



Pray: Dear Father, thank you for our family. Thank you for giving us the Bible and thank you for sending us your Son. Open our hearts for this lesson. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Say: Does anyone remember the answer to our Big Picture Question: "Why do we pray?"

allow some time for family members to recall the answer

Say: We pray because we trust God and we know that He hears us. Praying doesn't have to be hard. Just talk to God and tell Him what you're feeling. Whether you are thankful or sad, God is listening.

Say: Today we are going to learn the story of Jesus' birth. It is the story about how God came to earth as a human baby so that he could be with us!

BIBLE TRIVIA!

The prophet Isaiah says that one of Jesus' names will be "Immanuel." This prophecy was fulfilled in Matthew 1. What does that name mean?

Matthew 1:23 "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel - which means, 'God with us'."

Open your Bibles to Matthew 1 and Luke 2 to read of Jesus' birth. Or you can read the abbreviated version below

READ *take turns reading, between the bold and regular font*

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Was Born

Matthew 1; Luke 2

Joseph found out Mary was going to have a baby, but Joseph knew it was not his baby—Mary and Joseph were not married yet! Joseph decided to quietly break his engagement with Mary so she would not be publicly disgraced. Soon after Joseph thought these things, an angel appeared to him in a dream.

The angel said, “Don’t be afraid to take Mary as your wife. Her baby was put there by the Holy Spirit.

Mary is going to have a son; name Him Jesus because He is going to save His people from their sins!”

This happened just like the prophet said it would: “See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name Him Immanuel,” which is translated “God is with us.” When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel commanded.

During the time Mary was pregnant, the Roman emperor, Caesar Augustus, announced that everyone needed to be registered for a census. Since Joseph was a descendant of King David, he and Mary traveled to Bethlehem, the city of David.

While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. Mary and Joseph looked for a safe place to stay, but every place was



full. So Mary and Joseph found a place where animals were kept, and that is where Mary had her baby. Joseph named the baby Jesus. Mary wrapped Him tightly in cloth and laid Him in a feeding trough.

In the same region, some shepherds were out in the fields watching over their sheep. All of a sudden, an angel of the Lord stood before them. A bright light shone around them, and they were terrified! But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have very good news for you: Today a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord, was born for you in the city of David." Then the angel said, "You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a feeding trough."

Suddenly, a whole army of angels appeared, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people He favors!"

So the shepherds went to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby who was lying in the feeding trough. The shepherds went and told others about the baby Jesus. Everyone who heard about Jesus was surprised and amazed. Mary thought about everything that was happening and tried to understand it. The shepherds returned to their fields, praising God because everything had happened just as the angel had said.

Christ Connection: Jesus' birth fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy. God the Son came into the world as Immanuel. Jesus was born to be "God with us" and to save people from sin.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Display figures:** Invite one or two volunteers to move people and animal figures around a nativity scene as you tell the story.
- **Active listening:** Instruct girls to stand and then sit when they hear the name *Mary* and boys to stand and then sit when they hear the name *Joseph*.

Take to Heart

*As a family, take time to memorize the Key Bible Passage over the next several weeks!
Take it to heart and notice how God's Word becomes alive in you!*

"For I know the places I have for you," declares the Lord,
"plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you
a hope and a future" — Jeremiah 29:11

LEARN

Ask: Does anyone know why Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem ?

Say: Because Caesar Augustus ordered a census to be taken. A census means Caesar wanted to count how many people were living in Bethlehem.

Ask: What message did the angels give to the shepherds?

Say: That Jesus the Saviour had been born and you can find Him lying in a manger.

Ask: Why was Jesus born?

Say: Remember from our trivia that Jesus' name was also "Immanuel" which means "God with us." Jesus was born so

that we could be with God forever. We all make mistakes and because of our sins we are not perfect. We can try many things to make things better



Say: But nothing we do can make up for our sins before God. Jesus was sent so that He would die on the cross. His death was a sacrifice, sent by God, which made a way for our sins to be forgiven FOREVER. During this Christmas season, we remember that you have already been given the greatest gift ever: Jesus!

Say: God gave us the gift of Jesus and the Wise Men gave gifts to Jesus. Remember this Christmas, the best gift you can give to friends and to family is the good news of Jesus. Now that you know why Jesus is the perfect gift—you can tell everyone

PRACTICE YOUR FAITH

An important part of practicing faith is putting into action what we read about in the Bible! Take some time to think of ways to live out what we read in Nehemiah.

Ask: *How can you specially remember which gifts truly matter most this Christmas season?*

Brainstorm ways that as a family you can set aside to appreciate the greatest gift of all—Jesus. Perhaps this could look like taking a moment to pray a prayer of Thanksgiving before and after opening presents. Or maybe it could mean telling someone about Jesus.

PRAY

“God, we thank you for sending us your Son, the best gift ever. We know we do not deserve this gift but you sent Him anyways. Remind us each day of the hope that we can have in Jesus—so that we can be with you forever. Amen!

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.



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



WE SINNED. 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.



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



JESUS GIVES. 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.



WE RESPOND. 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.

Use "The Gospel God's Plan for Us" to talk in a kid-friendly way with your family about what it means for Jesus to save us from our sins.