



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 Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: 3 cups, miniature gift bow

What You Do:

- Lead kids in a shell game with the cups and bow.
 - Place the three cups upside down in a row.
 - Place the bow under one of the cups, making sure all the kids are watching you.
 - Tell kids to remember which cup the bow is under.
 - Then start moving the cups around, back and forth, switching their positions.
 - Choose a small group member to guess where the bow ended up.
 - Go slowly for the first couple rounds, letting kids get the hang of watching where they think the cup with the bow is.
- Play multiple rounds. If time allows, invite kids to lead the game!

•• **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.
- Work together with 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.

•• **ADVENT-UROUS COMPASSION** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

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 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 invite their family to help them 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!"

•• **GIFT WRAPPED** [Hear from God | Bible Story Review]

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

What You Need: Spark Story Bible, "Baby Jesus" coloring page, crayons

What You Do:

- Briefly explain that in Jesus' time, loving parents wrapped their newborn babies in swaddling clothes. Swaddling clothes were long strips of soft cloth.
- Hand out "Baby Jesus" coloring pages and crayons. Encourage them to color Jesus' swaddling clothes to look like Christmas wrapping paper.
- As kids color, read the first two pages (p. 212-213) of "Jesus Is Born" from the Spark Story Bible.

What You Say: "Long ago, God promised to send someone to show us how much God loves us and to teach us how to love others. Who did God send? (Pause.) Yes! God sent Jesus, God's very own Son, who was the BEST gift of all time!

"When God gave us Jesus, **[Bottom Line] God gave us the greatest gift** ever! God gave us Jesus because God loves us SO much. What gift can YOU give to others to show them God's love? (Pause for ideas: a toy, a card, a hug, a kind word, or spending time with someone) Those are kind and thoughtful ideas!

[Make It Personal] (Tell kids about a tangible or intangible gift you'll give this season to show someone God's love.)

"So always remember that at Christmas, we give gifts to others because **[Bottom Line] God gave US the greatest gift** of all: JESUS!"

•• **ANYONE** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

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

What You Need: "Rebus Verse" activity pages, crayons

What You Do:

- Give each kid a "Rebus Verse" activity page
- Guide kids to point to the pictures as you "read" the verse together.
- Unpack the word "anyone," emphasizing that it truly means ANYONE—young or old, boy or girl, rich or poor!
- Guide kids to point to the outline of the person.
- Invite them to color the figure to look like themselves. As they color, again emphasize that anyone who believes in Jesus will live forever with God.

What You Say: "God loved the world SO MUCH that **[Bottom Line] "God gave us the greatest gift** EVER! God sent Jesus to be born on earth. God did it so that ANYONE who believes in Jesus can live forever with God. Wow! Can you imagine how much God must love us that God gave us Jesus? Now that's a great big love!"

PRAY AND SEND [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

