



WEEK 4 - December 2020 - PRESCHOOL

Today's Bible Story: The wise men come to see God's Son.

Wise Men • *Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11*

Memory Verse: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son." John 3:16, GNT

Key Question: Why is Jesus special?

Bottom Line: Jesus is God's Son.

Basic Truth: God loves me.

Make it Fun

Activities to help kids transition into the classroom and set up the bible story.

-Christmas cookie match

Make it True

Captivate kids with a bible story and help them understand how it connects to their world

-Large group time

Make it Stick

Activities and crafts that help kids personalize the story and apply the truths to their life.

-Tunnel star
-Pass the gift
-Christmas story cube
-Journal and prayer

First 15 min - MAKE IT FUN

1. Christmas Cookie Match

Made to Play: An activity that encourages preschoolers to follow guidelines while having fun and learning new concepts

What You Need: “Memory Match Cookies” Activity Pages, cardstock, and scissors

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy “Memory Match Cookies” Activity Pages on cardstock and cut apart, two sets per activity.

During the Activity: Mix up the cards and lay them face down in a grid pattern in the center of the table. Allow the children, one at a time, to turn over two cards to find a match. When they find a set of matching cards, review that part of the Christmas story from this month using the dialogue below. The new cookie for this week is the star. Introduce that part of the story using the dialogue below, too.

After the Activity: Collect all the cards and set aside.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “Friends, let’s play a memory game. On each of these cards is a cookie. These cookies are a part of our Bible story—the Christmas Story! One at a time, you’ll turn over two cards to try to find two matching cookies. If you find a match, great! If not, turn the cards back over so the next friend can have a turn.”

During the Activity: “Oh, look! You found the angel cookie! Do you remember that part of the story? An angel appeared to Mary with a very special message. Mary would have a baby and name him Jesus.

“There’s the gingerbread man! This reminds us that God promised to send His only Son to us! What is His name? *(Pause.)* Yes, Jesus.”

“This candy cane cookie looks like a shepherd’s staff. The shepherds were out in the field, watching over their sheep, when an angel appeared with a special message! Jesus had been born that very night. The shepherds rushed off to see this very special baby.

“And here’s a star! We’ll hear about a VERY special star in our story today.”

After the Activity: “You found all the matches! Way to go, friends. These cookie shapes remind me of Christmas, the day Jesus was born! God loved us so much that He gave us His only Son.

Why is Jesus special? [Bottom Line] Jesus is God’s Son.”

Transition: Move to Worship and Story by calling out each character from the story and leading children to make the following motions for each character. Angel: Form a halo over your head

with your hands. Gingerbread man: spread arms out wide like a gingerbread man. Candy cane: Form a staff with your arms together, curled over your head like a candy cane. Star: lead children to do a star jump—jumping up with arms and legs outstretched.

Large group - MAKE IT TRUE

Large Group Overview:

Story Focus: The wise men come to see God's Son. We end the month with week four and the special star that God used to lead the wise men to Jesus. When the star stopped over the house where Jesus was staying, the wise men went in, bowed before Him, and gave Him their gifts. There He was—Jesus—God's Son.

Last 20 min- MAKE IT STICK

1. Pass the Gift Memory Verse

Hear from God | Memory Verse Review

Made to Move: An activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

What You Need: Small box, Christmas paper, scissors, tape, bow, and a music player

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Wrap the box like a gift.

During the Activity: Have the children sit in a circle in your activity area. Pass the gift around the circle as you play music. Periodically stop the music. The child holding the gift when the music stops will stand as you all say the verse together. Repeat until several children have a turn to stand up with the gift.

After the Activity: Set the gift aside for clean-up.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Friends, let's sit in a circle together on the floor. What did the wise men bring to Baby Jesus? (*Pause.*) That's right, they brought gifts! I have this gift to help us remember our memory verse. I will play music as we pass this gift around the circle. When the music stops, if you are holding the gift, stand up! We'll all say our verse together. Are you ready? Let's pass the gift."

During the Activity: (Music stops.) "Stand up, friend! Let's say our verse together. You can do the motions from your seat.

"God (*point up*)
loved the world so much (*hug yourself*)

that he gave (*hands out with palms up*)
his only Son,' (*rock arms like a baby*)
John 3:16." (*Open hands like a book.*)

After the Activity: "I LOVE this month's verse! God sent His Son, Jesus! Why? Because He loves us. I'm so glad God gave us Jesus on Christmas. It's the reason we celebrate. **Why is Jesus special? [Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son.**"

2. Tunnel Star

Live for God | Application Activity

Made to Move: An activity that uses a preschooler's natural desire to move to help them learn

What You Need: "Tunnel Star" Activity Page, cardstock, yarn, hole punch, tape, scissors, and a preschool tunnel

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy "Tunnel Star" on cardstock and cut on the dotted lines, one per activity. Punch a hole on the bold dot at the top of the star cutout. Cut a section of yarn about six inches long and feed one end of it through the hole in the star. Tie a knot at that end of the yarn so that you have the star hanging from the yarn. Choose one volunteer to hold the star on one end of the tunnel. Place the tunnel in the middle of the activity area.

During the Activity: Invite the children to follow the star and crawl through the tunnel.

After the Activity: Be sure each child has a turn to crawl through the tunnel.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Yay, a tunnel! It has a star on the other side." (*Point.*)

During the Activity: "Let's follow the star just like the wise men did! Let's crawl through the tunnel!" (*Do activity.*)

After the Activity: "God put a special star in the sky to show the wise men where Jesus was. God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus! **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son! Why is Jesus special? [Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son!**"

3. Christmas Story Cube

Live for God | Application Activity

Made to Create: An activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, Bottom Line, or memory verse by creating a craft

What You Need: "Christmas Story" and "Story Cube Parent Note" Activity Pages, Avery® #22806 labels or equivalent, cardstock, cube gift boxes, scissors, and glue sticks

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy "Christmas Story" on the label paper, one set per child. Copy "Story Cube Parent Note" on cardstock and cut apart, one per child. Write child's name on their box.

During the Activity: Encourage children to stick one picture square to each side. Demonstrate how to play.

After the Activity: Talk about the Christmas Story.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: “We’ve been learning all about the story of Christmas. There are angels, a mom and dad, a baby, some animals, shepherds, and wise men. Let’s make a story game cube to help us remember the Christmas Story.”

During the Activity: “Our story cube will have all the parts of the Christmas Story on it. Everybody gets a gift box and six picture squares. *(Pause.)* Stick one square to each side of the box. *(Pause.)* Find the side with the picture of the angel. *(Pause.)* This is the beginning of the Christmas Story. An angel came to Mary and told her she would have a special baby named Jesus. Jesus is special because **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God’s Son.**

“Now, turn your cube to the gingerbread man. *(Pause.)* This is when we learned that Jesus was born in a stable and Mary laid Him in a manger. Find the side with the candy cane. *(Pause.)* This is when we learned about the shepherds. The candy cane looks like the shepherd’s crook. An angel came to the shepherds and told them Baby Jesus had been born. Then, the sky filled with angels who said ‘Glory to God in the Highest.’ The shepherds ran to find Jesus then told everyone that Baby Jesus had been born.

“Next, turn the cube to the star. *(Pause.)* The star is what led the wise men to Jesus. They worshipped Him and gave Him gifts. You can take your cubes home and teach everyone there about the story of Christmas.”

After the Activity: “**Why is Jesus special?** *(Turn the cube to the side with the Bottom Line.)* Jesus is special because **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God’s Son.** *(Turn the cube to the side with the memory verse.)* ‘God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,’ John 3:16. We can remember how special Jesus is every day, not just at Christmas. **Why is Jesus special?** **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God’s Son.**”

4. Journal and Prayer

Pray to God | Prayer Activity

Made to Reflect: An activity that encourages personal application and prayer

What You Need: Paperclipped “Memory Verse Card” in Bible at John 3:16, journal, fun-shaped pen, star cookie cutter, heart stickers, and reward stickers or handstamp

SMALL GROUP LEADER (SGL): “It’s Small Group time! Today, we’ll go to our small group spot by following this star *(hold up the star cookie cutter)* like the wise men did in our story. Keep your eyes on the star! *(Hold the star cookie cutter high for the children to follow as you lead them to your small group spot.)*

“The star stopped, so this is the spot! Let’s sit down and talk about today’s Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me! *(Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.)*

“Our Bible story today was about some wise men who wanted to see Jesus and worship Him. God put a special star in the sky that helped the wise men find Jesus. The wise men followed the star until it stopped over Jesus. When the wise men saw Jesus, they bowed down and gave Him gifts to show Him how special He is. And **why is Jesus special?**”

CHILDREN and SGL: *[Bottom Line]* “Jesus is God’s Son!”

SGL: “You got it! *[Bottom Line]* **Jesus is God’s Son.** The Bible verse we have been learning says . . . *(Turn the pages of your Bible to the Memory Verse Card.)*

“God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, John 3:16. (Close Bible and lay it down.)

“Let’s stand up and say it together with the motions one more time, then anyone who wants to try to say it can give it a try!”

CHILDREN and SGL:

“God *(point up)*
loved the world so much *(hug yourself)*
that he gave *(hands out with palms up)*
his only Son,’ *(rock arms like a baby)*
John 3:16.” *(Open hands like a book.)*

SGL: “Wonderful! Let’s sit down. When it’s your turn to say the Bible verse, you can stand up and try it. I have my stickers/handstamp ready!”

(Say each child’s name. Make sure to give each child the opportunity to say the verse on his/her own. Have your stickers/handstamp ready to give when they say it.)

SGL: “You did it, [child’s name]! Here is your sticker/handstamp! *(Say this with each child as they try to say the Bible verse.)*

“Okay, when I count to three, I want everyone to show me their sticker/handstamp. One, two, three! Yay, I see them! *(Clap and cheer for the children.)*

“Okay, let’s sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. *(Hold journal, fun-shaped pen, and the star cookie cutter for the children to see.)*

“The wise men wanted to see Jesus so they could worship Him and give Him gifts. They knew that Jesus is special because *[Bottom Line]* **Jesus is God’s Son.** Today, we’ll do something to show Jesus how special He is. I will write ‘JESUS’ real big in our prayer journal. *(Write ‘JESUS.’)* See? And when I say your name, you will hold the star cookie cutter and put a heart sticker around Jesus’ name. When you put your heart sticker in the journal, you can say, ‘I love You, Jesus.’ Then, you give the star cookie cutter to the next child whose name I call. The only person who can talk is the person holding the star cookie cutter. Got it? Okay, get ready and listen for your name.”

(Say each child’s name. Make sure they get to hold the star cookie cutter. Give them a heart

sticker to put around JESUS. Remember to print, so the children can recognize the letters.)

SGL: “That was so special. I had such a wonderful Christmas celebrating Jesus with you! Would anyone like to pray before I pray?”

(Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.)

Prayer

SGL: “Dear God, Thank You for loving *(name each child)* so much that You gave them Jesus to be their friend forever. Thank You that I get to spend time with them learning about You and how much You love us. I pray that each child here will always know how much You love them and choose to follow Jesus one day. Jesus truly is the best gift ever. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

