

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Luke 2:1-20
- In This Passage: Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem for a census. There is no room in the inn, so Jesus is born in a manger. Angels proclaim the good news to a field of shepherds, who run to see the baby—God’s love in human form.
- Bible Point: God loves you.
- Summary Verse: “For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

Dig Deeper

- You’ll Be Teaching: *God loves you.* God’s love had never been more apparent than that first Christmas night when he sent his Son, Jesus, to earth as a baby. But the Christmas message can lose its power in the midst of all the seemingly more exciting Christmas festivities. Use this lesson to capture kids’ sense of wonder that God—Creator and ruler of the universe—came in the form of a tiny little baby because of his great love for us.
- Think About: What aspects of Christmas fill you with wonder?

Dig In to Prayer

- Ask God to get kids’ attention with his love—which is greater than any light display or giant present under the tree.

Quick Tip

- Christmas is loud, busy, and full of activity. For adults, that can be stressful. For kids, it’s fun! But still, a change of pace from frenetic to quiet may be just what they need to capture their attention this week.

This Lesson at a Glance



MUSIC VIDEO

Preschoolers sing songs of praise to God.

Supplies

- “Angels We Have Heard on High” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Silent Night” (watch or download [here](#))
- “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (watch or download [here](#))



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO

Recommended for elementary kids.

Supplies

- “Carl’s Christmas” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))



OPENING

Preschoolers share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Preschoolers do an obstacle course, experience aspects of Jesus’ birth scene, worship God, and share the good news.

Supplies

- Bible
- classroom furniture
- yellow raffia
- flashlight
- worship music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Use the classroom furniture to set up an obstacle course kids can make their way through when their names are called.
- Spread raffia on the ground on one end of the room.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Preschoolers sing a Christmas song to celebrate Jesus.

Supplies

- Christmas music about Jesus
- music player



OBJECT LESSON

Preschoolers watch as light refraction through water flips the focus of an image.

Supplies

- “What’s Christmas About?” handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- tall, cylindrical, clear glass vase

Easy Prep

- Fill the vase with water, and make sure the outside is very clean and easy to see through.
- Practice with the handout and the vase of water by holding the handout behind the vase so you’re looking through the vase to see the person figure. Adjust the distance between the handout and the vase until you see the direction the person is facing flip so it looks like it’s facing baby Jesus—roughly 6 inches or a little more. This is the distance you’ll need to hold the paper when you show the preschoolers.



DEEPER BIBLE

Preschoolers pretend to be babies.

Supplies

- Bible
- jars of baby food, ideally a meat flavor (1 jar for every 20 kids)
- craft sticks (1 per child)



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers run to share the news of Jesus’ birth.

Supplies

- chairs (at least 4)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Place a chair in each corner of the room. If you have a large room, you may want to add a couple of extra chairs along the sides.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Preschoolers share God’s love.



CRAFT

Preschoolers make angel wings.

Supplies

- “Angel Wings” handout printed on card stock (2 per child) (download [here](#))
- white coffee filters (about 8 per child)
- glue sticks
- ribbon (3 feet per child)
- stapler

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

Classroom: Monkeys

- Cut out the Angel Wing shapes.
- Cut the coffee filters in half.



TAKE-HOME

Preschoolers receive a take-home page about the lesson.

Supplies

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



MUSIC VIDEO

Angels We Have Heard on High

[10 min]

Supplies

- “Angels We Have Heard on High” (watch or download [here](#))
- “Silent Night” (watch or download [here](#))
- “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (watch or download [here](#))

Tip

- Don't have internet in your classroom? That's okay! You can choose your own worship songs from our Best Of Dig In Music DVD [here](#).

Sing Songs to God

Sing the three songs in any order.



TALK-ABOUT VIDEO Carl's Christmas

[10 min]

Supplies

- “Carl’s Christmas” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

Tips

- Talk-About Videos may work for preschoolers, but they’re geared more toward elementary kids. If you find that the videos aren’t hitting the mark for your preschoolers, try using the Preschool Puppet Skit activity block instead.
- Don’t have internet in your classroom? That’s okay! You can download the videos before class using the “download” button at the link provided, or purchase DVDs [here](#).

Discuss and Watch “Carl’s Christmas”

Say: **We’re learning that God loves you. God loves you so much that he sent his Son, Jesus, to earth as a baby! That’s what we celebrate at Christmas: Jesus’ birth and God’s love. We do a lot of things to celebrate Christmas!**

Ask: • **What are some things you like to do to celebrate Christmas?**

Say: **It’s not bad to do those things, but it becomes a problem if it takes our focus off Jesus. Let’s see what happened when our friend Carl got his Christmas priorities a little bit out of whack.**

Watch “Carl’s Christmas.”

Ask: • **In your opinion, what’s the best Christmas present Carl got?**

• **What’s a present you’re hoping to get for Christmas?**
• **What can you learn from Genesis about how to appreciate God’s love even more than presents?**

• **Carl gave Genesis his favorite Christmas gift. What’s one thing you can do to show God’s love this Christmas?**

Say: **God loves you, and that’s the greatest gift ever. It’s better than a remote-control car or even...cheesy poofs! As you enjoy your fun Christmas celebrations and any gifts you receive, don’t forget that the greatest gift is God’s love, wrapped up as tiny baby Jesus. And the best way to celebrate Christmas is to share that love with others!**



OPENING Welcome

[5 min]

Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids give a fist bump to four friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by lining up preschoolers who have birthdays this month and having everyone else run by to high-five them.
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

- Say: **Today we'll learn God loves you. We'll hear how God showed his love for us when he sent Jesus to earth to be with us. That's why we celebrate Christmas! Let's start today by talking about some Christmas ornaments or decorations we like.**

Share

- Share about a special Christmas ornament or decoration *you* have.
- In leader-led small groups, have preschoolers share about a Christmas ornament or decoration that is special to *them*.
- After small groups have discussed, have adult or teen helpers share with the whole group what they talked about in their small groups.

Summarize

Open a Bible, and say: **It's so wonderful to celebrate Christmas because it's when we remember that God sent Jesus to be our friend! God loves us so much. We'll learn more about that today.**

Pray, thanking God for loving you.



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Jesus Is Born (Luke 2:1-20)

[20 min]

Supplies

- Bible
- classroom furniture
- yellow raffia
- flashlight
- worship music
- music player

Easy Prep

- Use the classroom furniture to set up an obstacle course kids can make their way through when their names are called.
- Spread raffia on the ground on one end of the room.

Tip

- You can purchase downloadable music and other items to enhance your DIG IN program [here](#).

Travel Through an Obstacle Course

Have kids sit on the end of the room opposite the raffia, while you stand on the side with the raffia. Say: **Today you'll find out God loves you. That's why we celebrate Christmas—because God loves us so much that he sent his special Son, Jesus, to earth to be with us.**

Show the Bible. Say: **The Bible tells us *how* Jesus came to earth to be with us. It says God made Mary pregnant with baby Jesus, and Joseph was going to be Jesus' daddy. One day when Mary was still pregnant, she and Joseph traveled to a town called Bethlehem.** Lead kids in patting their legs slowly like they're walking a long way and are tired.

Say: **There was a census, which is a little bit like when someone counts to be sure everyone is there. I'll call your name now to make sure you're here today.**

Have kids travel through the obstacle course individually as you call their names to join you on the side with the raffia. If you have more than 10 kids, have other leaders join you in calling kids over.

Say: **Mary and Joseph had to travel on a long, hard journey—even longer and harder than the obstacle course you just went through. Mary and Joseph had to travel for days and days to get to Bethlehem. How long can you pretend to travel before you get tired?** Lead kids in marching in place at different speeds until they get tired.

Experience Jesus' Birthplace

Say: **When Mary and Joseph made it to Bethlehem, there were so many people there! There weren't any hotels or places for them to stay, so they had to stay in something like a barn.** Lead kids to lie in the raffia. **It might've had a grassy or straw-covered floor.** Lead kids to feel the raffia beneath them.

Say: **Animals lived there.** Have kids take turns making barn animal noises as the other kids guess.

Say: **While Mary stayed there, she gave birth to baby Jesus, God's very special Son!** Lead kids to pretend to rock a baby.

Ask: • **What would it be like to be born with animals all around you?**

Worship With the Angels

Say: **At the same time, there were some shepherds in a field not far away.** Lead kids to travel to an adjacent area of the room, and have them gather close together.

Say: **Shepherds are people who look after sheep.** Dim the lights, and have kids lie on the floor and pretend to rest. **While the shepherds rested in the field at night, something surprising happened.**

Turn on the flashlight and shine it on the kids. **A bright light appeared, and angels came to talk to the shepherds. It was a little scary for the shepherds because the angels looked so amazing.** Have kids show what their faces would look like if they saw an angel.

Say: **But then the angels told them not to be afraid. They said, "God's special Son, Jesus, was born!" They told the shepherds exactly how to find Jesus.**

Then they sang a worship song to God to show their thankfulness that God sent Jesus. Turn on a worship song such as "Silent Night," and lead kids in singing.

Say: **It's great to worship God. He loves you and loves to hear you sing to him. He loved to hear the angels sing to him, too. And after the angels sang praises to God, the shepherds rushed to find Jesus.** Lead kids in running in place.

Tell About It

Say: **They found Jesus exactly where the angels said he'd be! And they knew Jesus was God's special Son and that God loves us because he sent Jesus to earth to be friends with us. The shepherds went to tell everyone about Jesus!**

Let's see how many people we can tell about Jesus. Lead kids in rushing to tell as many friends in the class as they can that "Jesus is born!" as you count to 30.

Say: **Jesus' birth shows us God loves us because God sent his special Son, Jesus, so we can be friends with him! That's why Christmas is so special—it reminds us God loves us.** Lead kids in hugging themselves as a reminder of God's love for them.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Christmas Caroling

[5 min]

Supplies

- Christmas music about Jesus
- music player

Tip

- You can purchase downloadable music and other items to enhance your DIG IN program [here](#).

Sing and Celebrate

Say: **Today we learned that God loves you. He sent his special Son, Jesus, to earth to be with us. That's why we celebrate Christmas! Let's sing a song about Jesus now.**

Play a Christmas song that focuses on Jesus, and lead kids in singing.

Pray

Say: **It's so fun to sing Christmas songs and celebrate Jesus' birth! Let's thank God for loving us so much that he sent us his Son, Jesus, to be our friend!**

Lead kids in a prayer, thanking God for loving you and the kids and thanking God for Jesus.

Say: **I am so happy you came to church today to celebrate Jesus' birthday with all your friends here. I hope to see you again very soon!**



OBJECT LESSON

Flip the Focus

[10 min]

Supplies

- “What’s Christmas About?” handout (1 copy) (download [here](#))
- tall, cylindrical, clear glass vase

Easy Prep

- Fill the vase with water, and make sure the outside is very clean and easy to see through.
- Practice with the handout and the vase of water by holding the handout behind the vase so you’re looking through the vase to see the person figure. Adjust the distance between the handout and the vase until you see the direction the person is facing flip so it looks like it’s facing baby Jesus—roughly 6 inches or a little more. This is the distance you’ll need to hold the paper when you show the preschoolers.

Tip

- The glass vase should also be smooth glass without any ridges or other decorative embellishments.

Watch What Light Refraction Does to an Image

Say: **Today we’re learning that Christmas is about how much God loves you. God loves you so much he sent his only Son, Jesus, to earth to do something very special.**

Christmas has been celebrated all over the world for a *long* time, and people have added many different ways to celebrate. That’s why we see things like Christmas trees and lights during Christmas—those weren’t part of the first Christmas when Jesus was born.

Ask: • **What are other things you see at Christmastime?** If needed, share another example or two such as gingerbread houses or holly wreaths hung on doors. Take a few responses.

Say: **Let’s do a little hunt around the room for things that remind us of things we see at Christmas.**

- Have leaders help kids search the room for things that remind them of Christmas. They could choose toys that remind them of gifts they get for Christmas or toy trains that might go around a Christmas tree. If you have some Christmas decorations up, kids could choose those, too.
- Allow a few minutes for preschoolers to make their choices; if no one chooses anything that represents baby Jesus, that only helps make the point.
- Have everyone bring their choices to the center of the room and sit together. Invite everyone to tell why the item they chose reminds them of Christmas, and take a few responses.

Say: **We have a lot of fun at Christmas with so many ways to celebrate! Sparkling and bright Christmas trees, presents wrapped in shiny paper, Christmas cookies and other treats—there’s so much fun at Christmas!**

- Hold up the “What’s Christmas About?” handout.
- Draw attention to the figure of the person in the middle of the handout, and explain that while it’s okay to enjoy all the special fun of the Christmas

season, we can make sure we also celebrate what Christmas is really all about.

- The person on the handout is so focused on the Christmas tree and presents that his or her back is turned to baby Jesus.

Ask: • What are things you can do or already do with your family to remember Christmas is about Jesus? Share an example of your own, such as going to church, always setting out a nativity scene with your Christmas decorations, or reading about Jesus' birth and the first Christmas.

- Set the vase on a table or chair so everyone can see it. Then slide the handout behind the vase the way you practiced earlier so that kids are looking through the vase at the handout.
- Repeat sliding the handout behind the vase a few times if kids haven't caught what's happening to the person figure yet.

Say: The person on the page switched directions! Even with all the other stuff you do to celebrate Christmas, you can switch and remember that Christmas is really about Jesus coming to earth to show you that God loves you.



DEEPER BIBLE Baby Time

[15 min]

Supplies

- Bible
- jars of baby food, ideally a meat flavor (1 jar for every 20 kids)
- craft sticks (1 per child)

Tip

- If you'd like, gather simple baby toys such as rattles or teething rings from your church nursery (1 toy for every 5 or 6 kids). Kids can pass these around during the discussion of toys.

Play Like a Baby

Say: **Today we're learning that God loves us. God sent Jesus to earth to help us be his friends. Listen to this!** Read aloud Romans 5:11.

Say: **Jesus wanted everyone to know God's love, from little kids to big kids to grown-ups. So he came to earth as a baby and grew up just like we do. That makes me wonder, what was it like for Jesus to be a baby? Babies can't do all the things big kids like you can do.**

Ask: • **What do you like most about being a big kid?** Kids may say being able to play on the playground, ride a bike, or eat ice cream.

Say: **Let's think about what it'd be like to be a baby again.**

Ask: • **For example, what's your favorite toy?** After kids share, encourage them to pretend to play with their favorite toy.

Say: **A baby couldn't play with most of those toys the way you do.**

But babies can play with a rattle. Encourage kids to pretend to shake a rattle. Then ask kids to give you a thumbs up if they'd prefer to be a baby and play with a rattle or a thumbs down if they'd prefer to play with big-kid toys.

Eat Like a Baby

Ask: • **What's your favorite food?** Encourage a few kids to share.

Say: **Babies can't eat some of those foods. This is the kind of food babies eat.** Show kids a jar of baby food, and then give a small amount on a craft stick to anyone who wants to taste it. Invite kids to share whether they like the baby food as much as other foods.

Walk Like a Baby

Lead kids to one side of the room.

Say: **We've all gotten bigger, so we can move from one place to another in all kinds of fun ways.** Encourage kids to walk to the other side in whatever way they'd like, the sillier the better.

Say: **Now let's pretend to be a little bitty baby.** Have kids lie on the floor and curl up like a baby.

Say: **If you were a baby, you couldn't get to the other side of the room by yourself. You'd have to cry for someone to carry you.** Lead kids to cry like a baby.

Say: **Baby Jesus needed his mommy to carry him around. He had to eat food for babies. And like every other baby, he couldn't do the fun things big kids can do. But Jesus wanted to show God's love to everyone, so he came to earth as a baby. Then he grew and became a toddler.** Encourage kids to either crawl or waddle like a new walker to the other side of the room.

Say: **Then he became a big kid like you.** Have kids cross the room again, using their silly walks.

Classroom: Monkeys

Say: **Jesus kept growing until he was all grown up. Show me your most grown-up walk.** Encourage kids to walk across the room pretending to be a grown-up.

Say: **Jesus came as a baby at Christmas to show us God loves us, no matter how old we are!** Lead kids to pray and thank Jesus for coming to show us God's love.



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Share the News

[10 min]

Supplies

- chairs (at least 4)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Place a chair in each corner of the room. If you have a large room, you may want to add a couple of extra chairs along the sides.

Tip

- You can purchase downloadable music and other items to enhance your DIG IN program [here](#).

Share the Good News

Say: **When the shepherds heard the good news of Jesus' birth, they ran around telling everyone. I wonder if they had to wait for some people to wake up before could they tell them. Let's play a game and tell our friends the good news as soon as they wake up.**

- Ask an adult or teen helper to sit in each chair and pretend to sleep. If you don't have enough helpers to fill all the chairs, ask willing preschoolers to take turns.
- Encourage the helpers to "wake up" at random intervals and stand up in front of their chair.
- When they do, direct kids to run to them and shout, "**Jesus is born!**"
- After hearing the news, the helpers can pretend to sleep again.
- Helpers can "wake up" at any time, even if another helper is also awake. Encourage them to wake up fairly regularly to keep the kids moving quickly from one helper to another.
- Continue playing as time allows.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.

Talk About Good News

Say: **In our game, we told our friends the good news that Jesus was born. Hearing good news makes me happy and excited!**

Share an example of some good news *you've* been told, such as news that your best friend is getting married, your sister is going to have a baby, or your grandma is coming for a visit.

Ask: • **What good news have you heard?** Kids may say they've been told they're going on a special trip, a friend is coming for a playdate, or their favorite uncle is coming for a visit.

Say: **That's all great news. But the best news ever is that God loves you! Jesus was born to share that news with us all.**



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Pop, God Loves You!

[10 min]

Sing About God's Love

Say: **Jesus came to show us that God loves us. The angels shared the good news with shepherds. We can share the good news of God's love with everyone! Let's tell our friends about God's love in a game.**

- Form leader-led groups, and have each group form a circle around one willing child. Show the kids in the center of the circles how to crouch down.
- Encourage each group to walk in a circle around the child in the center, singing the following song to the tune of "Pop! Goes the Weasel":

Jesus came to show us God's love

Let's tell [name of child inside the circle]

Jesus came to show us God's love

(Kids will pause for the child in the circle to pop up and yell "Pop!")

The group will finish with "**God loves you!**"

- Continue playing as time allows, giving each child a chance to be in the center of the circle.

Share God's Love

Say: **God's love for us is so exciting! It's fun to share it with others.**

Share about someone *you* can tell about God's love.

Ask: • **Who can *you* tell about God's love?** Kids might say a friend, a neighbor, or a sibling.

Say: **We can tell everyone about God's love, just like the angels told the shepherds!**



CRAFT Angel Wings

[20 min]

Supplies

- “Angel Wings” handout printed on card stock (2 per child) (download [here](#))
- white coffee filters (about 8 per child)
- glue sticks
- ribbon (3 feet per child)
- stapler

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.
- Cut out the Angel Wing shapes.
- Cut the coffee filters in half.



Tip

- If you don't have time to cut the Angel Wings, just have kids glue coffee filters inside the shape on the page.

Talk About Angels

Say: **Today we heard about some shepherds who had a visit from angels. The angels told the shepherds that Jesus was born!**

Ask: • **That makes me wonder, what do you think the angels looked like?** Give kids a few minutes to imagine what the angels might have looked like.

Say: **We don't know exactly what the angels looked like, but sometimes we picture angels with wings. Let's make some angel wings of our own. Then we can pretend to be angels telling everyone the good news about baby Jesus.**

Make Angel Wings

- Give each child two angel wings, about 16 coffee filter halves, and a glue stick.
- Show kids how to glue the coffee filters so the rounded edges all face the rounded edge of the wings. (Be sure kids have the wings laid out as mirror images, so there will be a wing for each side.)
- While kids are gluing, staple a piece of ribbon in a loop on the outside edge of each wing for straps.

Say: **Angels told the shepherds that Jesus had come. He came to show us that God loves us. We can wear our angel wings and tell our friends and families that God loves them, too!** Help kids put their wings on their arms so they sit on the back of each shoulder. Encourage kids to run around the room pretending to be angels telling each other the news that Jesus was born.



TAKE-HOME Dig In @ Home

[0 min]

Supplies

- this week's "Dig In @ Home" handout (1 per child) (download [here](#))

Easy Prep

- Add your church announcements to the "Dig In @ Home" handout.

Distribute a copy of the "Dig In @ Home" handout to kids as they leave, or email it to parents during the week.