



DECEMBER THEME

**UNDERCOVER
CHRISTMAS**
Make Others Your Mission

BIBLE STORY

Luke 2:1-7

Simply the Best | Jesus is Born
Spark Story Bible, pg. 212-213
Jesus is Born

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us the greatest gift

MEMORY VERSE

“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.”
John 3:16, NIV

LIFE APP

Compassion | Caring enough to do something about someone else’s need

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated...and with God’s help I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **COMPASSION** and God’s character, as shown through God’s big story.

THIS WEEK—Key Question: What are some ways you can give? When we experience God’s life-changing compassion, we can’t help but want to share that compassion with others. We hope our families leave with an idea of how they can give and show compassion to others.

This week we head to **Luke 2:1-7** to the familiar moment when Jesus is born. Even though Jesus was born where the animals stayed, God took care of all the details. The Savior of the World was born, and God’s compassion for us was on full display.

Bottom Line: God gave us the greatest gift. God had been planning a rescue since the very beginning. Jesus was God’s greatest gift to make it possible for all people to be with God forever.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each group member by name. Thank God for the wonderful gift of Jesus, and for making a way for us to have a relationship with God. Pray for God to give kids some ideas for how to respond to God’s amazing gift. Ask God to bring to mind today some things they can do to give to others, even if they don’t have a lot of resources or time.

•• **EARLY ARRIVER IDEA**

Made to Explore | An activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery

What You Need: 3 cups, Christmas candy

What You Do:

- Explain that you’ll be playing a “shell game” with the cups and candy.
- Turn three cups upside down in front of you, and hold up a piece of Christmas candy.
- Choose one kid to play first, and instruct him to sit facing you and the cups.
- Put the candy under one of the cups.
- Tell the kid to watch carefully while you mix up the cups. His job is to keep his eye on the cup with the candy in it.
- Scoot the cups around and mix them up as quickly as possible for 15-20 seconds.
- Ask the kid to guess which cup the candy is under. If he’s right, he gets to keep it. If he’s wrong, he’ll get to play again later.
- Continue playing, and allow kids who win to help their peers find the cup with the candy (if needed).
- Play until every kid has won a piece of candy.



•• GUESS WHO?

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Lead kids in a game similar to “I Spy” where you’ll use real people.
- Guide kids to stand in a circle.
- Secretly select one child to be your “mystery” child.
- Invite kids to identify who you chose by asking a series of yes-or-no questions, such as: “Is the person you chose wearing tennis shoes? Is the person you chose wearing boots? Is the person you chose wearing red? Is the person you chose a girl?”
- If anyone standing does not qualify based on the answer to the yes-or-no question, ask him/her to sit down in order to eliminate options.
- Continue until there is only one child left standing. The “mystery” child has been identified!
- Have everyone stand up again. Pick a different “mystery” child and play again. Continue as time allows.

What You Say: “It was fun to try to guess the “mystery” child by asking questions! Right now I’m thinking about another child. [Transition] Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we’ll learn/we learned who this mystery child is!”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

•• DRAW THE STORY [Talk about God | Bible Story Review | Application Activity]

Made to Create | An activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing, building, and designing

What You Need: 3 pieces of copy paper, markers, pens, Bible

What You Do:

- Label the pieces of copy paper as follows (*one set of verses on each piece of paper*)
 - Luke 2:1-3
 - Luke 2:4-5
 - Luke 2:6-7
- Divide kids into three groups, and assign a section of the Bible story to each group.
- Tell kids to read their verses and then draw what is happening.
- Give them several minutes to draw, and then ask them to show the other groups their pictures and tell what’s happening.

What You Say: [Bottom Line] “God gave us the greatest gift when God gave us Jesus. That was God’s ultimate act of compassion and care for us. Just like God cares for us and has met our greatest need, we are supposed to care for others and help meet their needs. God wants us to look around and see the very real and practical needs that other people have and then do something about those needs. What are some things you can give to someone this week? Think beyond just physical objects to something you can’t touch, like giving your time, energy, or attention to someone.” (*Allow kids to respond.*)



•• GREATEST GIFT

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: “Gift” activity pages, paper, pens

What You Do:

- Scatter the “Gift” activity pages around your small group table.
- Give each kid a piece of paper and a pen.
- Instruct kids to make a list of what they consider the greatest gift to the least great gift from the items provided.
- Then allow kids to share their greatest gifts with the group and explain why they chose what they did.

What You Say: “Those are all great reasons for choosing those gifts. But do you know which of these gifts is the greatest? It’s the gift card, because it has one thousand dollars on it! *(Pause while kids react.)* Ha. Not really. But it could have a thousand dollars, or even a million. The point is you don’t know. If it really did have a ton of money on it, it would be hard to tell, right? It’s not always easy to know what the greatest gift is until we know all the details.

[Bottom Line] “God gave us the greatest gift when God gave us Jesus. The Bible gives us tons of details about the birth, life, and death of Jesus. Jesus was God’s ultimate act of compassion and care for us. This week is about putting compassion into action. It can be about giving gifts, or it can be giving your time, attention, affection, and friendship. Just like God cares for us and has met our greatest need, we are supposed to care for others and help meet their needs. Let’s brainstorm some ideas of great gifts we can give to someone this week. *(Pause for ideas.)*

You made a great start just now with your fantastic ideas of gifts you can give to someone this week. Don’t forget to do it, and when we meet together again I’d love to hear about a gift you gave and how the other person responded.”

•• ADVENT-UROUS COMPASSION [Talk about God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: “Advent-urous Compassion” calendar, “Compassion” cards, tape

What You Do:

- Ask kids if they have ever seen an advent calendar.
- Explain that an advent calendar is a way that we count the days until Christmas.
- Tell kids that they’re going to make their own advent calendars to help them remember that **[Bottom Line]** God gave us the greatest gift when God gave us Jesus.
- Give each child an “Advent-urous Compassion” calendar. Tell them that each space on the calendar represents a day until Christmas.
- Read the memory verse aloud, leading kids to point to each word as you read.
- Show the “Compassion” cards and guide kids to identify ways the people are showing compassion.
- Invite each child to choose four cards and tape one on each “blank” calendar day.
- Tell kids that every day until Christmas, they should look at their calendar. Each day, they should read the verse up to the current day. *(For example, on December 4, they’ll read “For God so loved the world”.)* By Christmas, they’ll read the whole memory verse. Along the way, they will become very familiar with it through repetition!
- When they come to a day with a compassion card, they should look for a way do that act of compassion for someone.

What You Say: **[Bottom Line]** “God gave us the greatest gift when God gave us Jesus! That’s why Christmas is so amazing! It’s the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Because: God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life. That’s our memory verse! John 3:16 (NirV)! So this month, share God’s love with others and show them compassion. You can use your advent calendars to help remind you. And never forget: **[Bottom Line]** God gave us the greatest gift when God gave us Jesus!”

