**Large Group December 31**

**Bible Teaching: Shepherds**

**Bible Passage: Luke 2:8-20**

**Bible Teaching Summary**

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Shepherds were tending their sheep nearby. An angel appeared and told them that Jesus had been born. Many angels appeared, giving glory to God. The shepherds went immediately to find the baby like they had been told. They glorified God and told everyone about what had happened.

**brite\* Idea:** God deserves all the glory.

**Memory Verse: Isaiah 7:14b**

*(She) shall bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel (God with us).*

**Focus Verses: Psalm 100:4, Psalm 115:1, Hebrews 13:15**

**He Question:** Why do we worship God?

God is worthy of all of our adoration and attention because of who He is and all He has done, especially sending Jesus as our Savior.

**We Question:** How can we give God glory in our lives?

We give God glory as we live life His way and point others to Him.

**Me Question:** What does God want me to know about Him and what does this mean for my life?

**Leader Tips: Share Stories**

As kids are learning truths about God, it is valuable for them to be on the lookout for ways that these truths are evident in their everyday lives. Model this by sharing stories about how you have seen a truth about God on display during the week. Perhaps you could share a story about sensing God’s presence with you in difficult circumstances, or experiencing God’s kindness towards you through the thoughtfulness of a friend. Encourage the kids to share stories from their week as well, naming and celebrating ways they experience the qualities of God that the group has been learning about. You might even find it helpful to issue a challenge each week to invite the kids to be on the lookout for one of God’s characteristics, and then to follow up about it the following week. These practices will help the truths that the kids are learning feel more real and meaningful in their daily lives.

**Navigating a Broken World: Priorities**

According to Pew Research, only a little over a third of parents feel that it is very important to pass on their religious beliefs to their kids.\* This trend plays out in the lives of your church families as many things battle for their attention. Kids in your group may view church or their relationship with God as just another activity in their busy lives. In today’s lesson, kids will learn that God is worthy of all the glory in our lives, which includes our attention and focus. We can help kids see this most effectively by avoiding an approach involving guilt, and instead pointing kids continually to the awesomeness of who God is and what He has done. Helping kids fall in love with Jesus and understand the beauty of the gospel invites worship. Guilt pushes kids away. As a loving, caring adult in their lives, you have the opportunity to model for kids what a life focused on Jesus looks like.

**\***<https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/01/24/parenting-in-america-today/>

**Large Group Experiences Overview**

 **Welcome:**

*Supplies Needed: Video player*

**Find it in the Bible:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides*

**Bible Teaching:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible*

**Bible Teaching Review:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides, video player*

**Bible Teaching Wrap-Up:**

*Supplies Needed: Bible, teaching slides, video player*

**SPLASH FLOW**

Note: Advance slide at hi lighted lines

Theme Slide

**Kid’s Enter**

 Welcome and encourage to play games/interact with other kids and teachers

**Gather kids into their age groups**

 Do the “Belong” activity with the 2 groups

Play Countdown **when groups are winding down with their “Belong” activity and gather them into the main teaching area**

 **Quick Welcome, ask to stand up, then Play worship videos**

Video: “Joy To The World - Joyful Joyful”

Video: “Worthy of it all”

Offering

Theme Slide

**Ask all to sit, then do “Bible Teaching” section below**

**Welcome Activity**

**Supplies:** Video player

**Prep:** Show kids three motions that they will need for this game:

 **Sheep -** Get down on all fours.

 **Shepherd -** Stand with one hand on hip and one as if holding a staff.

 **Angel -** Stand with hands in the air and make an “angelic” sound.

**Say:** I am going to say either “sheep”, “shepherd”, or “angel”. When I do, you need to do the correct motion as quickly as possible.

*Say the words, mixing up the order to keep kids guessing as they move. Start slowly and increase your speed to be more challenging. You can also have kids sit when they mess up and determine a winner.*

**Say:** You did a great job listening carefully to my instructions. Today, we will learn about how the shepherds had to listen to instructions from the angels. Let’s watch our intro video.

**Intro Video**

 *Play the Intro video, then follow the script below****.***

**Say:** Mia’s play was a success! Mrs. D loved it, but Mia was very worried in the beginning that she would get all of the attention instead of the One she was doing it all for.

**Discuss:** Has there ever been a time that you wanted someone else to get the attention or recognition instead of yourself?

**Say:** It feels good to get attention, but it also is awesome to give others the praise they deserve – especially God. Today’s brite\* idea is: God is worthy of all the glory.

**Today we will answer these two questions:**

Why do we worship God?

How do we give God glory in our lives?

**And at the end of our time today, the question you will be able to answer is:**

What does God want me to know about Him, and what does this mean for my life?

 **Find It in the Bible**

**What is the Bible?**

The Bible is real and true. God gave us the Bible so that we could know Him. The Bible is filled with many books and stories, but it’s all a part of one BIG story—God’s Story.

**What is God**’**s Bigger Story?**

**Creation:** God is the Creator of all things, and He is very good.

**Fall:** Adam and Eve sinned and disobeyed God. Sin broke the world and people were separated from God. All people have sinned, so the relationship with God is broken for each of us.

**Redemption:** People could not fix their sin problem on their own. God promised all throughout the Old Testament that He would send a Rescuer, a Messiah, to save the people from their sin. He sent His Son, Jesus. Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

**Restoration:** When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, our relationship with God can be made right again. We don’t do anything to earn it, and we don’t deserve it. God restores us through His grace. One day, Jesus will return and restore the whole broken world, making it new again.

**Play “These Are The Books Of The Bible” Song video**

**The video can be viewed at this link:**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwDywQ5qaqM> **or on our Brite page.**

**Where is today**’**s Bible story?**

Today’s story comes from the book of Luke. Luke is the third book of the New Testament. Last week, we learned about how Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Today’s story happens right after that!

*Open a Bible and show the kids the title page for the book of Luke. Then, show them how to get to today*’*s Bible passage (Luke 2:8-20).*

**Bible Teaching:**

**Bible Passage:** Luke 2:8-20

**Supplies:** Bible

**Prep:** Gather all the kids in a large open space.

**Say:** Jesus, the Savior of the world, was born in Bethlehem! But so far no one knew except for Mary and Joseph and some animals. But that was about to change! Today, we’ll hear how God got the word out, and we’ll hear about it through a fun game of blob tag.

*Explain that they*’*ll play several rounds of blob tag where you*’*ll choose one kid to be* “*It”. When that person tags one person, he or she will join hands with* “*It” and those two will continue tagging. They*’*ll add each new person they*’*ve tagged to their* “*It blob” by holding hands or hanging onto an arm or shoulder. The game continues until everyone is part of the blob.*

**Read Luke 2:8 directly from the Bible,** *And in the same region, there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

**Say:** In those days, shepherds were looked down upon in society. They worked hard out in the fields. They were sometimes smelly, and they weren’t able to come to the temple. But God wanted them to be the first to know His amazing news. He sent angels to share the very special announcement.

*Choose someone to be* “*It.” This is the first angel who starts gathering all the angels to go down from Heaven. As an* “*It” tags someone else, he or she should say,* “*Let*’*s share the good news.” After everyone has been tagged, have them freeze.*

**Say:** All of a sudden, there was a bright light. An angel appeared to them and the glory of the Lord was shining brightly. The shepherds were terrified. They had never seen anything like this before!

*Choose someone to be* “*It”. Have everyone disperse in the gathering area. As an* “*It” tags someone else, he or she should say,* “*Don*’*t be afraid.” After everyone has been tagged, have them freeze.*

**Read Luke 2:10-14 directly from the Bible,** *And the angel said to them,* “*Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,*“*Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!”*

*Choose someone to be* “*It”. Have everyone disperse in the gathering area. As an* “*It” tags someone else, he or she should say,* “*Glory to God in the highest.” After everyone has been tagged, have them freeze.*

**Say:** The angels went back into Heaven and the shepherds looked at each other, stunned. They said, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see what God has told us!” They immediately left and searched until they found Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus. Jesus was wrapped in cloths and lying in the manger, just like the angel said.

**Say:** The shepherds shared what had happened, and what the angels had told them. The Savior of the world had been born in a manger! People were amazed by what they had to say. The shepherds returned to their field, praising and worshiping God for all that had happened. They gave God all of the glory and all of the honor and praise, for sending the Savior.

*Choose someone to be* “*It”. Have everyone disperse in the gathering area. As an* “*It” tags someone else, he or she should say,* “*A Savior is born.” After everyone has been tagged, have them sit down.*

**POINT TO JESUS**

The Savior of the world came in an unlikely way. He was the King of the whole world, born in a lowly manger and His birth was announced to unlikely messengers. God’s plan was different than what anyone could have expected. The shepherds realized that Jesus wasn’t just any baby. The angels told them clearly who He was. He was the Savior – the one who came to rescue us from our sins. He was the Christ – the anointed and chosen One. He is our Lord – He came as God in the promised Savior flesh. Jesus is the only one who is the Savior and came as a baby. He grew up to die on the cross for our sins. To be made right with God, we must ask Jesus to forgive us of our sins and recognize that He is the only one who can save us. We must make the choice to trust in Him as the Lord of our lives. He lives. He made a way for every single one of us to be forgiven and be made right with God. Now let’s go share the good news of Jesus as excitedly as we did in our game!

**Bible Teaching: Review**

**Supplies Needed:** Bible, teaching slides, video player

**Prep:** None

**Watch the Bible Review Video, and then play the game below.**

**If kids know the right answer, they will say** “**Glory to God.” The first one who says it can answer aloud. You can bring several kids to the front to compete or play as a whole group.**

1. Where were the shepherds? **(In their fields watching the sheep)**
2. What was the angel’s good news of great joy? **(The Savior had been born)**

*The Savior had been born in Bethlehem. This was good news for every single person on Earth. The shepherds, who were some of the most unpopular people in the town, were the first to hear.*

1. Who said “Glory to God in the highest!”? **(A large group of angels appeared.)**
2. What did the shepherds do after the angels went back to heaven? **(They left to find the baby in a manger.)**

*The shepherds did exactly what the angels told them. They went and found the baby in the manger, wrapped in cloths. They told everyone what they had seen and heard.*

1. Why were the shepherds praising God? **(They had seen the Savior.)**

*The shepherds knew that God had kept His promise of sending a rescuer. They believed that this baby was the Savior.*

1. Why is God worthy of our worship? **(He sent Jesus.)**

*God is worthy of all of our adoration and attention because of who He is and all He has done, especially sending Jesus as our Savior.*

1. How can we give glory to God in our own lives? **(Living His way.)**

*We give God glory as we live life His way and point others to Him.*

**Bible Teaching: Wrap-Up**

**Supplies needed:** Bible, teaching slides, video player

**Prep:** None

**The brite\* idea for the day is:** God is worthy of all the glory.

**Memory Verse:**

Choose an older kid to look up the verse and read it aloud to the group. Have the whole group repeat it together.

*(She) shall bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel (God with us). Isaiah 7:14b*

Watch the Memory Melody video to review.

**Teaching Wrap-Up**

**He Question: Why do we worship God?**

God is worthy of all of our adoration and attention because of who He is and all He has done, especially sending Jesus as our Savior.

**We Question: How can we give God glory in our lives?**

We give God glory as we live life His way and point others to Him.

**As time permits…**

**Gather kids into their 2 age groups**

Do the “Believing” activity with the 2 groups

 AND/OR

***Do the “Becoming” activity with the 2 groups DEPENDING UPON TIME AVAILABLE***

**Prayer**

God, we give You all the glory. Thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior. We love You and adore You. Help us to give You our attention. Help us to give You our adoration because of who You are and the great things You have done. Amen.