

Journey to Bethlehem

This Sunday school lesson will teach the children that although many things have changed throughout the ages one thing has not changed during all of this time. The good news that Jesus came into this world because God loves us.

TOPICS

Birth of Christ, Christmas, Hope, Joseph, Mary

AS KIDS ARRIVE (10 minutes)

Upon arrival, give each child an index card prepared as follows:

Name: _____
Boy: _____ Girl: _____
State you were born in: _____
Current Age: _____

Have each child complete the card. Then as others arrive have the children tally up the number of classmates who are from the same state, who are the same age, and the number of boys and girls. The totals can be written on the board, and then each child can copy to the back of their card. Explain that this activity is similar to a census. Discuss various uses that a census may have and that these types of stats are still collected today, every ten years in America.

MEMORY WORK (12 minutes)

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." Luke 2:14 NIV

Practice saying this verse out loud several times as it may have been sang by the angels after the birth of Jesus.

SCRIPTURE READING AND DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

Introduction:

The virgin birth of Jesus is one of the best known stories in the Bible. With the birth of Jesus, God became a man to walk among us and to be our savior. Prophecies about the birth of Jesus go all the way back to Genesis. Also, according to prophesy, Jesus would be born in Bethlehem, a small town of the city of David (Micah 5:2). But Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth, a city over fifty miles away from Bethlehem. And the baby might be born any minute. Then, Caesar Augustus made a ruling. Everyone twelve years or older must go to their city of origin to register and pay taxes. It was called a census. Caesar needed to know how many people lived in the entire Roman Empire, so he would know how much taxes he could collect. Although baby Jesus might be born any moment, Joseph and Mary wanted to obey the law. They were both descendents of David, so they decided to walk to Bethlehem, a three-day journey.

Read Luke 2:1-20 (The Birth of Jesus)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Joseph and Mary go from their home in Nazareth and walk all the way to Bethlehem? *(Because Caesar Augustus issued a law for everyone to go to their home town for a census.)*
2. After Jesus was born, why was He placed in a manger? See verse 7. *(Because there was no more room at any of the Inns.)*
3. What is a manger? *(A feeding trough for animals - or have someone look up manger in a Bible dictionary)*
4. How do you think Joseph and Mary felt about spending the night where they kept animals? *(Perhaps they felt disappointed, but maybe thankful they had someplace to stay.)*
5. Jesus the savior of the whole world wasn't born in a beautiful palace like other kings? Why do you think that was? *(Unlike a king who was served, Jesus was to live a humble life and serve others.)*
6. What did the shepherds do after they saw Jesus for themselves? *(They spread the word about Jesus and glorified God.)*

CLASS EXERCISE (12 minutes)

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APPLICATION (4 minutes)

People during the time of Jesus lived a much different life than we do today. For example, when people in Jesus' time wanted to travel, they would usually walk. Today we ride in a car. Hospitals were not common in Jesus' time, so babies were usually born at home. But one thing for sure has not changed during all of this time: the Good News that Jesus came into this world because God loves us. When we put Jesus first in our lives, no journey is too long, no hurdle is too high, because our hope and assurance is in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

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JESUS AND ME

How does a child's life today compare to when Jesus was born? This activity helps kids relate to Jesus.

TOPICS:

Acceptance, Birth of Jesus, Family, Jesus

MATERIALS:

Activity page for each child [PDF] [page 4](#)
Pencils

DURATION:

Approximately 12 minutes

PREPARATION

Before class, print or make copies of the activity page for each child.

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

Give each child a copy of the activity page and read the instructions at the top. After the kids have completed writing down how they would complete each circumstance, discuss their choices with the rest of the class.

Additional Questions:

1. What were some major differences between you and Jesus?
2. What were some similarities?
3. If Mary gave birth to Jesus today, where do you think He would be born?



JESUS AND ME

In the spaces provided, write down how both you and Jesus would complete each sentence.

	Jesus	Me
The city I was born in was....		
I was born in a....		
When I was born, my mother dressed me in....		
If my family had to travel some place 50 miles away, we would....		
After I was born, I was visited by....		
On most Sunday mornings, you will find me....		
When I grow up, I will....		
I am sometimes tempted by....		