

Family Together Time

For families with children ages 3 to 6

Lesson 1

An Angel Announces Jesus' Birth: Matthew 1; Luke 1

Family Talk

The holiday season can be a very busy time filled with

programs, gatherings, and shopping. We should not allow ourselves to be so full of activity that we rob our children of the joy of learning God's Word. Take time to enjoy the wondrous birth of the baby announced by the angel. Create family memories focused on the love of Jesus.

The apostle Paul wrote, "Thanks be to God for his gift that is too wonderful to explain" (2 Corinthians 9:15). Like Paul, let us thank God for His grace and the babe He packaged it in.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

God, thank You for the angel who told Mary she would have a special baby boy.

Thank You, God, for Mary and Joseph.

God, help us tell the good news about Jesus to others.

Bible Memory FUN

Matthew 2:1, 2

Find these verses in a family Bible. Using an angel figure or paper cutout, mark a spot at the dinner table. The individual with the marker

will lead the family in saying the Bible verses together.

This week, help your child remember:

We can share good news about Jesus.



Family Fun...

Where Was Jesus Born? Locate

a globe or a map. Help your child find the country, state, and town where you live. Then help locate Israel and the town of Nazareth. Explain that Nazareth is the town where Joseph and Mary lived. Then locate Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus. Look at the distance Joseph and Mary had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Look for additional information about these cities to share with your child.

Articles by
Wendy Wagoner



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Lesson 2

Jesus Is Born: Luke 1:46, 47; 2:1-7

Family Talk

Long before a child comprehends concepts or vocabulary,

he or she senses emotion. The name *Jesus* can be a name your child associates with warm feelings. Talk openly to your child about Jesus and His teachings. Children will mirror the way you respond to life and Jesus' teachings.

Display a picture of Jesus, or make a habit of looking at a picture Bible. Talk about Jesus' birth at the dinner table or in the car. The frequent use of songs, Bible stories, and loving conversation about Jesus can help your child build a strong, loving foundation in Christ.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Thank You, God, for JESUS!

God, thank You for Mary and Joseph who took care of Jesus.

Thank You, God, for people who take care of me.

Bible Memory FUN

Matthew 2:1, 2

Look up these verses in a family Bible. Find a doll to represent baby Jesus. Say the Bible verses, and then hand the doll to

someone else. Ask that person to say the verses.

This week, help your child remember:

We are happy Jesus was born.



Family Fun...

Hooray, Jesus Is Born! Share memories and pictures of the day your child was born. What was the weather like? How did you get to the hospital? What time of day was your child born? Read Luke 1:46, 47; 2:1-7. Use a manger scene to compare and contrast the events of the birth of your child to the birth of Jesus. Together, tell God how happy you are that Jesus was born.

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Lesson 3

Shepherds Visit Jesus: Luke 2:8-20

Family Talk

"Glory to God in heaven, and on earth let there be peace to the

people who please God" (Luke 2:14). What a birth announcement! Jumping to their feet, the shepherds rushed into Bethlehem. Their excitement probably grew as they approached the manger site.

Soon, however, the shepherds returned to their fields, and life settled back to its routine. Though there were no longer angels in the sky, Mary "continued to think about them" (Luke 2:19). You can help your child follow Mary's example. Together, take time to treasure the presence of Christ daily.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

We praise You, God, because You sent us a special baby—Jesus!

Thank You, God, for shepherds who told what they had seen.

God, help me to tell my friends that Jesus was born.

Bible Memory FUN

Matthew 2:1, 2

Find these verses in a family Bible. Pick a road that is commonly used during the week and name it Bible Memory Lane.

Every time you and your child

travel down that street, say the Bible verses together.

This week, help your child remember:

We can tell others Jesus was born.



Family Fun...

Sharing Artwork. Ask your child what he thinks the shepherds saw when they went to visit Jesus. Talk about the people and animals that might have been present that special night. Read Luke 2:8-20. Give your child a white sheet of paper and have him draw what the shepherds might have seen when they arrived at the manger. Together, think of someone with whom to share the message of Jesus' birth through your child's artwork.

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Lesson 4

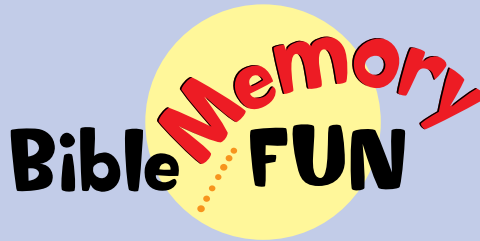
Simeon and Anna See Jesus: Luke 2:22-38



Children often help us rediscover the world as they

experience and see things for the first time. Often, the challenge for adults is to take time and enjoy those discoveries with their children.

Imagine what it was like on the day when Simeon and Anna saw the long-awaited Messiah in the temple. Create new and exciting ways to learn about the birth of Jesus with your children. Experience as a family the excitement of His birth. With joy and thanksgiving, celebrate that Jesus was born.



Matthew 2:1, 2

Find these verses in a family Bible. Roll a ball back and forth with your child, repeating the Bible verses as the ball goes from one set of hands to the other.

This week, help your child remember:

We are thankful Jesus was born.



Praise Party. Set aside time together to talk about the birth of Jesus. Make a cake or a special dessert as a yummy treat. Help your child make decorations on or around the table. You might want to invite another family or friends to join you. Sing songs together, praising God. Take turns thanking God for Jesus.



Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Thank You, God, for the Bible that tells us about Jesus.

I am thankful Jesus was born!

Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to help us.

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Lesson 5

Wise Men Worship Jesus: Matthew 2:1-11

Family Talk

Have you ever wondered if Jesus cried? He probably did, since that is

a baby's first language. Mary surely must have met His cries with love as she tended to His needs.

Children discover love for the first time by the ways their parents and caregivers respond to their needs. A loving environment where one can grow and experience life lays the foundation for learning about God's love. Pray that God will help you to show His tender care as you meet the needs of your growing children.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

I love You, Jesus.

Thank You, God, for keeping the wise men safe as they traveled to see Jesus.

God, help me worship Jesus too.

Bible Memory FUN

Matthew 2:1, 2

Find these verses in a family Bible. Create a song or rhyme with the Bible verses to repeat together throughout the week.

This week, help your child remember:

We can worship Jesus.



Family Fun...

Role-Play. Dress your child in a wise man's costume. Find shiny cloth to drape as a robe. Use construction paper to make a crown. Look for coins to hold as gold pieces, representing one of the gifts. Place a star and Bible in a special place marking the end of your journey. Travel around the house looking for Bethlehem. When your child has spotted the star and the Bible, read Matthew 2:1-11. Share with one another how we can worship Jesus too.

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Lesson 6

Jesus as a Boy: Luke 2:40-52



Children have an intense hunger to learn and explore new

things. Your house becomes a quest to be explored from corner to corner: the discovery of the dirt in the plant you just potted, the thrill of unwinding the new roll of toilet paper in the bathroom, or the marking on a wall with a colorful set of crayons.

God created children to learn according to their own personal designs and everyday experiences. They learn significant fundamental skills through play. As a parent, connect such experiences to God. Help your children know that God is their creator and friend.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Help me, God, to obey my parents.

God, I want to please You just as Jesus pleased You.

Thank You, God, for times when I can listen and learn about the Bible.

Bible Memory FUN

Luke 2:52

Find this verse in a family Bible. Bend at the knees and gradually reach for the sky in a growing motion as you say the Bible verse.

This week, help your child remember:

Jesus pleased God.



Family Fun...

I Am Growing. Take a tape measure, scale, paper, and pencil. Help your child put her name on the paper. Together, collect information: I am _____ years old. I weigh _____ lbs. I am _____ feet and _____ inches tall. My shoe size is _____. My favorite thing to do is _____. My favorite Bible story is _____. Trace your child's hand on the paper. Discuss how your child is growing, just as Jesus grew.

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Lesson 7

Jesus Is Baptized: Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:4-11



God's Word teaches that parents are responsible for the spiritual growth

of their children. There are two ways to raise children up "with the training and teaching of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). First, the example you set is the most powerful teaching tool your children will ever see. The way you model your life after Christ is vital to your children's spiritual development.

The second way to teach is through direct instruction. Read to your child from a children's Bible. Play Bible games. Act out Bible stories together. Think of ways this week to be intentional about modeling and teaching Christlike behavior to your children.

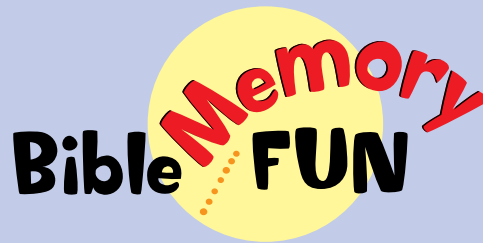


Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Thank You, God, for John. He told people about Jesus.

Help me, God, to please You just as Jesus and John pleased You.

God, help me do what is right.



Luke 2:52

Find this verse in a family Bible. Sing the Bible verse to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."

This week, help your child remember:

We can please God.



Baptism Experience. If you have been baptized, share with your child about the day of your baptism. Describe the location and people who were with you. Who baptized you? Why were you baptized? When the opportunity arises, let your child observe a baptism. Encourage your child to ask questions and talk about the baptism.

Together, read the story of Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:4-11).

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Family Together Time

For families with children ages 3 to 6

Lesson 8

Jesus Is Tempted: Matthew 4:1-11

Family Talk

As a parent, it is important for you to be in the Word of God. The Scriptures help

us to know what is right, and they give insight on the teachings of God. We must know those teachings because our children also need to know them.

Reading the Bible together and discussing the lessons, stories, and people will allow your child to grow up making godly choices. Give your child the road map to life by opening up the Bible and studying its truths.

Bible Memory FUN

Luke 2:52

Find this verse in a family Bible. Together with your child, think of hand motions to symbolize selected words of the Bible verse.

This week, help your child remember:

God's Word helps us do what is right.



Family Fun...

Stick to What Is Right! Little feet will be tickled with this sticky sensory experience. Wrap strips of duct tape (adhesive side out) around each of your child's tennis shoes. Play music and move to the music. Talk about the following:
What does the tape do to your feet?
Who do you think we should stick to?
Share how important it is to stick to Jesus and God's Word. Sticking close to the Bible helps us make right choices that please God.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Thank You, God, for the Bible that helps us to do what is right.

Dear God, keep me safe.

Help me, God, to obey Your Word.

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Family Together Time

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Lesson 9

Jesus Begins to Teach: Matthew 4:17-25

Family Talk

Some children seem to attract friends like magnets. They always seem

to be surrounded by other boys and girls, and they never have problems finding children to play with. For others, making and keeping friends comes with a little more effort.

Children's social skills develop uniquely, but social skills can also be taught. Give your child opportunities to play with other children his age. Help your child understand how others view his actions. Learning social skills is an important part of a child's life. God will be pleased as your child learns to love others.



Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

God, I want to be Your helper.

Help me, God, to listen to Bible stories so I can tell others about Jesus.

Thank You, God, for Jesus' helpers: Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

Bible Memory FUN

Luke 2:52

Find this verse in a family Bible. Take turns telling the Bible verse to one another.

This week, help your child remember:

We can tell about Jesus.

Family Fun...

Telling Party. Invite a teacher from your church family, perhaps a Sunday school teacher or minister, to your home for dinner. Help your child invite the person and his family. Encourage your child to assist in picking out the menu, decorating the table, and helping with the place settings. Explain to your guests that they have been invited to the Telling Party because they tell others about Jesus. Thank them, and ask them to share about their experiences as teachers.

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Lesson 10

Jesus and the Children: Mark 10:13-16



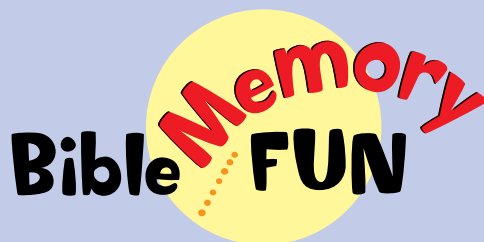
Jesus knew that the pure and joyful spirit of a child was not to be

ignored. Children remind us of the simple, yet important, things of life. Watch your children and see what lessons you can learn.

Are your children spontaneous? Be spontaneous with them! Have a little fun.

Do they talk about what is happening now? Focus on the here and now, rather than the past or future.

Enjoy moments of laughter with your children. Together you will see God in the small things of life and take joy in them.



1 John 4:7

Find this verse in a family Bible. Make hearts out of modeling dough. With every heart that is made, recite the Bible verse.

This week, help your child remember:

Jesus loves children.



Jesus Loves You and Me. Sit together with your family. Take turns telling each person in your family strengths about each other that you are thankful for. Then discuss how God has uniquely made each person. Brainstorm ways you can show others Jesus' love by your actions. Pray together, and thank God for loving everyone in the family. Sing "Jesus Loves Me."



Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Thank You, God, for loving me.

God, help me tell _____ (*friend's name*) that Jesus loves her.

Thank You, Jesus, for showing us how to love.

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Lesson 11

Jesus and Matthew: Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32

Family Talk

Parents often feel they are nurturing their children in the right way

by providing daily messages of correction, criticism, lectures, and demands. Consider the long-term effects these methods may have on a child. While discipline and the teaching of responsibility are important to a child's safety and growth, encouragement and praise are equally important. Instruction in love allows children to grow in an environment where they develop healthy self-images. God's unconditional love and acceptance are reminders of His plan for you as a parent in nurturing your children.



Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Help me, God, to follow Jesus as Matthew did.

Thank You, Jesus, for Your love for people.

Jesus, help me to love others as You do.

Bible Memory FUN

1 John 4:7

Find this verse in a family Bible. Divide the verse into short phrases. Build on the phrases until your child can say the entire Bible verse.

This week, help your child remember:

Jesus loves all people.

Family Fun...

Hearts. Make a different-colored construction paper heart for each participant. Write the word "LOVE" on each heart. Take four clothespins for each heart and choose a marker that matches the color of your heart. With your matching colored marker, write a letter on each of the four clothespins so the letters spell the word LOVE. Mix up the clothespins and try to match the colored letters to your heart. Clip the clothespins to your heart and spell LOVE. Discuss how much Jesus loves us and how we know of His love.

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Lesson 12

Jesus and a Woman from Samaria: John 4:5-9, 25-30, 39-42

Family Talk

Every parent gets frustrated, at times, with the ways children relate

to one another as they are growing up. Sometimes it is important for children to attempt to work things out for themselves.

Children need to learn how to resolve conflicts on their own after proper guidance and instruction are given. Use conflicts as teachable moments for your children to learn how to solve problems peacefully. Listen for feelings, and affirm what you hear.

Children need to learn how to express their feelings through words. Teaching children how to resolve conflicts in love equips them to love people in the midst of differences.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Thank You, God, for loving people near and far.

Dear God, please help _____ (a known missionary) to tell the people of _____ (the missionary's location) how much You love them.

Bible Memory FUN

1 John 4:7

Find this verse in a family Bible. Use an inflatable globe, or use a marker to draw the continents on a blue balloon or ball. Toss the globe back and forth with

your child. Each time the globe is caught, say the Bible verse.

This week, help your child remember:

Jesus loves people everywhere.



Family Fun...

Book Tour. Take a trip to the library.

Find a variety of picture books about life in other countries. Look at the books and explain where the people live. Talk about the things they eat, their ways of living, and activities they do. Devote time to praying for people in other countries. Share how God loves them, and pray that someone will be able to tell them about God and how much He loves them.

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Lesson 13

Jesus and Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-10

Family Talk

No one liked Zacchaeus. He boldly took from others to increase his

profit. He thought only about himself and his personal needs. Zacchaeus hurt those around him.

Sometimes children can have those same attitudes. They become aggressive and focus only on "ME." We must respond as Jesus—with compassion. Jesus' love changes people, as it did Zacchaeus, no matter their age or location. Jesus' love can flow through you as you care for and meet the needs of your child. Ask God to give you His love to share and to teach powerful lessons that will mold your child's life attitudes.

Daily Talks with God

Use these thoughts at mealtimes, bedtimes, or other times when you pray with your child this week.

Thank You, Jesus, for showing love to Zacchaeus.

Dear Jesus, help me to love others as You love them.

Jesus, thank You for showing us how to love others.

Bible Memory FUN

1 John 4:7

Find this verse in a family Bible. Fill a clear 1-liter bottle half full of water. Add ¼ cup oil, red food coloring, and sequins hearts.

Close and secure tightly. Roll

the bottle back and forth while reciting the Bible verse.

This week, help your child remember:

Jesus wants us to love others.



Family Fun...

Care Visit. Locate a nursing home in the area. Contact the activities director to coordinate a visit. Bake cookies with your child and make tags to put on individual bags of treats. Place a couple of cookies in each bag, with a small note, Bible verse, or picture attached. Together, pass out the cookies and visit with people to show Jesus' love to others. On the way home, talk about your experience and how Jesus wants us to love others.

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