

Angels And Shepherds

Luke 2:8-20

MEMORY VERSE

LUKE 2:11

“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Christ the Lord.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

As many 8.5"x11" pieces of paper as the number of children in your class, color crayons, glue (optional), glitter (optional), and magazine pictures (optional)

A roll of toilet tissue.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Happy Birthday Jesus!

Have the children make a birthday card for Jesus using color crayons, glue and glitter, or pictures cut out of magazines.

Discuss with the children the significance of birthdays, i.e. that we are celebrating the fact that the birthday boy or girl is here with us, and that we are thankful for their presence in our lives. This is why we celebrate Jesus' birthday.

LESSON TIME!

Today we are going to see how God has provided salvation for us through His Son, Jesus. Have you ever stayed up late at night, heard a noise, and wondered where that noise was coming from? This morning, we will learn about some shepherds who heard “good news of great joy” while they were watching their sheep at night. Why do you suppose this good news was so important? In today’s lesson we are going to find out. **God is our salvation.**

LUKE 2:8-10

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people."

Who knows where Mary and Joseph were when Jesus was born? We learned about it last week. They were in Bethlehem which means “house of bread.” Jesus called himself the “bread of life” in John 6:35. Where did Mary lay Jesus after he was born? She laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. The manger was actually a feeding trough for large animals. Often, shepherds would lay newborn lambs in a manger filled with hay. Jesus, the Lamb of God, was born and laid in a manger!

That very same night in the fields of Bethlehem, some nearby shepherds were suddenly terrified because something amazing happened to them. An angel of the Lord stood before them and the glory of the Lord was shining all around them. Yes, the angel had come to these ordinary shepherds and brought them this good news of great joy! **God is our salvation.**

Sometimes we might think that we have to have a lot of talents and abilities to be used by the Lord. These shepherds were just regular people who were used by God. God can also use us when we let Him. We need to keep our focus on Him and allow Him to use our lives like He did the shepherds.

Angels Appearing

Choose a couple of children to reenact the appearing of the angel to the shepherds.

Have the child playing the part of the shepherd act frightened at the appearing of the angel.

This little play may activate lively response from the class, so be prepared to regain their attention with the attention-getting signal.

This was the greatest news anyone had ever heard since the beginning of the world, and it is still great news for us today! God gives us this great news from the Bible. When God gives us great news, doesn't it bring joy to our lives? Who can tell me some great news God gives us from the Bible?

Sometimes, just like the shepherds, we might be afraid; but last week, we learned that God is in control of all things. We do not need to be afraid of anything. Now, this angel (which means “messenger”) had a very special message. Can anyone guess what the good news was all about?

Yes, God sent His Son, Jesus. Why did He tell a bunch of shepherds? 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 tells us that “God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.” God chooses plain, ordinary people like us to share His good news, to “all” people. **God is our salvation.**

LUKE 2:11-12

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

God knew the exact time Jesus was to be born to save us from sin and death. God chose the exact time for us to be born because He has a unique plan for each of our lives. Did you know that God knew you before you were even born? Psalm 139:15-16 tells us “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”

He knows every thought you have even before you think it. He created all things, the sky above, the animals, and the mountains - everything for His good pleasure. He knows what you will do tomorrow and even five years from now. It is amazing to know that **God is our salvation.** He loves us and sent His Son, Jesus, to save us from death and Hell. He wants us to have everlasting life with Him.

The angel uses three titles for Jesus:

- 1) Savior, which means “deliverer,” is also used when Jesus returns to receive the Church to Himself.
- 2) Christ, which means “Anointed One” or “Messiah.”
- 3) Lord, which means “Yahweh” or “God.”

In the Jewish custom and culture a newborn baby was washed, rubbed with salt in the belief that it hardened the skin, and then wrapped tightly, limb by limb, with “swaddling clothes” to insure the child would grow straight.

Swaddling Clothes

Pick one child to be wrapped in “swaddling clothes.”

Have a few other children wrap the “swaddled” child with toilet tissue, starting with the arms and legs and then around his entire body.

Ask the “swaddled” child if he feels warm and secure, then let him break free from the “clothes.”

Have all of the participating children dispose of the tissue before resuming the lesson.

LUKE 2:13-15

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

Unexpectedly, out of heaven, came an entire troop of angels singing praises in honor of God. They declared "Gloria, in Excelsis Deo," which means "Glory to God in the Highest." The angels were praising God for His wonderful Salvation, Jesus.

They sang praises to God, like we did this morning. They thanked God and worshipped Him because He is worthy of our praises. If the whole host of angels are so quick to give glory to God, we need to praise Him for His excellent gift of Salvation! God didn't bring salvation to angels, but to any man who would receive His great and precious promise, Jesus, because **God is our salvation**. What are some ways we can glorify and praise God?

Sing Praise Unto the Lord

Have the children share some of the praise songs they know and like to sing to the Lord.

Choose one or two that you know well, and lead the children in a short time of praise.

The angels sang "Peace, goodwill toward men!" The only way to peace is salvation and we know that **God is our salvation**. To have peace we need Jesus in our lives. Salvation is knowing and accepting that Jesus shed his blood on the cross, gave His life for us, was buried, and rose from the grave three days later. Jesus paid the full price for us to be forgiven of our sins. We receive God's salvation through Jesus, freely, by the grace of God.

Jesus needs to be “Lord” of our lives. We need to let Him control every decision, because He always has the best answer. When He is in control of our lives, we experience His peace. John 14:27 tells us “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.”

Soon after the angels proclaimed praises to God they ascended to heaven. It would seem that the shepherds were excited and full of joy because they heard Jesus was born and had come to save them from sin and death. Now the shepherds wanted to know if this was true so they went straight to Bethlehem, where they found the baby Jesus lying in a manger.

LUKE 2:16-20

And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

The shepherds went to see the newborn baby, and when they saw everything the angel said was true, they were full of joy! The shepherds were so excited about the good news that they spread the word about all that was spoken to them by the angel. They knew that God had provided salvation for everyone that special night because **God is our salvation.**

When we hear good news about Jesus, should we tell others? Jesus told his disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations.” He was telling them to spread the good news because **God is our salvation**. He came to save the world from sin and death. All you have to do is believe in Him. Do you think people want to hear this good news?

Spread the Good News

Line your children up to leave the classroom.

Take them from class to class and have them tell the other children that the Messiah has come. If the other classes are out doing the same, have them tell the other groups they pass in the hallway.

Return to class and resume the lesson.

After they had made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this child, they returned to watching their sheep. Do you think they were happy when they returned to their sheep? The Bible says they were “glorifying and praising God.” They went back celebrating and honoring God because **God is our salvation**. We need to remember today to celebrate the precious gift of Jesus.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for Jesus and the great salvation that is ours through Him. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.