



Thank you Coaches and Volunteers for serving!



BIBLE STORY

The angels tell about Jesus.

**SHEPHERDS
LUKE 2:6-18**

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

Jesus wants to be my
friend forever.



Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and Small Group Leaders by providing age appropriate and hands on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

Prepare to offer one or more of the following activities as your 3-, 4-, or 5-year-olds arrive. Let one or two teachers lead activities in different areas of the room while another teacher greets parents and kids at the door.

1. Hop to the Manger

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

What You Need: "Manger Scene" Activity Page, white cardstock, and floor tape

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Copy "Manger Scene" on cardstock. Provide one per classroom. Set out nine pieces of cardstock on the floor in a hopscotch pattern (one piece followed by two pieces followed by one piece, etc.) in an open area of the room and tape them down. Tape down the "Manger Scene" Activity Page at the end of the hopscotch board.

During the Activity: Line up the children at the start of the hopscotch board. Encourage the children to hop along the hopscotch board to reach the manger scene.

What You Say:

During the Activity: "In our Bible story today, we'll hear about some shepherds who went to see a very special baby. Do you remember who that special baby was? (Pause.) Yes, Jesus! Let's hop all the way down to the manger at the end. Make sure you take turns so that each friend has a chance to hop."

After the Activity: "That was so fun! The shepherds were so excited to see baby Jesus. I can't wait to hear all about it in our Bible story today!"



2. Herding

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

What You Need: Masking tape and cotton balls

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Make a large circle with the masking tape on a table or the floor in the activity area. Scatter the cotton balls all around the outside of the circle.

During the Activity: Challenge the children to herd all of the cotton ball sheep into the circle. Spread them out again and challenge them to herd the sheep using a specific body part (elbow, pinky finger, foot). Repeat as long as there's interest.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "We are going to be shepherds today! Shepherds herd sheep to keep them safe."

During the Activity: "These are our sheep (*point to cotton*) and this is our sheep pen (*point to circle*). We need to herd all of the sheep into their pen. Let's give it a try! (*Do the activity*). Great! Now let's make it even trickier. Let's herd them using only our little pinky finger! (*Repeat, changing the body part each time.*)

After the Activity: "Great job! You are all awesome shepherds! We are going to hear an amazing story from the Bible today about shepherds."



Connecting: Making the Story Apply to Them (Small Groups, 25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Bottom Line that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

1. Pass the Baby

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: Baby doll

What You Do:

Before the Activity: Guide the children to sit in a circle.

During the Activity: Say the memory verse together as a class as you pass the baby doll around the circle. Repeat several times.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "Everyone come and sit in a circle with me. (Hold up the baby doll.) Christmas is Jesus' birthday. God sent baby Jesus here just for us."

During the Activity: "Let's practice our memory verse. We can pass the baby around the circle while we say it. Are you ready? (Start passing the doll.) God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, John 3:16." (Repeat several times.)

After the Activity: "Awesome job! God loves us so much that He gave us Jesus. **Why is Jesus special? [Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son!**"

2. Wrap It Up

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: A box wrapped in Christmas paper, and stick-on bows (at least one per child)

What You Do:

During the Activity: Give each child a bow. Pass the present around the circle. As each child holds the box, he or she will add the bow and say the Bottom Line.

What You Say:

During the Activity: "The angel gave the shepherds a very special message. Let's pass this box around the circle. When it comes to you, add your bow to the box and say, **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son.**"

After the Activity: "That was fun! The angels told the shepherds about Jesus. He is the GREATEST gift. **Why is Jesus special? [Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son!**"

3. Ornament

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

Visit First Look's December 2018 Pinterest Board to see the inspiration for this activity: <https://www.pinterest.com/firstlookcurr/december-2018-birthday-bash/>

What You Need: "Ornament Tag" Activity Page; red or green cardstock; hole punch; scissors; red or green ribbon; pipe cleaners (one per child); wrapping paper or gift bag (one per child); and red and green straw pieces

(NOTE: There are many different ornament options on our Pinterest page. You may choose to make this ornament or choose another option from the Pinterest page. Be sure to place a tag on any ornament that you choose. If a tag will not work for your ornament, you may consider printing the "Ornament Tag" Activity Page onto Avery® #5160 labels and attach them to the ornament.)

What You Do:



Before the Activity: Copy the Activity Page onto the cardstock and cut on the dotted lines. Use the hole punch to punch a hole on the bold dot on the tag. Cut the ribbon into four-inch sections. Each child will need a tag and one section of ribbon.

During the Activity: Give each child a pipe cleaner and straw pieces. Help the child string the pieces onto the pipe cleaner in any order that they would like. When the pipe cleaner is $\frac{3}{4}$ full of the straw pieces, bend the pipe cleaner into a circle to resemble a wreath. Twist the ends of the pipe cleaner to secure it. Feed a section of the ribbon into the hole on the tag. Tie the ribbon and the tag to the top of the wreath.

After the Activity: Place the wreath in a gift bag or allow the child to wrap it.

What You Say:

Before the Activity: "We are going to make a Christmas gift for our families."

During the Activity: "We are going to make a beautiful ornament for you to give to your family for Christmas. (Give each child a pipe cleaner and straw pieces.) Place the straw pieces onto the pipe cleaner like this. (Demonstrate.) You can mix the colors any way you would like." (Finish activity.)

After the Activity: "Great job! Your family will love your Christmas gift to them. Now let's wrap your gift. (Finish activity.) Yay! I love celebrating Christmas. Christmas is Jesus' birthday. God gave us Jesus. **Why is Jesus special? [Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son!**"



BIBLE STORY

Choose an engaging adult to tell the Bible story. This person should be able to command the attention of preschoolers and control the group through animated storytelling. These scripts are written to be “told” and not “read.” Advanced preparation is necessary.

What You Need: A Bible

LEADER: “Hello, friends! Merry Christmas! My name is [LEADER’s name], and I have a true story for you from the Bible. In today’s Bible story angels appeared to announce that Jesus was born. They came to announce Jesus’ birthday! You know, the reason why we’re having the biggest, bestest Birthday Bash ever!

(Open the Bible.)

“The angels were a big part of Jesus’ birthday celebration. You see, Jesus, God’s Son, had just been born. That same night, there were shepherds watching their sheep, because that’s what shepherds do. They watch sheep. Do you remember what a sheep sounds like? Let me hear you make a sheep sound.

(Pause.)

“Fantastic! You sound like a lot of sheep!

“Well, one night the shepherds were watching all of their sheep and all of a sudden an angel appeared and said to them and said, ‘The baby has been born! He is God’s Son! Go find Him in the manger!’ Then the whole sky was filled with more angels singing and praising God saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest!’

“Would you like to pretend to be an angel with me? *(Pause for response.)* Great! Everyone stand up. Hold out your pretend angel wings like this.

(Hold your arms out and move them slowly up and down.)

“Let’s say, ‘Glory to God in the highest!’ while we move our pretend wings. Ready?”



CHILDREN and LEADER: "Glory to God in the highest!"

STORYTELER: "Again!"

CHILDREN and LEADER: "Glory to God in the highest!"

STORYTELER: "One more time!"

CHILDREN and LEADER: "Glory to God in the highest!"

LEADER: "Great job! You can sit back down now."

(Wait for children to sit down.)

"The shepherds were excited about Jesus being born because **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son. Why is Jesus special?**"

CHILDREN and LEADER: **[Bottom Line] "Jesus is God's Son!"**

LEADER: "You got it! So as soon as the angels left, the shepherds ran to see baby Jesus. When they saw Him, they knew He was the most special baby and they wanted to go and tell everyone. So they did!"

"Stand up and let's pretend to be shepherds this time. Put your hands around your mouth like this."

(Cup hands around each side of your mouth.)

"And let's tell everyone that **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God Son.** Here we go! Say it with me!"

CHILDREN and LEADER: **[Bottom Line] "Jesus is God Son! [Bottom Line] Jesus is God Son! [Bottom Line] Jesus is God's Son!"**

LEADER: "Wow! You make great shepherds. You can sit back down now."



(Pause for children to sit.)

“Jesus is special because **[Bottom Line] Jesus is God Son.** That’s why we’re throwing the biggest, bestest Birthday Bash ever, because we’re celebrating Christmas, the day Jesus was born.

“God loves us so much that He sent his Son, Jesus. Pretty special, don’t you think?”

“Let’s pray and thank God for how special Jesus is.”

PRAYER

LEADER: “Dear God, thank You for giving us Jesus. He is so special. I pray each person in here will understand one day how special a gift Jesus is to all of us. He is the BEST gift! Help us tell others about Jesus the way the shepherds did. We want everyone to know that Jesus is Your Son and You gave Him to us to be our friend forever. We love You, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.