

# SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

## CHRISTMAS WEEK 1

### The Son of Man is born in Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-20



## DAY 1

*A Child was born into the world • Luke 2:1-7*

### READ

Luke 2:1-7

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Luke 2:1-7

Jesus was not a story-book character living a fairytale life. He was a real, historical person like us. He was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus, emperor of Rome from 29 BC to 14 AD (Luke 2:1). Although many said Augustus was a savior who brought peace, the real Savior and Prince of Peace was born in a small corner of his empire. Jesus was born during the first census administered by Quirinius, a census ordered by Caesar in 8 BC but implemented in Palestine between 6 BC and 4 BC. So Jesus' parents traveled to Bethlehem, which took several days to cover 70 miles, not to mention the time in Bethlehem (2:3-5). Then, instead of giving birth in a private and peaceful place, Mary was surrounded by noisy crowds. Instead of giving birth in her own home with everything arranged just right, she gave birth in an animal shelter (2:7). Instead of leaning on family for help and support, she was at the mercy of strangers. So you can trust in Jesus: not only was He a real person, but He also knows the struggles we face.

### ASK

- Who was emperor and who was governor when Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem?  
*Caesar Augustus was emperor and Quirinius was governor.*
- Why does it matter who the rulers were?  
*It shows us that Jesus' birth is real history. It really happened. It also shows that Jesus, not rulers like Augustus, is to be honored as the Savior and Prince of Peace.*
- Was Jesus born in a nice place?  
*No. He was born in an animal shelter in a crowded, tiny town.*
- Where was Jesus born?  
*Bethlehem, the city of David.*

### DISCUSS

- How was Jesus' birth similar to all other human births?
- How was Jesus' birth different from all other human births (Isa 7:14; Luke 1:30-35)?

## DAY 2

A Child was born to save • Luke 2:8–14

### READ

Luke 2:8–14

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Luke 2:8–14

Why was Jesus born? The angel tells us by giving Him three titles: Savior, Christ, and Lord (Luke 2:8–11). First, Jesus is Savior. He was born to save us from our sins (Matt 1:21). That means He was born to die (Isa 53), because sin cannot be atoned for apart from the blood of a spotless sacrifice (Lev 17:11). Second, Jesus is the Christ. He is Israel's long-expected Messiah, the one anointed by God (Dan 9:25–26) to be both Savior and King (Luke 1:32–33). Third, He is Lord, meaning that He is God Himself. This is the most amazing thing ever, so God arranged something very unusual. Angels had delivered messages in the past, but never before had they been accompanied by a multitude of the **heavenly host** (2:13)! Why so *many angels*? Because God was about to display His glory by bringing peace to earth (2:14). This is peace, first and foremost, between God and man (Rom 5:1). This gift of peace is for “those with whom he is pleased” (Luke 2:14). It is for those God has made the object of His love.

### ASK

1. Who announced Jesus' birth?  
*An angel, and then a multitude of angels*
2. To whom did the angel announce Jesus' birth?  
*To shepherds.*
3. What three titles did the angel give Jesus?  
*Savior (He came to save), Messiah (He is the promised King), and Lord (He is God).*
4. What kind of peace does Jesus bring?  
*Peace first between God and man. Only those at peace with God can have peace with one another.*

### DISCUSS

1. Does your attitude about the story of Jesus' birth match how glorious it is? Do you realize how big your sin problem is, and how great Jesus is?
2. How does the world try to create peace? Will this work? What is the real problem and the real solution?

## DAY 3

A Child was born to be trusted • Luke 2:15–20

### READ

Luke 2:15–20

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Luke 2:15–20

If Jesus' birth was so real and so glorious, how should you respond? Like the shepherds, you should believe what the angels said. Then, if you truly believe, you will obey and hurry quickly to Jesus as the shepherds did (2:15–16), and you will eagerly tell others that God's word is true and that He saves (2:17). The circumstances of your life might not change, but

you will be transformed from the inside out as your praise and glorify God like the shepherds did (2:20). Also, respond like Mary (2:19). Take time to ponder, consider, and reflect deeply on this story. Meditate on God's truth (1 Tim 4:15), grow in knowledge (2 Pet 3:18), and long to know God more (Phil 3:10). If you respond like the shepherds and like Mary, you will be saved, for the shepherds show us that Jesus saves ordinary people in the ordinary world. Instead of lifting you out of this world, He enters into your world. Instead of taking you out of difficulty, He will put His life, joy, and peace into you in the midst of difficulty.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

**ASK** 

1. Did the shepherds believe? How do you know?  
*Yes. We know because they immediately obeyed. Then they told others and glorified God.*
2. How did Mary respond to the shepherds' report?  
*She "treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). She thought deeply about what she heard, even though she didn't understand it all.*
3. What did the shepherds do afterward?  
*They went back to their sheep. Life went on, but it would never be the same.*

**DISCUSS** 

1. What do your actions show about what you truly believe (Jas 2:18)?
2. Do you ever read or hear things from the Bible that you don't understand? What do you do when that happens?

**DAY 4****Why shepherds? • Luke 2:8-9****READ** 

Luke 2:8-9

**EXPLAIN** **The truth of Luke 2:8-9**

Why did God announce Jesus' birth to shepherds first? To teach us three things about our Savior (Luke 2:8). First, Jesus came to offer salvation to the lowly, because shepherds were generally uneducated and unskilled. Are you lowly? People usually think they are better than they really are, but you will only be ready to receive Jesus when you see how needy you are (1:51-52). Second, Jesus came as the promised Good Shepherd (Ezek 34:23; John 10:11). Do you remember an ancestor of Jesus who was also a shepherd? David shepherded his family's sheep in these same fields a thousand years earlier! But now Jesus is a shepherd of people, so you can trust Him to provide everything you need (Ps 23:1). Third, Jesus came to die for sins. The sheep near Bethlehem were just 5 miles from Jerusalem. Many of them were offered as temple sacrifices. So Jesus was the Lamb of God who died to take away the sin of the world (Isa 53:7; John 1:29). So when you hear the story of these lowly shepherds, humble yourself before the Good Shepherd whose death can take away your sins.

**ASK** 

1. What kind of people were shepherds?  
*They were not special people. They were uneducated and unskilled.*
2. How was Jesus like the shepherds (Ezek 34:23)?  
*Jesus came to be the great shepherd. He will be the perfect ruler of His people.*
3. How was Jesus like the sheep?  
*The sheep near Jerusalem would have been offered as sacrifices for sin. Jesus was the Lamb of God who died as the perfect and final sacrifice for sin.*
4. What appeared to the shepherds?  
*God's glory. It had been 600 years since God's glory had left Israel (Ezek 11:22-23).*

**DISCUSS** 

1. What do shepherds do for their sheep (Ps 23; Ezek 34)? How do sheep respond to their shepherd (John 10:1-16)?
2. Do you need to be better than other people before God will choose you (1 Cor 1:26-29)?

## DAY 5

Jesus the sympathetic high priest • Hebrews 4:15

### READ

Hebrews 4:14–16

### EXPLAIN

#### The truth of Hebrews 4:15

Jesus understands your weakness. He is a sympathetic because He knows what is like to be tempted (Heb 4:15). He truly understands your trials. He was born into all the troubles of poverty and oppression. Although equal to God, He became a humble man (Phil 2:6–7). Although rich, He became poor so that he could make poor people like you rich (2 Cor 8:9). When God came to save, He did so by truly entering this world. He entered it in the past through the tabernacle when He wandered with the Israelites in the wilderness (2 Sam 7:6). And He will enter it again in the future when He lives with the redeemed forever in the new heaven and new earth (Rev 21). But at the center is the **incarnation**, when the Son of God became a human (Luke 2:7; John 1:14). So when you are tempted, be encouraged. Remember that Jesus has been there too. His example shows you how to overcome temptation without sin (1 Pet 1:21–22), His presence strengthens you to overcome (1 John 4:4), and His mercy offers forgiveness when you do sin (Heb 4:16).

### ASK

1. Why is Jesus a sympathetic high priest?  
*He really understands our trials because He lived like us in this world. He was tempted like us.*
2. How was God present in the past?  
*Through the tabernacle.*
3. How will God be present in the future?  
*He will live with the redeemed in the New Creation.*
4. What does “incarnation” describe?  
*It means “in the flesh.” The Son became a man.*

### DISCUSS

1. Is God humble? Why is “humility” a good word to describe Jesus’ birth (Phil 2:3–8)?
2. When life is hard, what can you remember to help you resist temptation (or repent quickly when you do sin)?

## NEXT WEEK

### The Son of Man is presented in Jerusalem

Luke 2:21–38

