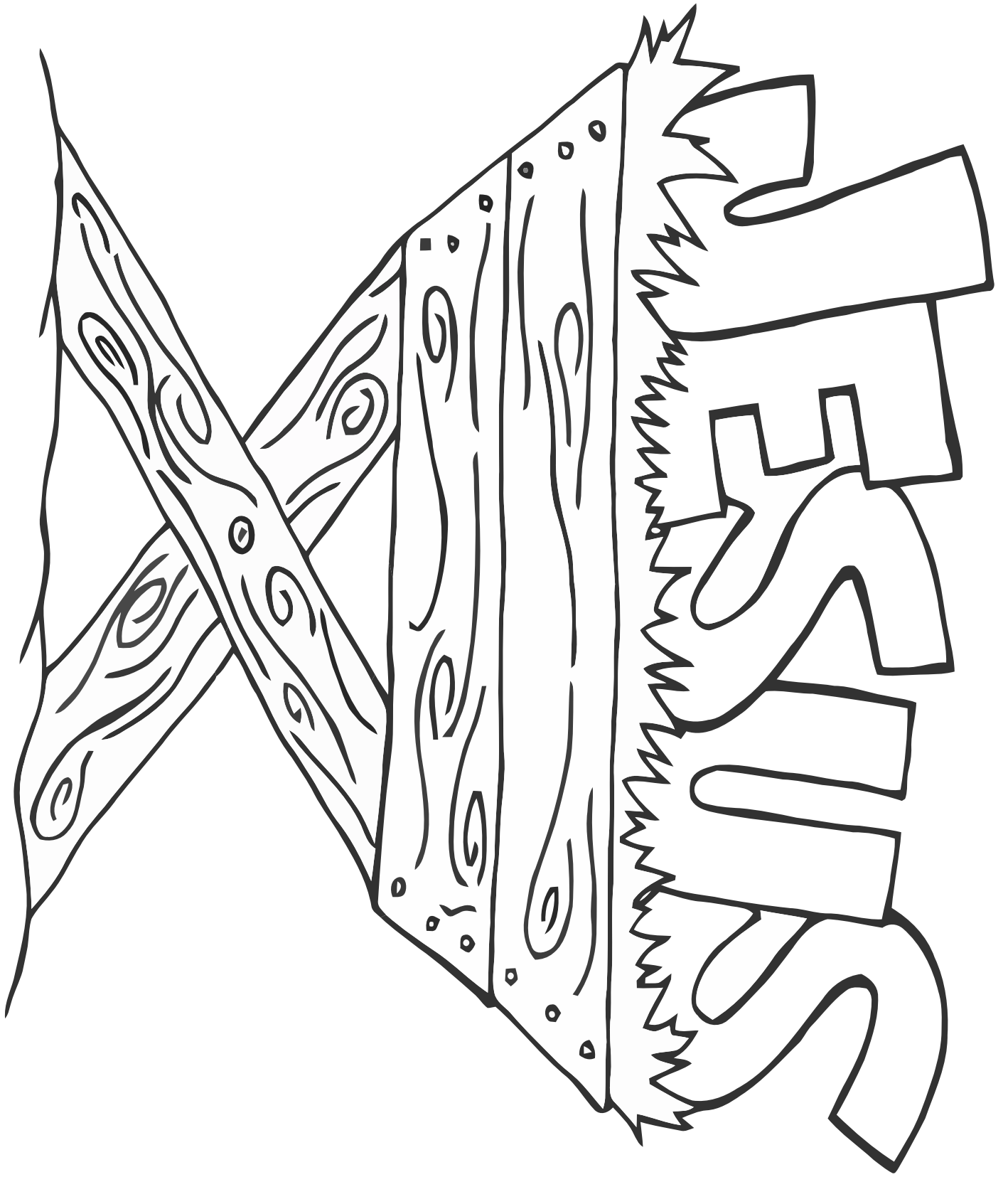
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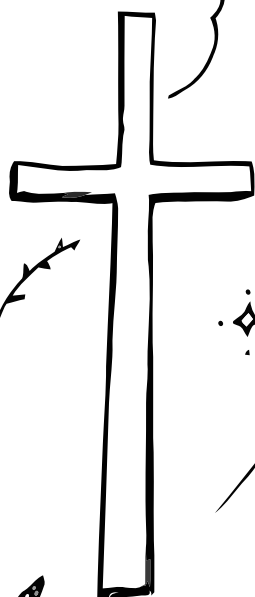
Jesus
IS OUR
Savior





JESUS

FOR UNTO
US A CHILD IS BORN...



FOR UNTO US
A SON IS
GIVEN...

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Mandy Groce '21



Word Search Puzzle: Luke 2:1-20

The Birth of Jesus Christ

ANGELS – AUGUSTUS – BABY – BETHLEHEM – CAESAR – CHILD
CHRIST – FIRSTBORN – JOSEPH – MANGER - MARY - SHEPHERDS

D F A F C A E S A R S
N I Q N C H R I S T W
V R A S G B P L V O S
Q S G J Z E O J P N H
Q T A R S W L O M C E
G B S T B H G S A H P
N O V M A N G E R I H
Y R U V B T E P Y L E
H N M A Y F Q H K D R
W B E T H L E H E M D
M S J A U G U S T U S

Word Search Answers

D	F	A	F	C	A	E	S	A	R	S
N	I	Q	N	C	H	R	I	S	T	W
V	R	A	S	G	B	P	L	V	O	S
Q	S	G	J	Z	E	O	J	P	N	H
Q	T	A	R	S	W	L	O	M	C	E
G	B	S	T	B	H	G	S	A	H	P
N	O	V	M	A	N	G	E	R	I	H
Y	R	U	V	B	T	E	P	Y	L	E
H	N	M	A	Y	F	Q	H	K	D	R
W	B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	D
M	S	J	A	U	G	U	S	T	U	S