

THE SHEPHERDS GO TO SEE JESUS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

LIVE CELEBRATE JOY BIRTH OF JESUS

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Luke 2:8-20

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To encourage the children to celebrate the birth of Jesus with joy.

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" (1 John 4:9, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

In this part of Christmas story, some very important people appear: the shepherds. These were considered to be people with very limited resources. However, God chose these humble men to be the first to hear the wonderful news of the birth of Jesus.

The Gospel of Luke is the only one that tells us about the visit that the angels made to the shepherds. During the night, they tended their flocks near Bethlehem, in a small and not very well-known town.

Bethlehem was a city rich in history. Jacob's wife, Rachel, was buried there when this city was called Ephrathah. It was also the home of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. It was there that the prophet Samuel met David, the future king of Israel. Micah prophesied that the Messiah himself would be born in Bethlehem.

The angel's announcement was very clear in telling them who Jesus was. He called him "Savior" and "Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). His birth was good news for all (v. 10), not just for the more powerful Jews. The birth of Jesus was good news for all people, even the most humble of the earth.

The angel's announcement to the shepherds is still valid today, and year after year we celebrate the glorious truth that Jesus, the Son of God, came to this world to save us from our sins.

The spontaneous way of believing and the response of the shepherds is an example for us.

Help your children realize that the story of Jesus' birth is very different from the secular stories they hear about Christmas. Do not be alarmed if older children combine events of Jesus' birth with secular stories. Encourage them to experience the hope, joy, and reverence that the shepherds felt when they heard the angel's announcement. God cares for everyone, especially those who are very humble.

The shepherds did not have expensive gifts for Jesus. The only thing they had to offer was their worship.

Like shepherds, children often do not have much money to buy presents during the Christmas season. Help them know that God values the worship they give Him and the love they show to family and friends. Just as the shepherds told others the good news, the children can also tell their unconverted friends and family about the birth of Jesus.

Young children do not know what it means to be an evangelist or a preacher. However, they know that they can tell others what they have learned. Even at an early age, they can have a very important part in spreading the gospel.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

A night full of stars

Draw figures of good sized stars on a piece of cardboard and cut them out. Give one to each child and let them decorate with sequins, glitter or simply color it gold or yellow. When everyone has finished their stars, let them write their names, and hang them around the room to simulate that it is night and the stars are shining in the sky.

Talk about the stars. Remind the children that these are God's creation, and they make the sky look beautiful when it is night.

Tell them that this story speaks of something that happened one night when the stars shone brighter than ever.

TEACH THE LESSON

Prior to the session study Luke 2:8-20 to be prepared to teach the lesson. The following activity will help you present today's Bible lesson.

The joy of the shepherds

The story began with a night full of stars. Some shepherds were watching over their sheep when, suddenly, the sky lit up. The shepherds raised their eyes and felt much fear. "What was that light?" they asked each other.

An angel told them: "Do not be afraid, God has sent us to give you good news. A special child was born today. That baby is the Son of God, and you can find him in a manger in Bethlehem."

Suddenly, the sky was filled with a multitude of angels who began to praise God saying, "Glory to God in the highest."
(Encourage the children to repeat it with you).

The shepherds were very excited and happy about the news that the angels gave them, so they said, "Let's go to Bethlehem to see what has happened." They took their belongings and hurried to see the child.

When they arrived, they found Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus. It was just as the angels had told them. When the shepherds saw everything, they could not wait to tell others about Jesus, the Son of God.

CONNECT THE LESSON

The shepherds' way

Distribute Student Activity Sheet #51-A and #51-B. As you do this activity review the Bible story. Help the children cut out the figures of shepherds, angels, and sheep found in SAS #51-B. Also, help them glue the figures onto SAS #51-A according to the story that they learned today.

Ask them to follow the path in SAS #51-A that leads them to the baby Jesus, marking it with a colored pencil.

Encourage the children to take home these activity sheets and share the story with their family and friends.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Have the children form a circle. Put yourself in the middle. Throw them a soft ball. The child who receives it should stand up and say the memory verse. Repeat this exercise in such a way that all your children participate. Help the little ones who have difficulty memorizing.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Prayer should be part of the daily life of preschoolers. The Christmas season is full of gifts and toys. This is a good time to emphasize that prayer is not a simple list of requests to God, but a way of communicating with him, thanking him and praising him. Let the children use their own words as they pray. Intercede for their requests, and thank God for sending Jesus as our Redeemer and Savior.

To conclude, pray, thanking God for the Christmas celebrations.

Encourage

Encourage the children to praise God for sending Jesus as a gift of love for us. Also encourage the children to tell the story of Christmas to others.

Invite

Say something interesting about the next session and encourage the children to attend. Say goodbye by singing some Christmas song.