

Gospel Light

 Elementary

Large Group/Small Group

Sample Lesson

Includes links to all related resources

God gives
me courage
to obey Him!

More Jesus!



Includes a Link to
Downloadable Lesson
Extras

Includes

- Small Group Guides
- Kid Talk Cards
- Family Fridge Fun
- Family Event Plan

Reproducible!

Large Group
Leader Guide

Winter B

Welcome to Stories of Rescue!

This quarter, get ready to dive into God's plan to rescue His people! We'll start with the Christmas story and then move on to discover how God's salvation plan is seen in the books of Joshua, Judges and Ruth. As your students explore the lives of these people, they'll see how trusting God can make a difference in their own lives.

If this is your first time to teach this material or if you'd like a quick refresher, go to our website at gospellightsundayschool.com. But if you're ready to dive in to God's rescue plan, then follow these easy

1-2-3 STEPS

Prepare and Pray

1. Check out the first page of the lesson. The Big Idea tells why the lesson will make a difference in kids' lives—and in your life, too! The Action Plan helps you focus on what kids can do in this lesson to apply the Big Idea to life! Connecting You to Jesus shows how the action in this lesson's Bible story points to Jesus.
2. Read the lesson and customize it for your kids by marking the activities you plan to do in addition to the Bible story. Pray for God to help you reach your kids and show His love to them.
3. Set up your DVD equipment and gather the materials you need—they're listed right there on the first page!

CONNECT TO FAMILIES

Check out the Winter Family Event in the downloadable lesson extras. This special seasonal event will pump up parent participation in your program and help them grow faith at home. Build a partnership with your parents!

Teach in the Large Group

1. Welcome your kids and use the Opening Music, Icebreaker and Bible Verse activities to help kids **Get Thinking** about today's Big Idea! There's even an Optional Game you can play.
2. Tell the Bible story and make some memories as kids **Get God's Word!** Grab kids' attention with the creative Story Starter and keep them involved with the fun Storytelling Idea.

Teach in the Small Group

3. Kids get together with the same leaders each week to build relationships and to **Get Talking** about the verse and Bible story and the ways they can apply them to their lives. Whiteboard Time and *Kid Talk Cards* make it easy to lead in-depth discussions. (And get families talking, too, by handing out *Family Fridge Fun* papers for kids to take home.) End with a prayer time together!

Ready to dive in? Let's go!

[See Small Group Guide for grades 1 & 2](#)

[See Small Group Guide for grades 3 & 4](#)

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Downloadable Lesson Extras



In the digital package, you will find the following:

- What to Print list
- Gospel Light Elementary flyer
- Separate e-mailable files for lessons and small-group guides
- Winter Family Event instructions
- Song Motion Charts
- Bible Book Cards
- Lesson Extras such as puzzles, pictures and more
- Younger Elementary *Kid Talk Cards*
- Elementary *Kid Talk Cards*
- *Family Fridge Fun* papers
- Teacher-Training Articles: "Connecting Kids to Jesus," "Teaching FAQs," "Skills 101: How To Prepare"

You'll find the download link printed here in the purchased guide.

Basic Materials Needed for Each Lesson



Bibles, markers and pens or pencils, whiteboards and markers, *Mix It Up! Media DVD* and player, *Get Going! Worship CD* and player, Younger Elementary and Elementary *Kid Talk Cards*, *Family Fridge Fun* papers, several copies of *What the Bible Is All About Bible Handbook for Kids*

DVD



On the *Mix It Up! Media DVD*, you will find the following:

- Lesson Video Clips: Every week, you can show a cool video clip that will catch kids' attention as you lead the large group. Clips are used in a variety of ways: Icebreakers, Story Starters, Wrap-Up and Bible Verse.
- Music Videos: Each of the six songs for this quarter has a kid-friendly video to lead kids in worship and praise.
- Lesson PowerPoint Slides: Show these colorful slides to help your group follow along.
- Gospel Light Elementary Preview Video: Help large- and small-group leaders and parents get the vision for leading kids to Jesus by showing this video.



Gospel Light

Sunday School Curriculum

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Skills 101

Welcome to Skills 101! This is the place where we'll work together to build skills—designed to enhance your teaching experience and to help you find new ways to improve your kids' learning! This quarter's skill builder focuses on . . .

How to Prepare

When we finish a class session, we might say to ourselves, *Whew! Glad I don't have to do anything about this again until next week!* It's a far more common feeling than most of us care to admit! But that attitude can keep us from doing what we need to do most: nurture relationships with children and involve them in life-changing Bible learning. To do this, a teacher's work needs to be ongoing.

Any person can run into a classroom, throw a few materials together, keep children from hurting themselves for an hour or so and send them on their way. But is this effective teaching? This sort of "teaching" says to children, "This is something anyone can do. You kids won't know the difference. You aren't worth preparing for." Because children so easily absorb an adult's unspoken attitudes, they will soon conclude that indeed this is just another situation where the teachers are nice but the children are not very important.

Prepare yourself.

One terrific teacher says, "Begin preparing for the next class session as soon as this session is over. Look at the next session while the manual is still open! When you know what is coming next, you have time to think things through, collect materials you otherwise wouldn't have thought of and be relaxed instead of harried."

Prepare the Bible content.

Don't assume that you know the story. During the week, block out an hour of time during which you will read the Scripture and the teacher's devotional and pray for the children in your class. Familiarize yourself with the age-appropriate version of the story from the lesson. Your goal is to be able to tell the Bible story without being tied to the leader's guide. Maintaining good eye contact is essential to keeping children involved.

Prepare the environment.

Look at your classroom both when children are in it and when it is empty. Ask yourself, *What kinds of clutter collects in this room?*



Where are the bottlenecks where children can't move freely? What items distract children? Take time to eliminate clutter, rearrange the space and make the room a place that is welcoming and inviting. If you share a room, meet with those who share the space to work out ways to keep the room functional and beneficial for all concerned.

Prepare the materials.

Ask yourself, *What are some things that might happen if the children have to wait while I collect supplies for this activity? What could result if I don't have materials ready for large group time?* It can be very difficult to refocus children's attention when they have waited for an adult to prepare materials. Being prepared is the best way to prevent wandering attention!

During the week, collect materials and prepare them for the activities you have chosen. Stack materials in the order of use. If your church has a supply room, plan to arrive early enough to gather needed materials before going to your classroom. When you arrive in the classroom, it's easy to place the stacked, prepared materials in the area of your classroom where they will be used.

Prepare to arrive early.

If you've taken the steps above, you have only some simple setting up to do when you arrive in the classroom. You've eliminated that panicky feeling of needing to do a lot of preparation in a hurry. It's important to remember that no matter what your class's stated starting time, class begins when the first child enters the room. Arriving early to set up materials is well worth your commitment.

One veteran teacher points out that this first 15 minutes or so after you enter the classroom has the most potential for doing the very thing we are called to do as teachers: nurture relationships and involve children in life-changing Bible learning. The priority must be the children, not our preparations.

Be prepared to talk to children by the time the first child arrives. (Yes, this means you must be ready for church half an hour earlier. Commit to it as part of your ministry!)



Prepare ways to interact.

We quite often can picture what we will be doing during a given part of the class session. But a good question to ask is, *What will the children be doing during this time?* Be familiar with the conversation suggestions provided in the curriculum. Have a couple of backup ideas in mind (a simple game or a puzzle) in case something you have planned doesn't work well. When children are involved in an activity, it is never time to sneak away to do something else. This is another prime opportunity to build relationships and involve children in understanding God's Word.

For additional teacher-training articles, see [Teacher Training Smart Pages](#) (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 2006).

TIP

We have very little time to impact children with the good news of God's love. Being prepared makes us ready to do this with a loving, relaxed attitude that reflects His love and care to the children we teach



*Shepherds at a Stable

Winter • Lesson 1

Luke 2:1-20

Dear Teacher,

The word “glory” has always seemed too abstract for me to use in connection with my everyday actions. But as I read Luke 2:14, the phrase “glory to God” leaped out at me. As I thought about all the Christmas preparations waiting to be done, I wondered how I could give glory to God in the midst of this season.

Thankfully, the angels and the shepherds gave me some clues. The angels sang! While my voice isn’t angelic, singing songs of praise and Christmas carols is something I can accomplish, even while I’m wrapping presents or doing errands. And how did the shepherds give glory to God? They told everyone they saw the reason for the season: the birth of the Savior. I’m asking God to give me an opportunity every day to include Jesus in my conversations with others. Got glory this Christmas? I hope so!

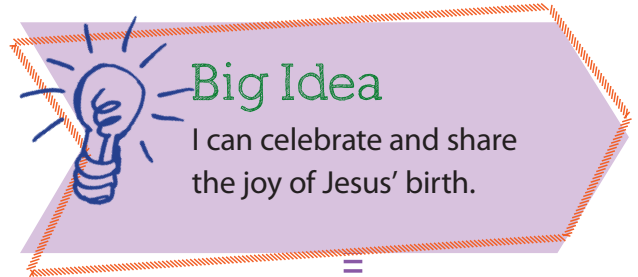


Sheryl Haystead
Senior Managing Editor

Sheryl became ill shortly after writing this lesson and went to be with Jesus on January 6, 2012. She missed out on the Christmas preparations she had been looking forward to. But she gave glory to God in every area of her life.

Connecting You to Jesus

Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem was just one of several ways that the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah were fulfilled (see Micah 5:2). God used the decree of a pagan king to bring His prophecies to pass. Even today, God uses the people and events in our world and in our lives to bring us to faith in the Messiah who was born so long ago.



Big Idea

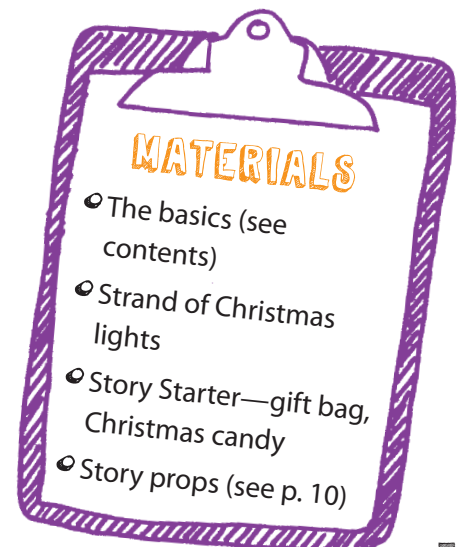
I can celebrate and share the joy of Jesus’ birth.

Action Plan

Discover why Jesus’ birth gives me joy, and tell ways to celebrate with others.

Bible Verse

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” Luke 2:14



MATERIALS

- The basics (see contents)
- Strand of Christmas lights
- Story Starter—gift bag, Christmas candy
- Story props (see p. 10)

Opening Music (5 minutes)

As children come into the large-group area, play **"All for Jesus"** (on *Media DVD* or track 1 on *Worship CD*). Lead children in singing and doing motions (see **Song Motion Chart** on p. 139).

Knowing that Jesus was born at Christmas gives us great joy, and we want to praise Him to show our joy!

Icebreaker (5 minutes)

Let's play a game to find out about different ways people celebrate Christmas. I'll say four things and point to a corner for each of them. Move to the corner that shows your favorite thing! Use categories such as kinds of Christmas lights (colored, white, flashing, icicle), types of cookies, where kids go for Christmas Eve or Christmas dinner, etc.

When you have given the final category, say, **Now tell each other what your favorite Christmas song is. See how many of you like the same song! Then stay in your groups for the Bible verse activity coming up!**

Bible Verse (10 minutes)

Guide each group that was created during the Icebreaker to stand in a circle. Appoint a leader in each group who will start the verse. **Each of you will say one word of the verse as you go around the circle.** Open your Bible and read Luke 2:14 aloud several times, slowly, as kids take turns going around their circles and saying one word at a time along with you. After several times through the verse, challenge each group, one at a time, to recite Luke 2:14 around their circle without you reading it aloud from the Bible.

Nice job learning this verse! "Glory" is another word for praise. In our story today, we'll find out who said the words in our verse and why he said them.

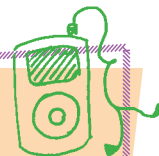


Big Idea

I can celebrate and share the joy of Jesus' birth.

TIP

Greet kids as they arrive, and ask, *What is your favorite Christmas decoration?*



PLAYLIST

*All for Jesus
Amen
My God Will Meet All Your Needs
Hope in the Lord*

TIP

Invite adult helpers to read the Bible verse aloud in each circle if kids need more help.

Optional Game

Ahead of time, collect two muffin tins, two bowls, small red and green items (pompoms, hard candies, etc.). Set muffin tins on floor or table at front of room. Place items in bowls and set where tossers will stand.

Playing fun games is a great way to celebrate things! Let's play a tossing game to celebrate Christmas. Invite two volunteers to the front. **Let's see who can toss the most red and green items into these muffin tins.** Each player stands in a designated spot. At your signal, players see who can toss the most items into the muffin tins. **Count out loud and cheer for your favorite contestant!** Call time, count the items in the tins and declare a winner. Invite other volunteers to play as time allows. **There are lots of ways to celebrate at Christmastime. I love to celebrate because God's Son, Jesus, was born!** (Optional: Play a larger-sized version of the game by throwing Christmas bows with coins taped to bottoms into large bowls or other containers.)

Music (15 minutes)

Sometimes we forget the real story of Christmas while we're busy doing fun things. This song reminds us of the BIGGEST reason we celebrate: Jesus was born! Lead children in singing and doing motions for **"Amen"** (on *Media DVD* or track 2 on *Worship CD*; see [Song Motion Chart](#) on p. 140).



When the shepherds were surprised by the angel, they felt afraid. They needed courage! Let's sing about the way God meets our needs! Lead students in singing and doing motions for **"My God Will Meet All Your Needs"** (on *Media DVD* or track 6 on *Worship CD*; see [Song Motion Chart](#) on p. 144).

The words to this song about Jesus were written long before He was born. Let's sing these Bible words! Lead students in singing and doing motions for **"Hope in the Lord"** (on *Media DVD* or track 4 on *Worship CD*; see [Song Motion Chart](#) on p. 142).

Story Starter (5 minutes)

Show gift bag. **What would be the most surprising gift that could be in this bag? The gift you wouldn't want to receive? The gift you would MOST want to receive?** Give several kids a chance to answer. **I don't have the gift you'd most like to receive, but I do have a small gift for each of you.** Give a piece of Christmas candy to each student. **Surprises are fun! We'll hear some surprises in today's story.**

Shepherds at a Stable

(15 minutes)

Luke 2:1-20



Big Idea

I can celebrate and share the joy of Jesus' birth.

STORYTELLING IDEA



Bring Bible-times costumes for volunteers to wear as they play the parts of the three shepherds, an angel, Mary and Joseph. Bring a toy sheep and a baby doll. Volunteers freeze in poses and use sheep and doll as instructed throughout story.

TIP

Invite a volunteer to read aloud information about Bethlehem in "Discoveries from the Past" on page 221 in *What the Bible Is All About for Kids*.

What Do You See?

Today we're going to hear one of my favorite parts of the Christmas story. This part of the story happened after Jesus was born, when people needed to hear the good news about His birth!

In a minute I'm going to ask you to close your eyes. When you open them, you'll see some people making a "picture." We'll look at the picture and then talk about it together. Ready? OK. **Close your eyes and listen as I read Luke 2:8:** "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night." **Shepherds stand together by toy sheep and pretend to watch their sheep.**

Open your eyes. What do you see? Kids respond. These shepherds took their job so seriously that they actually camped out in the fields. They probably had homes, but the shepherds stayed in the fields with their sheep. A shepherd's job was to protect his sheep from wild animals and thieves. If that meant he'd have to live in the fields with his sheep, then that's what he'd do.

Scared Shepherds

Close your eyes. Listen as I read Luke 2:9-13: "An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'" **Angel stands as if speaking; shepherds stand as if very afraid.**

Open your eyes. What do you see? Kids respond. The shepherds were terrified! Think about it—how often have angels come to talk to YOU? But that's exactly what happened to the shepherds! The angel said, "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."



The angel didn't say the good news was for some people, a few people or most people—he said it was for ALL people!

The good news was that Jesus, the Savior, had been born! “Savior” is another name for Jesus, because Jesus came to SAVE ALL people! The Israelites had been hearing for hundreds and hundreds of years that someday a king would come who would save them. That king was Jesus. That night, the angel came to tell the shepherds the news of the birth of Jesus the King.



Let's Go!

So what'd the shepherds do? **Close your eyes and listen as I read Luke 2:15:** “When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’” **Shepherds stand as if running. Open your eyes. What do you see? Kids respond.** The shepherds look as if they’re ready to go somewhere, don’t they? That somewhere is Bethlehem.

Let’s talk about two important words in that last verse. The words are “Let’s go.” When the angel told the shepherds the good news of Jesus’ birth, the shepherds didn’t say, “Uh, what should we do?” They didn’t look at each other and ask, “Do you think we should go back to bed?” They didn’t say, “Wow. That was cool. Since we’re awake, let’s go get a burger.” And they didn’t say, “Hmmm . . . you think MAYBE we should go to Bethlehem?” No, they said, “Let’s GO!” They didn’t hesitate, they didn’t question—and they didn’t wait! They said, “Let’s GO and SEE this thing God has told us about!” Those shepherds had a “Let’s Go” attitude. They went STRAIGHT to Bethlehem, just as the angel had told them to do!

Close your eyes. Listen as I read Luke 2:16: “So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.” **Mary and Joseph stand together, holding doll; shepherds kneel in front of them. Open your eyes. What do you see? Kids respond.** There, in a dirty, smelly stable, lay a newborn king—the Savior of the world. That night God sent His Son as a gift to ALL people. The shepherds knelt down in front of the baby and worshiped Him! The shepherds may not have understood everything about this baby, but they sure knew that He was IMPORTANT! The shepherds knew that they had been given a HUGE honor to be the FIRST people to come and worship Jesus!

After the shepherds saw Jesus and worshiped Him that night, they REALLY had a “Let’s Go” attitude! **Close your eyes. Listen as I read Luke 2:17-18.** “When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.” **Shepherds stand as if shouting the good news. Open your eyes. What do you see?** They went out and told anyone and everyone they could find about the birth of Jesus, the Savior,



the One God had sent to Earth as His gift to ALL of us at Christmas! This was ANOTHER huge honor—to be the FIRST to tell everyone the good news about Jesus' birth!



Big Idea

I can celebrate and share the joy of Jesus' birth.

Wrap-Up



Show **"Lesson 1: Who Would You Tell?"** on *Media DVD*. It's fun to tell great news. And Jesus' birth is the greatest news ever! You might have heard this story of Jesus' birth many times. Or you might be hearing it for the first time. Either way, it's a story that keeps being told, because Jesus' life has made such a BIG difference in the world. We celebrate Jesus' birth because of His life and His death and because God raised Him from the dead to make us part of God's family. This is why the angels said joyful words to God when Jesus was born. Read Luke 2:14 aloud. The word "glory" in this verse means to give praise or honor to God.

Show strand of Christmas lights. At Christmastime, using lights to decorate our trees and our houses is one way of showing our praise to God. The songs we sing and the things we talk about show the joy we feel—all because of Jesus. We celebrate with people all over the world that Jesus, God's Son, was born!

Connecting Kids to Jesus

Jesus' birth in Bethlehem showed that He was the special One that prophets in the Old Testament had said would be born. The king who had ordered Mary and Joseph to travel to Bethlehem did not believe in God. But God used this king to make the prophecy come true. This helps everyone know that Jesus is God's Son. Even today, God uses people and events to help us trust Jesus.



Prayer (5 minutes)

Take a moment to tell God why you are glad to celebrate Jesus' birth. Pause for kids to pray silently, and then pray, **Dear God, thank You for Christmastime. Thank You that we can celebrate Jesus' birth. We are glad You sent Jesus so that we could be part of Your family. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Dismiss to Small Groups

There are so many ways to celebrate Jesus' birth with others! In your small groups, you can talk more about why Jesus' birth gives us joy and how we can celebrate together with our families and friends.