

# Week 12: Jesus is Born

Luke 2; Matthew 2

## Objectives

Students will . . .

- Define sin.
- Explain why Jesus is the best gift ever given.

## Week at a Glance

*To the Teacher:* Pray for your students daily and prayerfully study the verses given above.

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Lesson</b>	Reflecting on Christmas	Angels Direct Shepherds	The Star Directs Wise Men	The Gospel and the Gift	Show What You Know
<b>Big Idea</b>	Personal reflections about Christmas.	The angels visited the shepherds.	The star led the wise men.	What is the Gospel?	Review for and administer this week's quiz.
<b>Videos</b>					
<b>Materials</b>				Cross Gift Box Craft page, ribbon (preferably red), scissors, crayons or colored pencils	
<b>Copies</b>	Daily Bible Connection, Christmas Reflections Activity page			Cross Gift Box Craft page	Show What You Know Quiz

## MONDAY: Reflecting on Christmas

### Hook: Christmas Reflection Activity

*Materials:* Copy of Christmas Reflection Activity page for each student.

Christmas is an exciting time of year. We decorate. We shop. We wrap presents. We eat special meals. Some travel to connect with family and friends. It's easy in all the business to get caught up in the moment and not take time to think.

Today we are going to do a Reflection Activity. Our purpose is to stop and think back on our past and to think forward on things we can do to make Christ the focus at Christmastime.

**Note to Teacher:** After students fill out the Christmas Reflections Activity page, you can choose one of the following options:

1. *Team activity*—Divide your group into two-person teams and have each one share with the other the answer to one or two of the reflection questions that you choose.
2. *Discussion activity*—Ask students who want to share their answer to number 5 to do so with the class. Then have everyone share / brainstorm activities about things your class or family can do to make Jesus Christ the most important part of your Christmas celebration.

### Discovery Words

1. The **shepherd** carried the lamb.  
*shepherd*—a person who takes care of sheep
2. The **Magi** followed a star to Bethlehem.  
*Magi*—the wise men who brought gifts to Jesus
3. The farmer put hay in the **manger** for the cows.  
*manger*—a trough or open box designed to hold feed or water for livestock
4. Rob and Sara stayed at an **inn** when they traveled through France.  
*inn*—a place for travelers to spend the night
5. Mary wrapped her baby in **swaddling clothes**.  
*swaddling clothes*—the strips of cloth they used to wrap babies
6. Jesus is the **Messiah**.  
*Messiah*—the promised Son of God who would save sinners.
7. The Bible tells us how we can be rescued from **sin**.  
*sin*—anything I say, think, or do that is not pleasing to God; *not* saying, thinking, or doing anything that would be pleasing to God.

### Memory Verse

Introduce the John 3:16 memory verse.

## **TUESDAY: Angels Direct Shepherds**

Luke 2:1–20

### **Discussion**

#### **Connect to Prior Learning:**

- Who was Elizabeth?  
*Answer:* She was Mary's relative who was married to the priest, Zechariah.
- Why did Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem?  
*Answer:* They went to be counted in the census.
- Who was king over Judea?  
*Answer:* Herod

Today we are going to hear about the man who was in charge of Rome, which, at this time, ruled over Judea.

**Reading Focus:** What is the man's name? And what law did he make?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:1–3

#### **Question for Comprehension:**

- What was the name of Rome's leader?  
*Answer:* Caesar Augustus
- What law did he make?  
*Answer:* Everyone should go to his or her own town to be listed.

Caesar wanted to count everyone so that he could tax everyone.

**Reading Focus:** What does this law have to do with the story of Jesus's birth?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:4

#### **Question for Comprehension:**

- Who had to go back to his hometown to be listed?  
*Answer:* Joseph
- What was his hometown?  
*Answer:* Bethlehem

Joseph was from the line of David. That means that David was a great, great, great . . . grandpa to Joseph.

**Reading Focus:** Who do you think went with Joseph?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:5

Bethlehem was 90 miles away from Nazareth. They didn't have planes or cars or trains. Mary and Joseph had to walk or ride on animals. This trip probably took a week or two and was a hard trip to take.

**Reading Focus:** What happened once Joseph and Mary arrived at Bethlehem?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:6–7

**Question for Comprehension:**

- What happened to Mary?  
*Answer:* She gave birth to Jesus.
- Where did Mary put Jesus when He was born?  
*Answer:* In a manger
- What's a manger?  
*Answer:* A trough that animals eat out of
- Why were Joseph, Mary, and Jesus out with the animals?  
*Answer:* There was no guest room for them. They had to go out to find shelter, possibly to a cave in the rocks.

When we go to a different city and stay overnight, we might stay at a hotel or a bed and breakfast. If we have family or friends in the area, we might stay in the guest room or sleep on the floor at their house. Joseph was from Bethlehem, but there was no room for him to stay. Because of Herod's law, many other people also traveled to Bethlehem to be counted for the tax.

Jesus had a wonderful home in heaven, but He left that to be born on earth. He was not born in a palace (even though He is the King of all kings). He wasn't even born in a guest room. He was born in a cave. His first bed was a place where animals came to eat.

**Reading Focus:** Who were invited to be the first ones (other than His parents) to welcome Jesus to earth?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:8

**Question for Comprehension:**

- Who was nearby in the field?  
*Answer:* Shepherds
- What are shepherds?  
*Answer:* People who take care of sheep

People who take care of sheep were not high-class, popular people who wore nice clothes. They were poor.

- Was it daytime or night time?  
*Answer:* Night time

**Reading Focus:** What did the shepherds see that night?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:9–10

**Question for Comprehension:**

- Who did they see?  
*Answer:* An angel of the Lord
- What is an angel?  
*Answer:* Angels are messengers for God.

- What did this angel say to them?

*Answer:* Students should read aloud the angel's words in verse 10.

**Reading Focus:** What was the good news?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:11–12

**Question for Comprehension:**

- What was the good news?

*Answer:* A Savior [Jesus] had been born.

- What else did the angel tell them?

*Answer:* That Jesus was the Messiah *and* where to find Jesus.

**Reading Focus:** Who else showed up with the angel?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:13–15

**Question for Comprehension:** Where did the angels go after they delivered their message?

*Answer:* Into heaven

**Reading Focus:** What did the shepherds do after the angels left?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:16

**Question for Comprehension:** What did they do?

*Answer:* They hurried to find the baby and Mary and Joseph.

Can you imagine what it must have been like for the shepherds? The manger was their clue. They went to where animals would be fed, and they found Jesus lying there. A newborn baby. And Mary and Joseph. And probably a few other animals.

If you've seen a movie about Jesus's birth or a nativity scene, it all looks soft and beautiful. But places where animals are kept smell bad. The shepherds were poor people, yet they got the invitation to come see Jesus.

**Reading Focus:** What do you think the shepherds did after they saw the child? [Allow students to offer an answer before reading the passage.]

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:17–18

**Question for Comprehension:** What did the shepherds do next?

*Answer:* They told everyone that they had seen the Christ child and that the angels had said He was the Messiah.

When they told others about angels and a baby laying in the manger, people were amazed.

**Reading Focus:** What did Mary do with all of this news?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:19

Mary had special reason to remember that night. All the angel Gabriel had told her had come true. She had taken a long trip. Even though she and Joseph were poor and had no house to stay in, God provided a place to stay and brought shepherds to come marvel at her tiny boy.

**Reading Focus:** What did the shepherds do after visiting Joseph, Mary, and Jesus?

**Read Aloud:** Luke 2:20

**Question for Comprehension:** What did the shepherds do?

*Answer:* They returned. They praised God.

What a great response to the good news that Jesus was born! Let's take time now to praise God for sending Jesus into the world. We don't have angels telling us about Him, but we have His Word in written form to tell us. [Pray. Thank God for sending Jesus into the world.]

## **Memory Verse**

Practice the John 3:16 memory verse.

## **WEDNESDAY: The Star Directs Wise Men**

Matthew 2:1–12

### **Discussion**

#### **Connect to Prior Learning:**

- Who told the shepherds how to get to where Jesus was?  
*Answer:* The angel
- Why do you think a group of angels appeared to the shepherds?  
*Answer:* They were helping announce the birth of God’s Son who came from heaven to earth.
- Do you know of anyone else who came to see Jesus that we think of at Christmas?  
*Answer:* The wisemen

**Reading Focus:** Where did the wisemen come when they were looking for Jesus?

**Read Aloud:** Matthew 2:1–2

#### **Questions for Comprehension:**

- Where did the wisemen come?  
*Answer:* Jerusalem

Jerusalem was the most important city for the Jews. Herod was there.

- Who was Herod?  
*Answer:* King of Judea

Jerusalem was the major city of Judea.

**Reading Focus:** What did King Herod think when the wisemen showed up asking about a new king?

**Read Aloud:** Matthew 2:3–4

#### **Questions for Comprehension:**

- Why do you think Herod was upset?  
*Answer:* He was king and didn’t want a new king.
- Why did Herod call the chief priests and teachers of the law together?  
*Answer:* He wanted to find out what the law (Old Testament) said about where Jesus would be born.

**Reading Focus:** What did they tell Herod?

**Read Aloud:** Matthew 2:5–6

**Question for Comprehension:** Where did the prophet Micah, who lived hundreds of years before, say that the ruler from God would be born?

*Answer:* Bethlehem in Judah

**Reading Focus:** What did Herod do next?

**Read Aloud:** Matthew 2:7–8

**Question for Comprehension:** Do you think Herod really wanted to worship Jesus?

*Answer:* No. He wanted to kill off any king, even a tiny baby, who would threaten his throne.

**Read Aloud:** Matthew 2:9–11

**Question for Comprehension:** Where did the star lead them?

*Answer:* To a house

When the shepherds came, it was to a cave or stable. But when the wisemen came, it was to a house. After Jesus was born, Joseph and Mary didn't travel back home to Nazareth. Instead, they stayed in a house in Bethlehem. The wisemen's arrival could have been a year or two after Jesus was born.

Stars don't usually move around like a glowing GPS. This star guiding them was a miracle from God.

**Reading Focus:** What did the wisemen see?

**Read Aloud:** Matthew 2:11–12

**Questions for Comprehension:**

- Who did they see?

*Answer:* Jesus and Mary

Chances are good that Joseph was away working when they came.

- What did they give Jesus?

*Answer:* Gold (an expensive rare metal), frankincense (an expensive essential oil), and myrrh (an expensive sweet-smelling resin used in making perfume).

- What did God warn the wisemen not to do?

*Answer:* Not to go back to Herod.

- Did the wisemen go back to Jerusalem on their way home?

*Answer:* No

While there is much more to the story of Jesus, let's focus on how the people and angels in the story responded as they thought about Jesus (as God) coming to live with humans.

- What did the angels do?

*Answer:* They sang praises to God and shared the good news about Jesus with the shepherds.

- What did the shepherds do?

*Answer:* They went to tell others the good news about Jesus.

- What did the wise men do?

*Answer:* They gave gifts and worshiped the newborn king.

- What can we learn from these groups?

*Answer:* Answers will vary.



- Who did they focus on?  
*Answer: Jesus*

## **Memory Verse**

Practice the John 3:16 memory verse.

## THURSDAY: The Gospel and the Gift

Romans 3:23; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

### Discussion

*Materials:* Make a Cross Gift Box Craft yourself, cut it out, and tie it up with a red ribbon. You will use it as a demonstration in the lesson. You may want to cut apart a box and make a larger version of this so it will be more visible to your students when you are teaching.

#### Connect to Prior Learning:

- What did the angels say when they talked to the shepherds?  
*Answer:* The angels told the good news that Christ was born.

The shepherds never would have met Jesus if the angels had not told them about Him.

- What did the shepherds do *after* they saw Jesus?  
*Answer:* The shepherds told everyone.

The angels told the shepherds, and the shepherds told everyone. Now, all these years later, we hear the good news about Christ coming to earth.

When a family has a baby, that's good news because God has given that family a new member. Jesus's coming was not just good news for Joseph and Mary; it was good news for all of humanity because Jesus was not a mere human baby—He was also God.

He came down from heaven to make a way, a life path *to* God, so we could get off the death path that separated us *from* God. The good news is that God loved the world so much that He gave the most amazing gift of all—His only Son.

Listen to this quotation from pastor and author Timothy Keller: “The Gospel is that Jesus Christ came to earth, lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died.”<sup>1</sup>

After Jesus was born, He lived a perfect life free from sin.

**Sin is anything I say, think, or do that is not pleasing to God. Sin is also *not* saying, thinking, or doing anything that would be pleasing to God.**

**Reading Focus:** How many of us have sinned?

**Read Aloud:** Romans 3:23

**Question for Comprehension:** Who has sinned?

*Answer:* Everyone.

That's right. Every human, except Jesus Christ, is a sinner. All of us are on the death path.

**Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God's glory.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Keller Wisdom (@DailyKeller), Twitter, December 31, 2013, 2:44 p.m., <https://twitter.com/dailykeller/status/418105393227649024>.

**Reading Focus:** What does this verse tell us about how Jesus lived?

**Read Aloud:** 1 Peter 2:22

Jesus never sinned. Never lied. Never said, thought, or did anything that *did not* please God. Never failed to say, think, or do all that *did* please God.

He perfectly obeyed *all the time*. Because of His active obedience, Jesus could become the bridge to connect us with God. He is not only human just like we are but also perfect because He is God.

You would think that if someone did *nothing* wrong and did *everything* right, people would not only want to be around such a person but also want that person to be in charge. But that's not what happened. The people in charge actually hated Jesus and had Him killed. The way they had Him killed was by nailing His hands and feet to a cross. (Draw a cross on the board and explain how this was used as a torture device.)

Remember, Jesus did *nothing* wrong to deserve to die. He went to the cross because that is where all of God's anger would be poured out on Jesus.

God wasn't angry with Jesus, who was sinless, but He is angry with all of us who sin. Our sins had to be paid for in order for us to have a relationship with God. But instead of each of us paying for our own sins, Jesus paid for our sins when He died on the cross.

After Jesus died on the cross, He was buried in a cave in a hill for three days. People not only rolled a huge rock over the cave entrance, but they also placed soldiers in front of the grave to make sure no one stole Jesus's body.

But after being dead three days, Jesus came back to life!

Remember how death came to all men when Adam and Eve sinned? By rising again, Jesus set in motion an eternal *undo* button. All the sadness and shame and death that comes with sin began to be undone.

[Show the Cross Gift Box Craft that you made as a demonstration.]

At Christmas we give each other gifts, but this little box actually represents the best gift anyone has ever given.

[Ask a student to pull the ribbon to untie the bow on the gift box.]

Now, it looks like the box is empty. If you wrap up an empty box to give as a present, that's a mean trick. But this box is empty to remind us that the grave where they buried Jesus is empty. He is not there because He came back to life. Because He came back to life, *we* can have eternal life.

Notice that, as I unfold the box, it opens up to the shape of a cross. There is no one hanging on this cross because Jesus is alive.

In the middle of the cross you can see the verse we've been learning.

**Reading Focus:** What are we believing when we believe in Jesus?

**Read Aloud:** 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

**Question for Comprehension:** What are we believing?

*Answer:* We are believing that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day.

Do you remember how Noah told the people God was sending a flood to judge their sin? Those who got into the ark were the ones who believed God’s message from Noah. When we believe in Jesus, we are turning from pursuing our own way to following Christ. He is like the boat we are getting into that will protect us because God’s anger already fell on Christ when He died. When Jesus was on the cross, He took on Himself every single sin we have done or will do.

When we believe in Christ, we take on ourselves the perfect life He lived. It’s like taking off the filthy coat that fell in the sewer of sin and putting on Jesus’s perfect coat of His perfect obedience. But coats are something we wear on the outside. When we believe in Christ, His new life happens to us on the inside. When God looks on those who believe in Jesus, He sees not their imperfect, sinful selves, but the perfect life of Christ in their place.

When we believe in Jesus the life of Jesus becomes our life, and since Jesus is eternal, our life becomes eternal. Even if our bodies die, who we are will never die but will continue living with Christ. And one day God will give us new bodies like the new body Jesus had when He rose from the dead.

This is good news! If you have questions about any of this, please ask God to help you understand this good news. What you believe about Jesus is the most important thing about you. If you have questions, be sure to come to me or talk to someone who really knows Jesus.

## **Hands-On Activity**

Today you get to make your own Cross Gift Box to use to tell others this good news about Jesus. You can decorate the back of the cross to look like a beautiful Christmas present. You can tell others about how the baby we celebrate at Christmas grew up and lived a perfect life and died a horrible death so that we can have eternal life.

When you take this gift home, you can use it to tell your family and friends about Jesus—the *best gift* that was ever given!

Cross Gift Box Craft Instructions:

1. Cut out the cross and fold on the dotted lines.
2. Color the back side of the cross to look like wrapping paper.
3. Tie ribbon around the gift box to keep it shut.

*Note:* You can use red ribbon to tie a bow on top to help hold the box closed. Use the red color of the ribbon to talk about how Christ gave His life blood to save us.

## **Memory Verse**

Practice the John 3:16 memory verse.

## FRIDAY: Show What You Know (Key)

**Multiple Choice:** Choose the letter that best answers the question and write it in the blank.

- B 1. Who went to his hometown to be counted because he was a great, great, great . . . grandson of David?  
A. Caesar Augustus      B. Joseph      C. Herod      D. Judah
- C 2. In what town did Mary give birth to Jesus?  
A. Jerusalem      B. Nazareth      C. Bethlehem      D. Jericho
- D 3. Where did Mary lay Jesus after He was born?  
A. In a crib      B. In her lap      C. In her bed      D. In a manger
- B 4. How did the shepherds feel when the angel first showed up?  
A. Angry      B. Terrified      C. Frustrated      D. Sad
- D 5. What did the shepherds do after the angels went away?  
A. They kept watching sheep.      B. They ate their dinner.  
C. They ran away and hid.      D. They went to see the new baby.
- C 6. What did the shepherds do after they saw the baby?  
A. They went to find gifts.  
B. They stayed with Mary and Joseph.  
C. They told everyone what they had seen and heard.
- C 7. How did the wisemen find Jesus?  
A. They followed directions from ancient writings.  
B. They followed the shepherd's directions.  
C. They followed a star.  
D. They followed the angel's directions.
- D 8. What did the wisemen do when they saw Jesus?  
A. They bowed down before Him.      B. They worshipped him.  
C. They gave him gifts.      D. All of the above.

**Short Answer:** Write your answer to the question on the lines provided.

9–15. According to John 3:16, “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.”

16. Sin is anything I say, think, or do that is *not* pleasing to God, or anything I do *not* say, think, or do that *would* be pleasing to God.

17. According the Bible, how many people in the world are sinners? Everyone

18. According to the Bible, who is *not* a sinner? Jesus Christ (God)

19-20. Why is Jesus the best gift that was ever given? \_\_\_\_\_

Answers will vary but hopefully will include that He grew up to die on the cross and

pay for our sins to make a way for us to connect with God.

(You may want to give credit if they try to answer. The main purpose of this question

is to give you insight into what they are understanding.)