Dec. 12/13/16

CHRISTMAS Session 2

JESUS IS OUR RESCUER

LUKE 2



KEY PASSAGE: But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Galatians 4:4-5 NIV

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.

CHRIST CONNECTION: The angels told the shepherds the birth of Jesus was good news for all the people. Anyone who believes the good news that Jesus lived, died, and rose again for their sin will be saved.

STORY POINT: Jesus is the promised Messiah who came from heaven to rescue us from sin.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

The announcement of the birth of Jesus came in a completely unexpected way. Instead of announcing the birth of the Savior in the halls of power or the seats of religion, God chose for a group of shepherds on the outskirts of Bethlehem to be the first to hear of Christ's birth. The announcement from angels to the shepherds watching over their flocks was significant not only because of the message they gave, but also for the people to whom it was given.

Shepherds spent their days on the fringes of society taking care of animals. Living on the outskirts made it difficult for these men to make it to synagogue and participate in the daily spiritual life of their community. Because these men constantly worked with livestock and were regularly exposed to manure and dead animals, they would have been considered unclean according to Jewish law.

It was no accident that God chose often overlooked and outcast shepherds as the ones to whom the angels would give the announcement of Jesus' birth. This announcement was a powerful statement about the nature of the kingdom of God. God's kingdom is for all people, and no one is outside of God's plan to know of His love.

The long expected announcement was remarkable. Jesus had been born for all people in the city of David. Three significant titles are used here to describe why that is good news for all people. First, Jesus is the Savior—the one who rescues people from sin. Next, He is the Messiah, the anointed one of God who came to lead God's people into God's kingdom. Finally, He is the Lord, the ruler of all the universe.

The shepherds' response to this glorious news included curiosity, awe, and obedience. This Christmas, may we do everything we can to see Jesus, adore Him for who He is, and boldly proclaim the truth that Jesus is Savior, Messiah, and the Lord.



THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



10-15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



25-30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



15-20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel

PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.

WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "The Announcement" activity page

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ ball
- ☐ music

LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus Is Our Rescuer" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster

LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set

LIVE

Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "Our Rescuer" activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

> **SAY** *"When was the last time you heard some good news? What was it?"*

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "The Announcement" activity page.

> **SAY** *"Today, we will hear how angels announced good news to the shepherds, telling them that the Savior had been born."*

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 2: GREAT JOY



Lead kids to stand in a circle. Distribute a ball to one kid and direct him to toss the ball to someone else in the circle when the music plays. Play music as kids pass the ball. When the music stops, the kid holding the ball must share something that brings her great joy. She might say, "drawing" or "playing outside" or "spending time with friends." Continue playing, trying to allow every kid to share something that brings them joy.

> **SAY** *"God has given us many ways to experience joy. He is a good God who gives good gifts. But the greatest gift God has given us is Jesus! Today, we will hear how the angels announced good news of great joy for all people. Through Jesus, the greatest joy can be found. Jesus is better than anything else because He saves us from sin and satisfies our hearts."*

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

> **SAY** "*My name is* ***[your name]****, and I'm so glad you're here to learn about some really good news. Today, we'll be in the New Testament book of Luke 2. Did you bring your Bible?* ***[Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]*** *Do you know what division of the New Testament the book of Luke is found in?* ***[Allow responses.]*** *Luke is one of the four Gospel books.*
>
> *Christmas is truly a time to remember the birth of our Savior and how God's plan to send Jesus into the world came true. Today, we'll learn that* **JESUS IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH WHO CAME FROM HEAVEN TO RESCUE US FROM SIN**. ***[Display the Story Point Poster.]*** *We need a Savior because we are sinners. God kept His promise to send Jesus, the Savior, into the world to rescue us from sin. Let's prepare our hearts to hear God's Word. 'Dear God, thank You for keeping Your promise to send Jesus into the world. Help us hear Your truth with hearts that long to know You and worship You. Amen.'* "

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

> **SAY** "*Our big picture question is,* Why was Jesus born? *What is the answer?* ***[Allow responses.]*** Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.
>
> *Today, we will see how the shepherds and angels glorified God because God sent the Savior, Jesus Christ, into the world. We can glorify God too! When we respond to the good news of Jesus' birth by praising God and trusting in Jesus, we are showing that we love God and want to obey Him. Jesus is the only way to be saved. Those who trust in Jesus desire to love God and obey Him.* "

3 REVIEW

> **SAY** "*Throughout the Old Testament, God repeated His promise to send the Messiah into the world. From Genesis to Malachi, God's prophets wrote down God's promise and told the people to hope in the coming Messiah. Hundreds of years passed, and God's people were waiting on the promise to come true. But God is never late. He knew the exact right time for the Messiah to be born. Today, we will see how God sent Jesus to be born in Bethlehem so people can be rescued from their sin.* "

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER *(10 minutes)*

Open your Bible to Luke 2. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus Is Our Rescuer." Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS IS OUR RESCUER

"**An order went out that each person** *in the Roman Empire* **should go to his own town to be counted. So, Joseph went** *from the town of Nazareth in Galilee* **to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem**, *because he was from the family line of David.* **Mary, who was engaged to Joseph and was pregnant, traveled with him.**

While they were in Bethlehem, she gave birth to her firstborn son. There was no guest room available for them, so she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger.

Some shepherds were out watching their sheep in the fields nearby. An angel of the Lord stood before them, *and glory shone all around them.* **They were terrified! But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I'm here to tell you good news of great joy for all the people. Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you.** *He is the Messiah, the Lord. You will know you have found him when you see a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger."*

Then many angels appeared, and they all began praising God. They said, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!"

When the angels had left, **the shepherds said, "Let's go to Bethlehem right away to see what the Lord has told us** *through the angels!"*

The shepherds hurried and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. They shared what they had heard from the angels, and everyone was amazed. *Then the shepherds returned to their fields, glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard that day.*

Christ Connection: The angels told the shepherds the birth of Jesus was good news for all the people. Anyone who believes the good news that Jesus lived, died, and rose again for their sin will be saved."

STORYTELLING TIPS

Remember it: Remind kids about all the prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament, including Micah 5:2, where the prophet Micah said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

Shout it: Invite kids to shout "Glory to God" when you share how the angels said these words.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY *“ Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem because of a census ordered by Caesar Augustus. When they arrived, there was no guest room available for them. Where was Jesus placed after He was born? Look at Luke 2:7.* **[Ask a volunteer to read Luke 2:7 aloud.]** *Jesus was laid in a manger—a feeding trough for animals. Even though He is the Son of God, He was born in a lowly place, showing that He would be a humble King. Jesus did not come as a rich or powerful Ruler, but as a King who would give His life to save people from sin.*

An angel appeared to shepherds who were in the fields watching over their sheep. What did the angel tell the shepherds? Look at Luke 2:10-11. **[Ask a volunteer to read Luke 2:10-11 aloud.]** *The angel announced good news of great joy to all people because Jesus, the Savior, had been born. This was an incredible message—***JESUS IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH WHO CAME FROM HEAVEN TO RESCUE US FROM SIN***! Then a host of angels appeared, praising God and declaring peace to those who trust in Jesus. God deserves all glory, and the birth of the Savior, reminds us of how we can glorify God for the salvation He provided.*

What did the shepherds do after they saw Jesus? Look at Luke 2:17-18,20. **[Ask a volunteer to read Luke 2:17-18,20 aloud.]** *They worshiped Him and shared the good news with others. The shepherds praised God for all they had seen and heard. Jesus’ birth was not just an ordinary event—it was God’s plan to save us. Because of sin, we are separated from God, but Jesus came to take away our sins and bring us back to Him. Just as the shepherds joyfully shared the good news, we are also called to tell others that Jesus is the Savior! ”*

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY *“ The angels told the shepherds the birth of Jesus was good news for all the people. Anyone who believes the good news that Jesus lived, died, and rose again for their sin will be saved. Have you trusted in Jesus as your Savior? ”*

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Corinthians 10:31 together.

SAY *“ The angels gave glory to God because Jesus, the Savior, had come. In everything we do, we can glorify God, knowing He has made the way to save us from sin. ”*

5 PRAY *(2 minutes)*

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

> **SAY** *"Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus into the world to rescue us from sin. We praise You and glorify You for how You love us. Jesus is the greatest gift we could ever receive. Amen."*

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Luke 2. Explain that Luke is one of the four Gospel books that tells the stories of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Tell kids that the author of Luke is the physician Luke, who was a friend of the apostle Paul.

Consider pointing out the town of Bethlehem (I5) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 2:20 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

> **SAY** *"The shepherds glorified God and praised Him because the angels' message was true. God's words are always true and can always be trusted. Hundreds of years before Jesus' birth, God promised to send the Messiah into the world, and at just the right time, His promise was fulfilled.*
>
> *We can glorify God and praise Him for keeping His promises and for providing the way to be saved. God deserves all glory and praise for who He is and what He has done. He is a good God who brings us the good news of salvation through Jesus."*

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

> **SAY** *"What makes Jesus' birth such good news?"*

Remind kids that Jesus' birth is good news because He is the Savior who came to rescue us from sin and bring us back to God. Sin separates people from God, but God sent His Son to bring peace, forgiveness, and eternal life to everyone who believes in Him. Jesus' birth shows that God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to save us!
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Luke 2:10-11.)

> **SAY** *"The angel told the shepherds that Jesus' birth was 'good news of great joy for all people.' How does Jesus' birth bring joy to all people?"*

Discuss how Jesus' birth wasn't just for some, but that Jesus had come to offer salvation to all people. Anyone can trust in Jesus to be saved. When we do, we experience lasting joy, knowing we have been saved from the punishment of sin and given eternal life with God forever. Nothing on earth can compare to the joy found in Jesus.
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 15:11.)

> **SAY** *"Who is someone in your life that you can share the good news of Jesus with?"*

Answers will vary. Remind kids that all people sin and need a Savior. We don't need to be fearful or ashamed of sharing the gospel because God does the work of saving people. We are just called to be obedient and faithful to tell others the truth of salvation.
(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Mark 16:15-16.)

Transition from **LOVE** *to* **LIVE**

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE *(10 minutes)*

☐ OPTION 2: FOUR CORNERS REVIEW

LOW PREP

Using paper, label each corner of the room 1–4. On your start, close your eyes and direct kids to choose a corner of the room to stand in. Then call out a number, like "4." Kids in that corner will need to answer a review question correctly to stay in the game. They can work together to answer the question. You might ask, "Where were Mary and Joseph from?" (Nazareth). If kids answer it incorrectly, they are out. Continue playing, asking a new review question each time. Play as time allows.

> **SAY** *"Today, we learned that* **JESUS IS THE PROMISED MESSIAH WHO CAME FROM HEAVEN TO RESCUE US FROM SIN.** *We all need to be rescued because we are all sinners. At just the right time, God sent Jesus to earth. Jesus grew up, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross for our sin. Then three days later, He rose back to life, defeating sin and death. Anyone who trusts in Him will be saved."*

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER *(5 minutes)*

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, praising God for sending Jesus to rescue us from sin and death. As time allows, lead kids to complete "Our Rescuer" on the activity page.



THE GOSPEL

God's Plan for Us

The gospel is the good news—the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use these prompts to share the gospel with your kids.



Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.



Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.



Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.



Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.



Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.

JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?

2. What does this story teach me about myself?

3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?

4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?

5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Christmas Bonus Session

JESUS IS OUR RESCUER

Luke 2

HOW CAN WE GLORIFY GOD?
WE CAN GLORIFY GOD BY LOVING HIM AND OBEYING HIM.

An order went out that each person should go to his own town to be counted. So, Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem. Mary, who was engaged to Joseph and was pregnant, traveled with him.

While they were in Bethlehem, she gave birth to her firstborn son. There was no guest room available for them, so she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger.

Some shepherds were out watching their sheep in the fields nearby. An angel of the Lord stood before them. They were terrified! But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I'm here to tell you good news of great joy for all the people. Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you."

Then many angels appeared, and they all began praising God. They said, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!"

The shepherds said, "Let's go to Bethlehem right away to see what the Lord has told us."

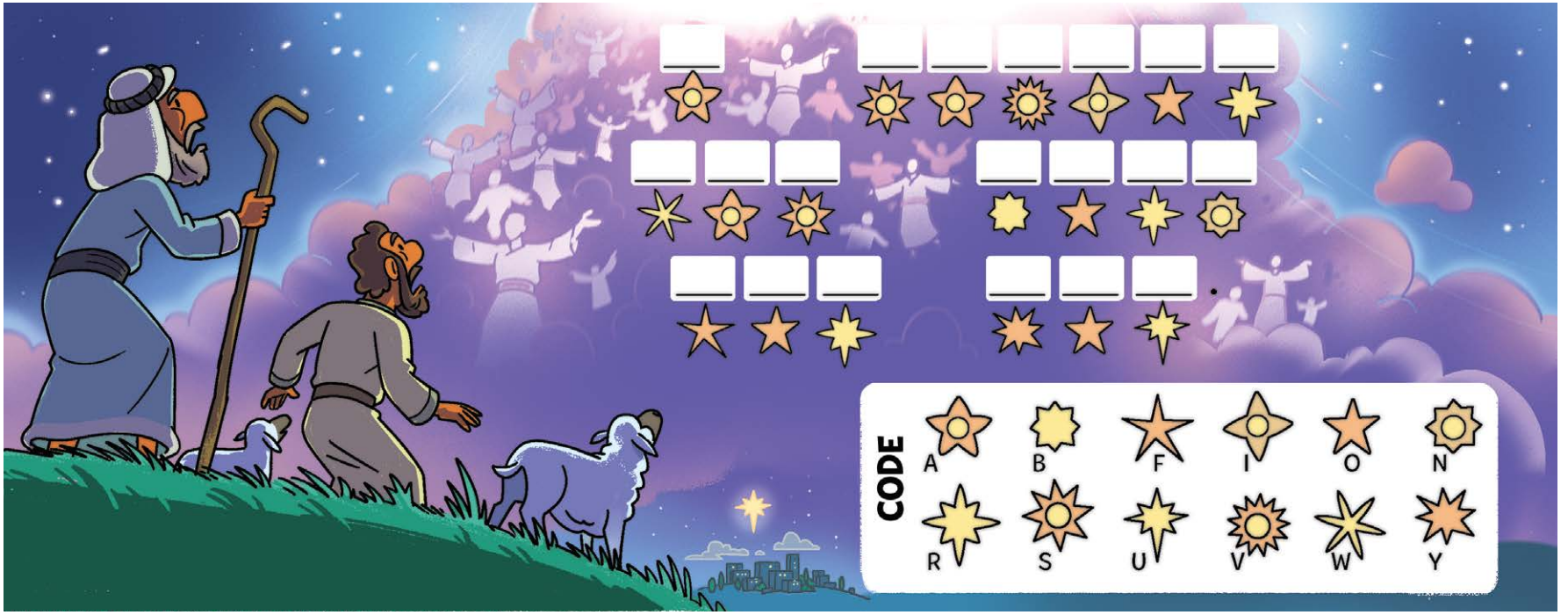
The shepherds hurried and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. They shared what they had heard from the angels, and everyone was amazed.

Christ Connection: The angels told the shepherds the birth of Jesus was good news for all the people. Anyone who believes the good news that Jesus lived, died, and rose again for their sin will be saved.

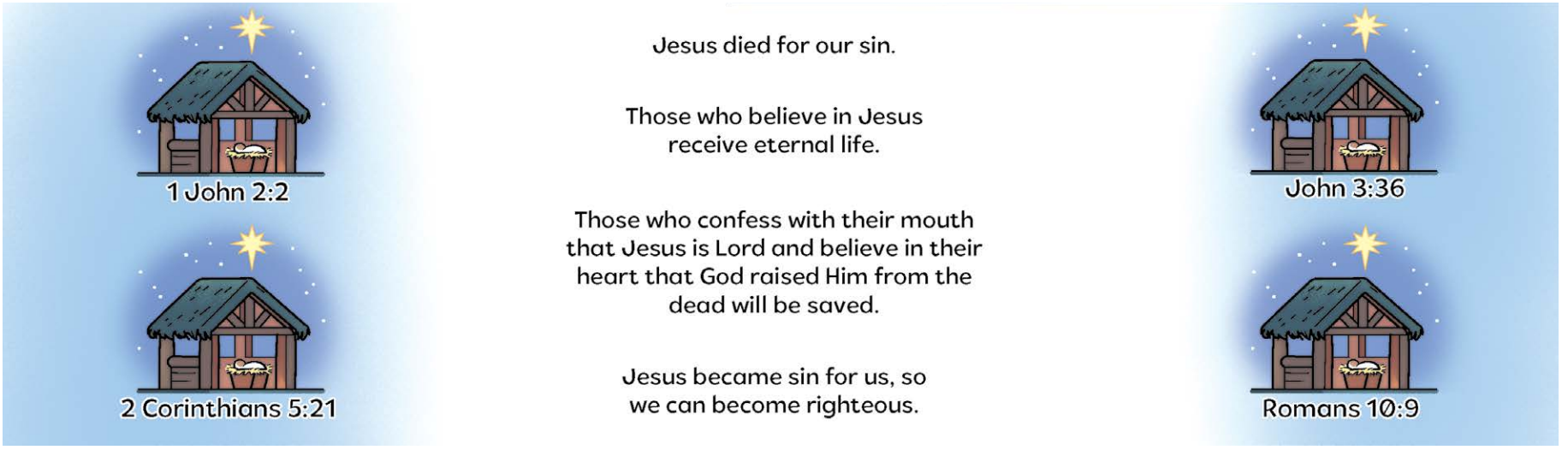
The Gospel Project At Home

SCAN THE QR CODE FOR RESOURCES TO USE AT HOME!

The Announcement | Decode the message to learn what the angels announced to the shepherds.



Our Rescuer | Look up each Bible verse and match it to the correct description to learn more about how Jesus rescues us from sin.



Jesus died for our sin.

Those who believe in Jesus receive eternal life.

Those who confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised Him from the dead will be saved.

Jesus became sin for us, so we can become righteous.

NAME:



theGOSPELPROJECT.



Jesus Is Our Rescuer

Luke 2

STORY POINT:
Jesus is the promised Messiah who came from heaven to rescue us from sin.

CHRIST CONNECTION:
The angels told the shepherds the birth of Jesus was good news for all the people. Anyone who believes the good news that Jesus lived, died, and rose again for their sin will be saved.

KEY PASSAGE:
1 Corinthians 10:31

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:
How can we glorify God? We can glorify God by loving Him and obeying Him.

Scan the QR code for resources to use at home!

The Gospel Project At Home

Younger Kids Activity Pages
Christmas Bonus Session