



WEEK THREE – DECEMBER 2018 – SECOND/THIRD

Bible Story: *Simply the Best* ▪ Luke 2:1-7

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(NirV)*

Life App: *Compassion – Caring enough to do something about someone else’s need*

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what.*

Summary: In Week Three, 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.

8:50–9:00 | 10:20–10:30 | 11:50–12:00 – EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITIES

1. Early Arriver Idea

Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation & discovery

What You Need: Cups; Christmas hard candy

What You Do:

- Explain that you'll be playing a "shell game" with the cups and candy/prizes.
- Turn three cups upside down in front of you, and hold up a prize.
- Choose one kid to play first, and instruct him to sit facing you and the cups.
- Put a prize 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 prize 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 prize 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 take turns moving around the other three cups, challenging their peers to find the cup with the prize.
- Play until every kid has won a prize.

2. Greatest Gifts

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: "Gift" Activity Cards; index cards; pencils

What You Do:

- Scatter the gift items cards around in the center of your group.
- Give each kid an index card and a pencil.
- 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 hundred dollars on it! (Pause while kids react.) Ha. Not really. But it could have a hundred dollars, or even a thousand. 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. [Transition] Let's go to Large Group, where we'll hear about the absolute greatest gift ever."

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

9:10–9:45 | 10:40–11:15 | 12:10–12:45 – LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

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.

9:45–10:05 | 11:15–11:35 | 12:45–1:05 SMALL GROUP

1. Draw the Story

[Application Activity]

Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing/building/designing

What You Need: Butcher paper; markers; Bibles; tape

What You Do:

- Roll out the butcher paper and set out the markers.
- Use a marker to divide the paper into three equal sections. Label the sections:
 - 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 everyone else their pictures and tell what's happening.
- Tape the paper on the wall for parents to see when they come to pick up.

What You Say:

"[Bottom Line] "God gave us the greatest gift when He gave us Jesus. That was his 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.

(If you're doing Activity Two) "We're going to get a chance right now to think about some of the ways we can meet others' needs."

(If you're not doing Activity Two) "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.)

2. Wrapping Paper Verse Relay

[Memory Verse Activity]

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Wrapping Paper Pieces; markers; Bibles

What You Do:

- Divide the kids into two teams.
- Give each team a set of wrapping paper pieces, some markers, and some Bibles.
- Instruct each team to divide the verse up into ten phrases and write the phrases on the wrapping paper pieces.
- Then play a relay game:
 - Set each team's pieces in a pile at one side of your space.
 - Guide kids to line up on the opposite side.
 - Instruct kids to relay to get the pieces. The first kid must grab the first phrase, the second kid must grab the second phrase, and so on.
 - The first team to get the entire verse put in order is the winner.

What You Say:

*"God's greatest give to us was Jesus. Everything God had been planning from the start was about Jesus and the plan to save the world. It's so cool that this verse tells us something that God had planned thousands of years before it even happened. It wasn't a spur of the moment thing. It was a well-thought-out gift from God to us. **[Bottom Line] God gave us the greatest gift** when He gave us Jesus."*

3. Pray and Dismiss

[Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Wrapping paper pieces from the "Wrapping Paper Verse Relay;" markers

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of wrapping paper and a marker.

- Instruct them to write a prayer thanking God for giving us the greatest gift.
- Close with the prayer below.

What You Say:

“God, thank You so much for sending Jesus to us. He is by far the greatest gift ever. We praise You for your compassion toward us, and we ask You help us show compassion to others and tell them about the great gift of Jesus. In His name we pray, amen.

“I want you to take your prayers home with you as a reminder to keep thanking God for giving us the greatest gift.”

*As adults arrive to pick up, ask kids to use the butcher paper drawings to quickly tell them the Christmas story. Encourage parents to ask kids about the prayer they wrote on the wrapping paper. **Also, hand out the weekly Parent Cue card.***