

HOW THE GOOD NEWS IS GIVEN

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

JOY BIRTH OF JESUS WITNESS

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 33:12-15; Matthew 1:6; Luke 2:8-20

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the preadolescents tell others about the joy they feel about the birth of Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE

"This is how God showed his love among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

Perhaps your students have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, but only some speak with others about their faith. Maybe they do not know how to witness or, as time has gone by, they have lost the emotion they felt in surrendering to Christ.

This lesson will help your class understand that the birth of Jesus is a cause for celebration, and that witnessing about it does not always mean explaining the plan of salvation. As in the case of pastors, our testimony will be very effective if we tell others about the joy that Jesus gives us. Encourage your students to learn to tell others the good news of Jesus' birth, and to reflect in their lives the joy of personally knowing the Savior and Lord.

BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Read Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 33:12-15; Matthew 1:6 and Luke 2:8-20. Jesus was born in a manger, not by accident, but because it was part of God's plan. The first to receive the good news were the shepherds, while they tended their sheep in the field during the night. Furthermore, in Isaiah 11:1 it was prophesied that the Messiah would descend from the line of Jesse, David's father.

Since David had been a shepherd, it was appropriate that the first to hear the glorious news about the birth of Jesus were shepherds.

The angels gave the news of the birth of the Messiah to humble shepherds, not to rulers or religious leaders. That fact was very significant, because it was to common and hardworking people. Religious leaders despised shepherds for not keeping the Sabbath, and under the law of Moses, many Jews considered them impure. Jesus himself was accused of violating the Sabbath and being impure by associating with people that society rejected.

The announcement to the shepherds also showed that Christ came first to the Jews. They awaited the Messiah, and God honored them for believing in his promises.

The shepherds, feeling the need to go to Bethlehem, left their work to seek the Savior and worship him.

Through this passage, we can know the joy that must have filled their hearts. After worshiping the newborn King, the shepherds returned to their work. They praised God and told the news to everyone they met on their way. Their hearts overflowed with joy after coming face to face with the Savior.

Do we feel that same joy and transmit it to others? If we show the joy, we have in Christ, as the shepherds did many years ago, people will know the love of God, seeing it reflected in us.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Guess what happened!

Guide their attention to Student Activity Sheet #364-A. Ask them to complete the sentences about the most exciting experiences they have had.

Then, ask them: "What do people do when they are excited about good news?" (They want to tell it.) "If you had exciting news, who would you like to tell?" Listen to their responses and then say: "In today's story, we will hear about some people who received very exciting news, and we will see what they did."

TEACH THE LESSON

Read Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 33:12-15; Matthew 1:6 and Luke 2:8-20 in advance and be prepared to tell the shepherds' story following this text as a guide.

What do they do when they cannot sleep? Allow a storm of ideas until someone mentions that the solution is to count sheep. Then, tell them: Imagine what it would be like to count sheep for life. Boring? Tiring? Would they lose count?

It all started on a quiet night, while a group of shepherds cared for their sheep. Nothing exciting happened on that side of the mountain. Maybe sometimes the shepherds wanted a wild animal to appear to stop the boredom. Suddenly, the darkness was gone and the sky was filled with radiance. It was an angel! The shepherds were frightened, but the angel told them ... (in advance ask someone to read Luke 2:10-12 at that time).

Then, more angels appeared singing praises to God (ask another student to read Luke 2:14 at that time).

It seemed that the earth trembled! Or maybe it was the shepherds who trembled with fear? When the angels disappeared, the shepherds were so excited and they said ... (Read all together Luke 2:15). Maybe they did something they had never done before: they left their sheep and ran to Bethlehem.

There they found Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus. After worshiping Jesus, the shepherds returned to watch over their flocks; they praised God and told everyone what they had seen and heard.

CONNECT THE LESSON

To announce!

Tell your students: "God wants us to express our joy for the birth of Jesus to others." Then, write on the blackboard: "Tell others about Jesus." Talk about the meaning of each word. Ask: "What should we tell about Jesus? How can we talk about Jesus if others do not want to listen? To whom should we tell the good news?" Write your students' answers on the blackboard. Emphasize that today, many people have a hurried life, and it is often difficult to get them to stop to listen to the Word of God. We need to be prepared to talk to people about Jesus and be precise in our message.

Have the students look at Student Activity Sheet #364-B and do the suggested activity. They will need time to write simple messages of two lines that express the truth about Jesus and the joy of knowing him. Read the examples on the Student Activity Sheet #364-C and allow them to work together to write their poems about telling others.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

[Download Suggestions for Bible Memorization PDF](#)

Before this session you will need to prepare another set of large pieces of cardboard with the words of the memory verse. Use both sets of pieces of cardboard with the words of the memory verse today. Begin by reading the memory verse (1 John 4:9-10) aloud. Then divide the group into two teams, e.g. boys and girls. Tell the teams they need to help you put all the words of the memory verse in the correct order. Allow one student on each team at a time to place one word in the correct order. The team that completes the memory verse first is the winner. After all the words are put in the correct order, repeat the memory verse together a couple of times. Then, put the pieces of cardboard in a visible place in the meeting area for continued use during the unit.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Intercede in prayer for the people your students will share the Good News with during this week.

Encourage

Encourage the group to trust God to help them share the Good News this week. Say goodbye by singing a Christmas song.

Invite

Be sure to invite the group to the next session. Tell them something interesting about it to encourage them to attend. Remind them to welcome visitors.