



Rescuer – Lesson 2

4K and 5K

Divine Attribute: God is Rescuer

Heart Response: Worship him

Memory Verse: John 3:16 NIRV

“God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.”

Points of Emphasis:

1. We need to be rescued from our sin.
2. God loves us.
3. God sent his Son, Jesus, to rescue us.
4. We should worship Jesus.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

The Christmas season is a time of joy and excitement. But it can also be a time of stress and busyness. As you prepare to share this lesson with your class, take a moment to read Luke 2 and Matthew 1:18-25. Reflect on the extraordinary events of Jesus' birth while remembering the extraordinary love and purpose of Jesus' life. God chose ordinary people, Mary and Joseph, to be the parents of his extraordinary Son. Jesus was fully God, but he was also fully human and experienced life the same way that we do.

God also chose ordinary people, the shepherds, to proclaim his Son's extraordinary birth. After Jesus' birth, the angels praised God before the shepherds. These ordinary men responded by going to meet Jesus and worshiping God for his birth. Their joy was so great that they went on to tell everyone they could find about this amazing good news.

In light of this, how does it make you feel to know that although Jesus was God, he also lived an ordinary life on earth and understands what you experience? How do you respond to what God has done for you through Jesus? Do you share in the shepherds' reaction—a heart of worship, praising God for the gift of his Son?

The story of Christmas is one of the ordinary being invaded by the extraordinary. God sent his Son to ordinary people in an ordinary world and through him, God brought the extraordinary into their lives. As you share this lesson, look for ways that God can use someone ordinary, like you, to bring the extraordinary message of Jesus to the children in your class and to others.

CENTER TIME

10-20 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

To help the children transition into class, please use a center format at the beginning of each service. Set up three centers in your classroom to allow children options of activities. Ideas include, but are not limited to:

1. Read books on the floor.
2. Color at the table.
3. Play with blocks on the floor.
4. Play with puzzles at the table.
5. Play with Play-Doh at the table.

OPENING ACTIVITY

10 minutes at the start of service

The following activity is provided to begin engaging the children for the upcoming lesson. As the teacher of your class, you have an important opportunity to come alongside the parents of these children to teach them about God.

A Bed for Jesus

Supplies:

Blocks (in room)

Using the blocks in the classroom, encourage the children to build a manger or stable for Jesus. Talk about how there were no rooms available, so the Prince of Peace and Savior of the world was going to be born in a stable and laid in a manger.

A manger is a trough, or box, that was used to feed animals. What do you think it smelled like?

BIG GROUP TIME

please check your classroom schedule

Please talk to your class about the purpose of this time—to have fun worshiping God together. Give your class practical ideas of what this means (obey the teachers up on the stage, sing and praise God with a happy heart, keep your hands to yourself, etc.). Teachers, you are crucial in helping create a peaceful, orderly environment to worship God during this time. Thank you for your help!

SMALL GROUP TIME

25-30 minutes

Bible Story

Supplies:

Bible

Lesson picture - baby in manger (one per bin)

Last week, we had a new memory verse. Listen to the verse, and then I want you to say it with me. “God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” John 3:16. Now say the verse with me. “God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” John 3:16.

Last week, we learned that God sent Jesus, his Son, into the world, and this is what we celebrate at Christmas. Our lesson last week was about God sending the angel Gabriel to tell Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of his Son, Jesus.

At this time, the Roman emperor, Augustus, says that he is going to count the people in the Roman Empire. People have to go back to the towns where their families are from. Remember, last week we learned that Mary was going to marry a man named Joseph. Joseph’s family is from Bethlehem. Can you say Bethlehem? (Say “Bethlehem” with the children.) **Great!**

Well, Mary and Joseph have to leave Nazareth, where they live, and travel to Bethlehem. By this time, it is very close to the time when Mary is going to give birth to Jesus. Back in those days, people did not have cars, buses, trains or planes to ride in. Most people traveled by walking.

This trip probably takes Joseph and Mary between four days and a week! It is not an easy trip. Mary most likely rides for part of the trip on a donkey and Joseph walks beside her. Have you ever been on a long trip? (Give time for responses.) How did you travel—car, train, bus, or plane? (Give time for responses.) Did you get tired? (Give time for responses.)

By the time Mary and Joseph reach Bethlehem, they are very tired. They look for a place to stay, but all the rooms are taken, so they stay in a stable with the animals. While they are staying in the stable, Jesus is born. Mary wraps baby Jesus in strips of cloth and lays him in a manger.

Does anyone know what a manger is? (Give time for responses.) It is the place where the animal’s food is placed. Mary puts clean hay in the manger and gently places baby Jesus in it, on top of the hay. (Show lesson picture of the baby in a manger.) She worships God, thanking him for sending Jesus.

Last week, we talked about the reason Jesus was sent into the world. We have all done things that God has told us not to do. That is called “sin.” God is holy and cannot be around sin. So our sin separates us from God. In order to be able to talk to God and be friends with God, we need someone to take away our sin. We are not able to do this for ourselves. Jesus, God’s Son, came to the world to live a perfect life and die to take away our sin. That is the only way we can be friends with God again and go to Heaven.

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus who came to the world to rescue us and save us from our sins. Jesus was God’s gift to us because he loves us so much. We should worship Jesus.

Prayer

Prayer time may not be appropriate immediately following story time. If this is the case, we ask that you be intentional about praying spontaneously or formally with the children at other times during class.

Father God, thank you for your gift of your Son, Jesus. We want to praise you for making a way for us to be friends with you. Help us to remember that this is what Christmas is about. Amen.

Jesus is God's Gift to Us

Supplies:

Rounded slot clothespin with a face drawn on (one per child)

Strip of white/off-white cloth (one per child)

Small paper gift bag with 2/3 of the top cut off (one per child)

Bag of brown crinkle paper (one per bin)

Christmas stickers to decorate the bag (two per child)

Small gift-wrap bow (one per child)

Crayons

Today we are going to wrap baby Jesus in a cloth like Mary did and put him in a “manger.” This is to remind us that Jesus is God's gift to us. Let the children color on their “mangers” and put the stickers and bows on them. Then give each child a clothespin and strip of cloth. Demonstrate how to wrap the clothespin with the strip of cloth and have the children wrap their clothespins. Have children put a pinch of crinkle paper in the bag and put the wrapped clothespin Jesus on top of that in the “manger.” Remind them that the greatest gift we've been given is God's gift of Jesus Christ!

***Have fun and let them do the crafts themselves, as much as possible. This is a hands-on way for them to learn who God is and remember what they learn. It doesn't matter if they place the label or stickers in the wrong spot. What matters is teaching them who God is. ***

SNACK & ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

last 30 minutes

Please wash the children's hands before snack time and say a prayer thanking God for the food. As they are eating their snack, please take time to go over the review questions.

Review Questions

1. **Where did Mary and Joseph have to go to be counted?** (Bethlehem.)
2. **How did they get to Bethlehem?** (They walked or rode a donkey.)
3. **Why did Mary and Joseph stay in a stable?** (There were no rooms available.)
4. **What did Mary do after Jesus was born?** (She wrapped him in cloths and put him in a manger.)

A Room for the Savior

Supplies:

Set of 1 stable and 15 “X” cards (one set per bin)

Children will act out the story of Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem. Have two children volunteer to play Mary and Joseph (or assign two). The other children will play the people of Bethlehem. Each of the “people of Bethlehem” children should blindly pick a card from the set – choosing either an X or the stable. Make sure they keep what’s on their cards a secret!

Have the children with cards spread out around the room. Then have “Mary” and “Joseph” pretend to carry bundles and travel around the room to get to Bethlehem. “Mary” and “Joseph” will go from child to child, asking for a place to stay. Remind them that Mary has traveled a long way and is very pregnant with baby Jesus and needs a place to rest and give birth. When the couple reaches a child with an X card, that child will say, “There’s no room at the inn!” When they find the child with the stable card, he or she will tell the pair that they must stay in the stable with the animals.

Remind the class that Mary and Joseph were thankful and happy to have a place to stay, so the Savior of the world could be born and rescue us! Play as long as time allows, with other children playing the parts of Mary and Joseph.

Teachers – Please clip the set of cards back together and put them back in the bin at the end of the activity

