



WEEK
FOUR
DECEMBER 2023

SMALL GROUP
3-5 YEAR
-OLDS

PRELUDE SOCIAL WORSHIP STORY GROUPS HOME

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT
25 MINUTES

MADE TO THINK

an advanced activity specifically designed for older preschoolers



3. GIFTS OF CHOICE

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Gifts of Choice" Activity Page, copy paper, magazines or sales flyers, scissors, butcher paper, and glue sticks

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Gifts of Choice" on paper and cut apart, three pictures per child. Cut out several pictures of items you might give as a gift from magazines or sales flyers, three per child. Lay the butcher paper on the table. Set all the gift images and glue sticks on the table.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage the children to pick two or three pictures of items they would give to someone they love. Once they've chosen their items, invite the children to glue them to the butcher paper to create a collage.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Talk about how we give gifts at Christmas to show others we love them and that God showed his love for us by giving us Jesus!

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "Friends, gather around the table! I have a question for you. Do you know why we give gifts at Christmas? (Pause.) We give gifts to show others we love them! Christmas is about God giving us the BEST gift ever—Jesus—to show how much He loves us."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Take a look at all the pictures on the table. I want you to pick out three things that you might give to someone in your family. You can glue them to the page. What pictures did you choose? Tell me about who you would give the gifts to. (Repeat with each child.) Wow! Look at all these fun gifts you picked out! Great job!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "We give gifts at Christmas to the people we love. We celebrate Christmas because God gave us Jesus to show us that He loves us.

How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus!"

BIBLE STORY

Happy Birthday, Jesus!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JESUS!
LUKE 1:26-33, 38; 2:1-2:21

MEMORY VERSE

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son."

JOHN 3:16, GNT

KEY QUESTION

How do we know God loves us?

BOTTOM LINE

God gave us Jesus.

BASIC TRUTH

God loves me.



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MADE TO CREATE

an activity that allows preschoolers to review the Bible story, bottom line, or memory verse by creating a craft to take home



5. DECORATIVE TOPPER

[LIVE FOR GOD | APPLICATION ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Decorative Topper" and "Decorative Topper Parent Note" Activity Pages, cardstock, scissors, cake pop sticks or wooden chopsticks, washable markers, stickers, washi tape, and a pen

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: Copy "Decorative Topper" on cardstock and cut, one per child. Copy "Decorative Topper Parent Note" on cardstock and cut, one per child. Write each child's name on the back of their paper.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Encourage children to decorate their cake topper. Turn train over and tape the cake pop stick or one chopstick to the back.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Review the Bible story.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "What a wonderful day it is to celebrate! Merry Christmas! Jesus' Birthday is here! Let's make a special decoration for the top of a birthday cake."

DURING THE ACTIVITY: "Decorate your Christmas train with the markers and stickers. (Pause.) Great job. Flip your train over and tape this stick on. (Help as needed.) Flip it back over, and let's sing 'Happy Birthday' to Jesus. (Sing together.) Great job, everyone!"

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: "The true story of Christmas begins with a girl named Mary. God sent an angel with an important message for Mary. The angel said that Mary would have a baby and this baby would be Jesus, God's Son! Not long after that, Mary and Joseph had to travel a LONG way to the town of Bethlehem. When they got to Bethlehem, they stayed in a stable full of animals, and that's where Baby Jesus was born. That night in a field, some shepherds were taking care of their sheep when an angel appeared in the sky. The angel said, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news!' And the angel told the shepherds that God's Son, Jesus had been born and they could find him in a manger. Then the sky filled with angels praising God saying, 'Glory to God in the highest!' The shepherds ran as fast as they could to find Jesus."

"God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus. And Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus' birthday! **How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus.**"

BIBLE STORY

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MADE TO REFLECT
an activity that encourages personal application and prayer



6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER

[PRAY TO GOD | PRAYER ACTIVITY]

WHAT YOU NEED: "Memory Verse Card" from Week One in Bible, journal, a fun-shaped pen, birthday stickers, and scissors

WHAT YOU DO:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: If you do not have the "Memory Verse Card" in your Bible, copy on cardstock and cut, one per small group. Place one card in your Bible at John 3:16. Keep this card in your Bible all month. Cut a row of stickers for each child.

DURING THE ACTIVITY: Lead the children in doing a conga line as they chant, "Hap-py birth-day, Je-sus!" to your Small Group spot. Sit down and gather the children around you. Review the memory verse and motions, then write "Happy birthday, Jesus!" in your journal and give the children birthday stickers to decorate around it.

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: Pray with the children using the list you made in the journal.

WHAT YOU SAY:

BEFORE THE ACTIVITY: "It's Small Group time! Today, we'll do a conga line to our Small Group spot while we say, 'Hap-py birth-day, Je-sus!' Line up behind me and do what I do! (Lead the children in a conga line as you chant "Hap-py birth-day, Je-sus!" all the way to your Small Group spot.) That was fun! Now let's sit down so we can talk about today's Bible story. One, two, three, sit down with me!"

DURING THE ACTIVITY: (Open the Bible and lay it in front of the children.) "In our Bible story today, we heard the true story of Christmas about how **God gave us Jesus** and why Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus' birthday. You see, God loves you and me so much that He gave us His one and only Son, Jesus. That's A LOT of love!

"We have been learning a Bible verse that will help us remember how much God loves us. It says, 'God (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down) loved the world (cross arms over chest) so much (pull hands away from each other) that he gave his only Son;' (rock arms like a baby) John 3:16. (Open hands like a book.) Stand up with me! We're going to say that Bible verse together! Just say what I say and do what I do. 'God (flat hand with thumb to forehead, pull down) loved the world (cross arms over chest) so much (pull hands away from each other) that he gave his only Son;' (rock arms like a baby) John 3:16. (Open hands like a book.)"

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(6. JOURNAL AND PRAYER, CONTINUED)

“Yay! **God gave us Jesus!** Now let’s sit down so we can write in our prayer journal and talk to God. (*Open journal.*) Since Christmas is when we celebrate Jesus’ birthday, I’ll write ‘Happy birthday, Jesus’ in our prayer journal, like this. (*Write “Happy birthday, Jesus.” Remember to print as you write in the journal so the children can recognize their names and the letters.*)

“Now for the fun part! I have birthday stickers for you to put around ‘Happy birthday, Jesus’ to make it extra special. (*Give each child a row of stickers and allow them to take turns adding their stickers to the journal.*) Wow! Look at all the birthday stickers! You really did a great job of making this look extra special! Let’s sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to Jesus, one more time! (*Lead the children in singing “Happy Birthday” to Jesus.*) Celebrating Jesus’ birthday is a wonderful reminder of how much God loves us. God loves us so much that **God gave us Jesus! How do we know God loves us? God gave us Jesus!**”

AFTER THE ACTIVITY: “Now let’s pray and thank God for giving us Jesus. Would anyone like to pray before I pray? (*Give each child who wants to pray the opportunity to do so.*)

“Dear God, thank You for this special time called Christmas—a time for us to celebrate Jesus’ birthday! Help us remember that Christmas is about celebrating when You gave us Your only Son, Jesus. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.”