

Lesson 12: The Best Birthday Party Ever!

Key Takeaway

Because God loves us, we can trust his plan, just like Mary did.

Scriptural Basis

Luke 2:1-20

Bible Verse

"The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!" (Luke 2:11, NLT).

Learning Objectives:

- Children will understand that Jesus is the Son of God and our Savior.
- Children will see how Mary trusted God's plan, even when it was hard.
- Children will recognize that God can use anyone to be part of his big story.

Materials Needed for Small Group:

- ☐ A Bible
- ☐ Name tags
- ☐ A snack per child

Activity: Good News Showdown

- ☐ Printout 1, slips of paper with “Good News” examples written on them (or printed on cards)
- ☐ A small bag or box to draw them from
- ☐ Optional: Signs labeled “Good News” and “Best News”

Activity: Story Sequencing Game

- ☐ Printout 2, printed story cards with short sentences from Luke 2 (mixed up)

Activity: Jesus Came for Me Collage

- ☐ Paper or poster board
- ☐ Old magazines, pre-printed images of people
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Crayons or markers

Optional Activity: Joy Response Celebration

- ☐ Optional: Simple instruments (shakers, tambourines) or clapping hands

Activity: Good News to Share Cards

- ☐ Index cards or folded paper
- ☐ Crayons, stickers, markers
- ☐ Optional: Sample phrases or verse to copy

Materials Needed for Large Group:

- ☐ A Bible
- ☐ Optional: Labels for each corner A,B,C,D

Materials Needed for Games:

Game: Prophecy Relay

- ☐ 4 envelopes labeled with one of Jesus’ names from Isaiah 9:6 (Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace)
- ☐ A set of matching definition cards (Example: “Mighty God – Jesus is powerful and strong”)

- ☐ A table or whiteboard for matching the names with their meanings

Game: Waiting for the Promise

- ☐ A wrapped gift (empty box or small prize inside)
- ☐ Small cards with quick mini-games or challenges (optional)

Game: Jesus' Names Freeze Dance

- ☐ A device to play music
- ☐ A list of Jesus' names from Isaiah 9:6

Game: Promise Pass

- ☐ A small object (ball, toy, etc.)
- ☐ A space to sit in a circle

Small Group Session 1

15 Minutes

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following activities to do together while children eat their snack.

Share and Listen

Option 1

Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).

Option 2

Ask the children to take turns sharing how they are feeling today using the [“How Are You Feeling?” chart](#).

Pray Together

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group, or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

Opening Questions

- **“Have you ever been surprised?”**
- **“Was it a good surprise or a bad surprise?”**

(Have leaders share a story about a good surprise) They could also share and contrast a bad surprise with a good surprise.

Activity: Good News Showdown

Objective: To help kids understand what “good news” feels like and prepare their hearts to hear about the best news ever—the birth of Jesus!

Material Needed:

- ☐ Printout 1, slips of paper with “Good News” examples written on them (or printed on cards)
- ☐ A small bag or box to draw them from
- ☐ Signs labeled “Good News” and “Best News” (optional)

“Who loves getting good news? We’re going to play a game to get us thinking about what really great news sounds like.”

Pick a Volunteer: One child draws a card with a “good news” statement (e.g., “You’re getting a puppy!”).

Ask:

- **“Would that be good news?”**
- **“Show me with a big cheer or a thumbs up!”**

Allow each child to go through and pick a Good News Card.

Ask:

- ***“Those are all really exciting things—but what if there was a kind of good news that was even better?”***
- ***“Something that changes the world—not just your day?”***

“A long time ago, some shepherds were just doing their normal job out in the fields when something amazing happened. An angel appeared with a message—and it was the best news ever shared. Let’s find out what that news was in Large Group!”

Large Group

10-15 Minutes

Welcome the students to Crossroads and tell them you are glad they came this week.

Optional Starters

Feel free to choose one, two, or even all of these ideas to start Large Group!

“Who is Jesus” call and response

Prayer Prompt: “God, you are good because...”

(Tell God what makes you know he is good—like how he loves you, forgives you, gives you good things, or always keeps his promises.)

Opening Song: “Joy to the World” by Go Fish

Opening Prayer

Tell kids that closing their eyes and folding their hands together can help keep them focused and not distract those around them.

Introduction

“Let me ask you a question:”

- ***“What’s the worst job you can think of?”***

“Maybe it’s picking up dog poop... or cleaning toilets... or standing outside in the freezing cold all night.

Believe it or not, in Bible times, being a shepherd was seen as a pretty rough job. They had to sleep outside, protect their sheep from wild animals, and they were often ignored or looked down on by other people.

They weren’t rich. They weren’t powerful.

They were just... normal.

But guess who got the very first announcement that Jesus—the Savior of the world—had been born?

The shepherds. Not kings. Not celebrities. Not important officials. God sent His angel to share the good news with people the world thought didn’t matter.”

Corner Quiz – The Shepherds’ Surprise

“I’ll read a question and give you four possible answers. Each answer goes with a corner of the room. When you hear the choices, go to the corner that matches





your answer! Let's see who was paying attention to the story of the shepherds and the angels!"

You can label the corners as:

 **A** |  **B** |  **C** |  **D**

Helpful Hint: If your space doesn't have clear corners, consider positioning leaders at different spots around the room for children to move to.




Question 1:

- ***"Where were the shepherds when the angel appeared?"***
 - A) In a house**
 -  **B) In the temple**
 -  **C) In the fields**
 -  **D) At the market**
-  **Correct Answer: C) In the fields"**

Read Luke 2:9.

"Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified..."





Question 2:

- ***"What surrounded the angel when he appeared?"***
 - A) Fire**
 -  **B) Clouds**
 -  **C) Bright lights and God's glory**
 -  **D) Smoke**
- Correct Answer: C) Bright lights and God's glory"**

Read Luke 2:10.

"But the angel reassured them. 'Don't be afraid!' he said. 'I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people.'"

Question 3:

- ***"What did the angel say to the shepherds first?"***
 - A) "Run!"**
 -  **B) "Don't be afraid!"**
 -  **C) "Come with me!"**
 -  **D) "Where is the baby?"**
-  **Correct Answer: B) "Don't be afraid!"**

Read Luke 2:11.

"The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!"

Question 4:

- ***"Who was born that night?"***
 -  **A) Moses**

- ☐ B) *The Savior, the Messiah, the Lord*
- ☐ C) *A King named Herod*
- ☐ D) *A prophet named Elijah*
- 👉 **Correct Answer: B) *The Savior, the Messiah, the Lord***

Read Luke 2:12.

“And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.”

Question 5:

- ***“How would the shepherds recognize the baby?”***
 - ☐ A) *He would be wrapped in golden clothes*
 - ☐ B) *He would be lying in a palace*
 - ☐ C) *He would be wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger*
 - ☐ D) *He would be holding a star*
- Correct Answer: C) *He would be wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger***

Read Luke 2:13–14.

“Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.’”

Question 6:

- ***“What did the angels say?”***
 - ☐ A) *“Get ready for battle!”*
 - ☐ B) *“Peace on earth and glory to God!”*
 - ☐ C) *“The end is near!”*
 - ☐ D) *“Jesus needs your help!”*
- Correct Answer: B) *“Peace on earth and glory to God!”***

Read Luke 2:15.

“When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, ‘Let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’”

Question 7:





- ***“What did the shepherds do after the angels left?”***
 - ☐ A) *Went back to sleep*
 - ☐ B) *Hid in fear*
 - ☐ C) *Ran to Bethlehem*
 - ☐ D) *Went home to tell their families*
- 👉 **Correct Answer: C) *Ran to Bethlehem***

Read Luke 2:17 & 20.

“After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child...”

The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them."

Question 8:

- **"What did the shepherds do after seeing Jesus?"**
 -  **A) Kept it a secret**
 -  **B) Went home quietly**
 -  **C) Told everyone and praised God**
 -  **D) Asked the angels to come back**
- 👉 **Correct Answer: C) Told everyone and praised God**

"You did a great job listening and answering questions! Today we heard the amazing story of Jesus' birth—the moment when heaven broke into earth and God's promised Savior was finally here!

And who did God choose to tell first? Not kings or important leaders... but shepherds. Everyday, ordinary people.

That reminds us that Jesus came for everyone—not just the powerful or popular. He came for the poor, the busy, the overlooked, the hurting... and he came for you.

The shepherds didn't just hear the good news. They believed it, they hurried to see Jesus, and then they told everyone about what they had seen.

Just like the shepherds, we can:"

- ***"Celebrate the birth of Jesus with joy!"***
- ***"Share the good news with others"***
- ***"And remember that God can use anyone—even us—to be part of his big story."***

Close in Prayer

Thank God for sending Jesus, the Savior for everyone.

Ask God to help us trust him and share the good news like the shepherds did.

Praise God that He uses ordinary people to be part of his big story.

Small Group Session 2

20-25 Minutes

Share the Key Takeaway: Because God loves us, we can trust his plan, just like Mary did.

Activity: Story Sequencing Game

Objective: Retell the story of Jesus' birth from Luke 2.

Material Needed:

- ☐ Printout 2, printed story cards with short sentences from Luke 2 (mixed up)

Order of Pictures:

1. Shepherds Watching their Flocks of Sheep
2. An angel appeared to shepherds
3. The shepherds found Jesus
4. The Shepherds telling others about Jesus

Shuffle the story cards and give them to each small group.

Let the group work together to place the events in the correct order. Help younger children by reading the cards aloud.

Once complete, read the story straight through using their ordered cards.

Review each card and ask: "What happened next?" to reinforce the sequence.

Example Cards:

- "Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem"
- "Jesus was born and laid in a manger"
- "An angel appeared to shepherds"
- "The shepherds found Jesus"

Activity: Jesus Came for Me Collage

Objective: To help children understand that Jesus came for all people, no matter who they are or what they do, and to reflect on how they are included in God's big plan through a creative and visual activity.

Material Needed:

- ☐ Paper or poster board
- ☐ Old magazines, pre-printed images of people
- ☐ Glue sticks
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Crayons or markers

Give each child a sheet of paper or have them work together as a group on a large poster.

Let them cut out or draw pictures of different types of people: young, old, rich, poor, different jobs, different ethnicities.

Across the top, write: "Jesus came for everyone!"

As they work, discuss:

- ***"Why do you think Jesus came for all people, not just important ones?"***
- ***"What kind of people do you think Jesus came for?"***
(Follow up: *Just rich people? Just people who go to church?*)
- ***"Why do you think God chose shepherds to hear the news first instead of someone important?"***
- ***"Do you think Jesus came for you too? Why?"***
(Encourage them to see their value in God's eyes!)
- ***"Can you think of someone in your life who needs to hear the good news about Jesus?"***
- ***"How does it feel to know that Jesus came for everyone—even people who feel left out or forgotten?"***
- ***"If you could share the good news of Jesus' birth with someone, what would you say?"***

Optional Activity: Joy Response Celebration

Material Needed:

- ☐ Simple instruments (shakers, tambourines) or clapping hands

Read Luke 2:10-11 and invite kids to respond with a joyful noise (music, singing, or cheering "Jesus is born!")

"But the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!"

- ***"Why is this good news for us?"***

"We can celebrate and rejoice just like the shepherds did!"

Going Deeper

- ***"Why do you think God chose to tell shepherds ordinary people about Jesus' birth first?"***
- ***"What does this part of the Bible story teach us about who Jesus came to save?"***
- ***"How would you have felt if you were one of the shepherds and saw the angel in the sky?"***
- ***"What's something surprising or unexpected that you think God might be asking you to trust Him with?"***
- ***"How can you show joy about Jesus, just like the shepherds did?"***
- ***"If Jesus came for everyone, how should we treat other people—especially those who are different from us?"***
- ***"What is one way you can share the good news about Jesus this week?"***
- ***"How does it make you feel to know that you're part of God's big story—just like Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds?"***

Ending Together

5-10 Minutes

Activity: Good News to Share Cards

Material Needed:

- ☐ Index cards or folded paper
- ☐ Crayons, stickers, markers
- ☐ Optional: Sample phrases or verse to copy

“The shepherds didn’t keep the good news to themselves—they told everyone!”

Give each child a card to draw or write a joyful message about Jesus’ birth.

- Younger kids can draw a manger or star and dictate their message.
- Older kids can write: “Jesus is born!” or “Good news for all people!”

Response and Reflection

Let them share their card with a parent, friend, or classmate.

Print out the memory verse.

Practice the memory verse for this unit (Luke 2:11). Take a look at the [Memory Verse Game Ideas](#).

Pray with the students and dismiss them.

Close in Prayer

Encourage kids to pray when they feel worried or have to wait for something.

Games

25 Minutes

Game: Prophecy Relay

Objective: Teach kids that God's promise of Jesus took time to be fulfilled, but he kept his word!

Materials Needed:

- ☐ 4 envelopes labeled with one of Jesus' names from Isaiah 9:6 (Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace)
- ☐ A set of matching definition cards (Example: "Mighty God – Jesus is powerful and strong")
- ☐ A table or whiteboard for matching the names with their meanings

How to Play:

- Divide the class into two teams and line them up. Place four envelopes (one for each name of Jesus in Isaiah 9:6) on a table across the room.
- One player from each team runs to the table, grabs an envelope, and brings it back to their team.
- Inside the envelope is one of the names of Jesus (Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace).
- The in team must work together to match the name to its meaning (written on the board or a poster).
- Repeat until all envelopes are collected and matched correctly.

Connection:

- **Did it take time to get all the names?** (Yes!)

Say: **Just like this took time, God's promise about Jesus took a long time, but He kept His word!**

Game: Waiting for the Promise

Objective: Help kids experience what it's like to wait for something good—just like the people waited for Jesus!

Materials Needed:

- ☐ A wrapped gift (empty box or small prize inside)
- ☐ Small cards with quick mini-games or challenges (optional)

How to Play:

- Pick one volunteer to sit at the front, holding the wrapped gift.
- Tell them they must wait before they can open it. While they wait, the class plays a mini-game (such as Simon Says, counting to 30, or a short memory challenge).
- Once the time is up, allow them to open the gift, revealing a note inside: "Jesus is the greatest promise!"

Connection:

- **How did it feel to wait?**

The people in the Bible had to wait hundreds of years for Jesus!

Alternative: Give different kids short tasks (jumping jacks, clapping, etc.) and let them receive a small reward after waiting—this reinforces patience and trust in God's promises.

Game: Jesus' Names Freeze Dance

Objective: Help kids learn Jesus' special names in a fun, active way.

Materials Needed:

- ☐ A device to play music
- ☐ A list of Jesus' names from Isaiah 9:6

How to Play:

- Play **music** and have kids dance around. When the music **stops**, call out one of **Jesus' names** from Isaiah 9:6:
 - **Wonderful Counselor** – Pretend to whisper advice.
 - **Mighty God** – Flex muscles like a superhero.
 - **Everlasting Father** – Stretch arms wide like a big hug.
 - **Prince of Peace** – Close eyes and take deep breaths.
- The kids freeze in a pose that represents that name. Start the music again and repeat with different names!

Connection:

- Which of Jesus' names do you like the most? Why?

Game: Promise Pass

Objective: Help kids understand that God's promise of Jesus was passed down for generations before it was fulfilled.

Materials Needed:

- ☐ A small object (ball, toy, etc.)
- ☐ A space to sit in a **circle**

How to Play:

- Have kids sit in a circle. Play music while they pass an object around the circle.
- When the music stops, the child holding the object must say one of Jesus' names from Isaiah 9:6.
- If they don't remember, the group can help them!
- Keep playing until all names have been said.

Connection: The promise of Jesus was passed down for hundreds of years.

- Why is it important that we pass on the good news of Jesus today?

Printout 12.1

GOOD NEWS SHOWDOWN

You're going to Disney World!	You're getting a puppy!	There is a field trip tomorrow!
We're having your favorite dinner tonight!	You're going to a friend's birthday party!	Grandma is coming to visit!
You get to open a present today!	You're going to a sleepover!	You're having a party at school!
Your team won the game!	You get dessert after dinner!	You get to stay up late tonight!

Printout 12.2

STORY SEQUENCING GAME

