

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Christmas At Calvary

The Gospel of John

*4G Series - 2022 - [cbcfamily.net/4g](http://cbcfamily.net/4g)  
Calvary Baptist Church  
[cbcfamily.net](http://cbcfamily.net) / 512.303.1697 / [office@cbcfamily.net](mailto:office@cbcfamily.net)*

---

## Introduction to *Christmas at Calvary*

I LOVE Christmas! To me, it really is the most wonderful time of the year. And one of the mysteries to me is how we can get through a season like this without it doing something to us. I don't mean it in a bad way. I mean shock us – as we try to wrap our minds around God coming to us in the way He did and why He did it.

And so, in this Christmas series, we'll be pulling back the packaging, pulling back all the pageantry, and looking at what this is all about. The gospel we're using for this series is the Gospel of John. Which doesn't necessarily have the traditional Christmas story of shepherds and angels and a manger but tells us a little more about who this baby is, was, and always will be.

Phillip Cole

Smithville Campus Pastor & Preaching Lead

## Introduction To The 4G Guide

### *GATHER – GOD – GROUP – GIVE*

It's important that we *GATHER* each week as a church family. Still, God wants us to take what He's teaching and apply it to our daily lives. This is the heart of the 4G Guides. These guides are written to encourage you in your personal *GOD TIME* and in your small *GROUPS*. They are designed to help you understand what God is teaching and apply it to your life. This understanding through application enables you to take what you are learning and *GIVE* it to others.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are from the *Christian Standard Bible* (CSB Text Edition: 2020).



## USING THE 4G GUIDE

Each week is divided into four sections:

### Gathering Time



On Sunday mornings we gather to worship, hear God's message, and be challenged to apply His word. You'll find the weekly Gathering Time sermon outlines and notes sections in this booklet.

If you need to join us online, go to [cbcfamily.net](http://cbcfamily.net) and click "Watch Live"

### Group Time



We learn from one another! 4G Groups meet to dig deeper into the weekly material. Group Time outlines are simple enough for anyone to facilitate. In addition, links to short video guides and other helpful resources are posted on our 4G web page.

### God Times



Personal worship is vital to the Christian walk, so we've provided five daily devotionals for each weekly topic. This is your time to meet with God one-on-one in a guided devotional format. Once your God Time is finished, pray, seeking direction for the day.

### Family Time



Family worship glorifies God. To help, we have created simple Family Time devotionals. In addition, to help get the conversations flowing, video or story guide links will be posted on our 4G web page.

[cbcfamily.net/4g](http://cbcfamily.net/4g)





Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Christmas At Calvary  
Message 1

*John 20:31*

Jesus Is The \_\_\_\_\_.

*John 1:2-3*

Jesus Has \_\_\_\_\_ and Always Will \_\_\_\_\_ God.

*Hebrews 1:1-3*

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ All.

*John 1:3*

Have You Put Your \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus?

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

Word / Been, Be / Created, Sustains / Faith



Group Time

ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N   Y / N   \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_   \_\_\_\_\_

LOOK BACK:

**Point:** *A faithful life is devoted to intentional prayer and thanksgiving for God’s word to be spread.*

- Share with the group how your prayer focus changed during the week.

**Question:** What does it mean to be a *carbon copy*?

**LOOK UP:** Watch this week’s video on the 4G webpage.

**Recap:** In the beginning, God spoke everything into existence through His word. And John’s gospel lets us know who Jesus is: the Word. Through Jesus, all things were created, and it is Jesus who sustains all creation.

So, as we enter this Christmas season, let’s keep at the forefront of our minds the reason for the season. Let us also understand what it means for us and the choice we all need to make about where, or in whom, we place our faith.

**LOOK IN: Discussion**

Read Hebrews 1:1-3.

- In verse 1, who were “*our ancestors*?” What would you say was the overarching message *God spoke* to them?
- Verse 2 speaks to Jesus’ divinity and purpose. Who else is referred to as heirs in the New Testament?
- In verse 3, use a variety of Bible versions and footnotes for the words, “*radiance*” and “*expression*.” Is it safe to say that Jesus is the perfect image of God?

LOOK FORWARD: Application

**Point:** *Jesus is the beginning and the end and the in-between.*

*Without Jesus there is nothing.*

If Jesus created all things, sustains all things, and inherits all things, that means you and I are a part of His plan.

**Read John 1:1-3**

1. On a separate piece of paper, write out John 1:1-3.
2. Turn the paper over and write these verses in your own words.

**Read Hebrews 1:1-3**

1. On a separate piece of paper, write out Hebrews 1:1-3.
2. Turn the paper over and write these verses in your own words.

Who do you say Jesus is?

---



---



---

What is Jesus’ plan?

---



---



---

Where do you fit in His plan?

---



---



---

Are you fitting in?

---



---



---

## WEEK 1: JESUS IS THE WORD

### God Time Day 1: John's Approach



John takes a very different approach to the Christmas story because he wants people to understand that Jesus is more than just a man, Jesus is God.



Read John 20:31.

*But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

Underline the words “*you may have life.*”

While Jesus is fully man, he is also fully God. The salvation and life we have in Jesus do not come from a mere man, but from God. It is for that reason that John's Gospel takes a very different approach to the Christmas story.

Pray for God to prepare your heart to see who Jesus truly is, and to keep Jesus at the center of your Christmas.

### God Time Day 2: Who Is the Word?



Read John 1:1.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*



Circle each instance of the word “*Word.*”

According to John, he uses the term “*Word*” as a name for Jesus, establishing that “*the Word*” is both a distinct person and one with the triune God.



Now read John 1:14.

*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John has established that the “*Word was God,*” and then describes the Word as becoming human and living among people, making clear that the Word is Jesus.

Take some time to reflect and meditate on the significance of God living among us as a human.

### God Time Day 3: Jesus is the Word



John puts great effort into establishing Jesus' identity as God. He makes a point of describing Jesus (“*the Word*”) as being both distinct from God the Father and the same as God. This is important because it reveals the nature of God.

Normally, when we hear the term “*the Word,*” it refers to the Bible. The Bible is how a great and awesome God, who seems so big and unknowable, reveals Himself to His people. God reveals Himself to us through *the Word*. God wants us to know Him. He reveals Himself to us.

Reread John 1:14 from yesterday.

Underline the phrase “*we observed his glory.*”



Now read Hebrews 1:1-3.

*<sup>1</sup> Long ago God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets at different times and in different ways. <sup>2</sup> In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him. <sup>3</sup> The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

Underline the phrase “*the exact expression of his nature.*”

In the Old Testament, Israel turned away from God and worshiped idols numerous times. We might ask the question “What is the appeal of idol worship?” Well, God is a big God, and sinful humans can think it is difficult to connect and relate to a God who is unseen. While idols were false gods, relating to them on a human level could somehow seem tangible, and simpler.

This is why Jesus living among us is so significant. Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God, the ultimate image, or icon, of God. If you want to understand God, it is made easy because now we get to look to Jesus, who is God.

Spend some time giving thanks in prayer to God for revealing Himself through Jesus.

God Time Day 4: Jesus is God



Read John 1:1-2.

*<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning.*

Do John’s words sound familiar? Perhaps they remind you of the Creation story in Genesis. The reason John’s Gospel sounds so different from the others is that John wants people to understand that the story of Jesus begins long before the manger, long before the beginning of time itself.

Underline the phrase “*in the beginning*” in verses 1 and 2.

One of the most significant things we need to understand about Jesus being God is that Jesus is eternal, just like God. Jesus has been around since before the beginning. We need to realize that since Jesus is eternal, He knows and understands our lives and our world better than we do; after all, He has been around since the beginning.

Whenever we experience struggles and difficulties in life, we can tend to address God as if He “didn’t see that coming.” But God understands even better than we do. God has seen everything play out since the creation of the world, and He understands how things will continue to play out in the future. How can God understand our struggles and hardships? Jesus, who is God, lived a human life; He experienced pain, temptation, betrayal, and struggle to an extent that many of us can only imagine.



Now read Colossians 1:19-20.

*<sup>19</sup>For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup>and through him to reconcile everything to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*

What does it mean for you to have a God who understands your struggles better than you?

---



---

God Time Day 5: Created and Sustains All Things



Read John 1:3.

*All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created.*

Yesterday, we learned that Jesus understands our lives even better than we do because He is eternal and has been around since before the beginning of creation. But that is not the full extent of His understanding. He is the actual creator of all created things.



Read Colossians 1:16-17.

*<sup>16</sup>For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He is before all things, and by him all things hold together.*

Underline the phrase “*all things have been created through him and for him.*”

Imagine that you were building a skyscraper. If you have questions, you can ask one of the construction crew or, you can ask the architect/designer. While the construction worker may understand how things are supposed to be built, the architect understands the purpose behind every detail of the design – not just the how, but the why.

Jesus understands us because He created us. Not only did Jesus create us and live among us, as one of us, but He designed us. He created every one of us for a purpose and designed us uniquely to serve in His plan for this world.

We might wonder, “Then why is everything so broken in the world?” Simple. Things fall apart not because of our design, but rather because we try to live according to a purpose other than what Jesus designed us for. It is like trying to eat soup with a fork: the fork was just not designed for that purpose.

As we enter this Christmas season, perhaps the real gift you should ask for (pray for) is knowing God’s purpose for your life today and every day to come. (Also, don’t miss Week 2)

## Family Time



Main Idea:  
Christ-Centered Advent



## Key Verse: Acts 20:35

*And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

## Ask:

All the giving at Christmas can remind us of Christ's gift on the first Christmas.

What is your favorite Christmas decoration that reminds you of Jesus' birth?

How can it be "more blessed to give than to receive?"

## Activity:

Think of what it would cost to have a very nice dinner. Now, this week we are going to eat only soup for one of our dinners. Instead of buying an expensive dinner, we will use that money to purchase canned food, baking items, and other festive food items that we can give to a family in need.

We can decorate a basket to put the items in and together let's think of a family in our community to whom we can give this basket.



## Talk:

On the night you eat soup for dinner ask these questions:

- How does it make you feel to give up a nice dinner for just soup?
- How does it make you feel to put together a basket for another family?

Remember, "It is more blessed to give than receive."



## Prayer:

*Father, you gave us your Son. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we are so grateful to You for being generous and giving us the gift of eternal life with You.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen*





Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Christmas At Calvary  
Message 2

Jesus Is The \_\_\_\_\_.

*John 1:29-31*

The Need for \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_.

God Gave Us a \_\_\_\_\_.

*Revelation 5:11-13*

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

Lamb of God / Forgiveness, Access / Gift





**Group Time**

ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N   
 Y / N   
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_   
 \_\_\_\_\_

**LOOK BACK:**

**Point:** *Jesus is the beginning and the end and the in-between.*

- Share with the group where you fit.

**Question:** Do you have a special or even comical story from a school or church Christmas performance that you can share? Maybe one with a lamb involved?

**LOOK UP:** Watch this week’s video on the 4G webpage.

**Recap:** Every culture throughout time has longed for something or someone bigger than themselves. This is because mankind is made in God’s image, designed for relationship with Him. People seem to innately know that forgiveness and access to that “someone bigger” requires a sacrifice by means of an exchange – a payment for our sin without which there can be no real forgiveness. All religions are based on this exchange for access. The exception is Christianity. Though in the Old Testament God did require sacrifices for temporary atonement (or, at-one-ment with God), Jesus has come to make peace between God and man, permanently fulfilling the need for sacrifice— paying for our sins with His own life, as the perfect Lamb of God.

**LOOK IN: Discussion**

Read John 1:29-31.

- How does verse 29 speak about Jesus’ purpose?
- How does verse 30 speak about Jesus’ identity?
- How does verse 31 speak about process?

**LOOK FORWARD: Application**

**Point:** *Jesus is the Lamb who makes peace between God and man. It's not what you did to make peace with God. It's what He did to make peace with you.*

**Jesus is God’s Gift – Merry Christmas.**

Here’s an easy way to share the gift of Jesus in four steps:

Step One: Get Connected

- Ask if and how they celebrate Christmas, and then ask why they celebrate in that way. Do they go to church? Which church?

Step Two: Get to God

- Ask: “Most religions, or denominations, are a lot alike, aren’t they? We are all trying to please God, so we can get to heaven. We are all trying to pay off our sin debt. But we all sin, don’t we? Even good people sin. Sinning is easy, but paying off our sin debt to God is much more difficult, isn’t it?”

Step Three: Get to Lostness

- Ask: “In your religion, or denomination, how do you please God? How do you pay off your sin debt?” Listen attentively and encourage them in their desire to please God. Don’t be afraid to ask questions along the way. Be a good listener.
- Wrap up by asking them three questions:
  1. “Are your sins paid off yet?”
  2. “When do you think your sins will be paid off?”
  3. “On Judgment Day, do you know for certain that your sin debt will be paid?”

Step Four: Get to the Gospel

- Say: “What I believe is different; I know that my sins are forgiven. It’s not because I am a good person, although I do try. I know my sins are forgiven because God Himself has made a way for our sins to be forgiven. Can I show you?”
- Present the gospel using a method you are familiar with such as the 3-Circles or 1-Verse on our GO2 webpage ([cbcfamily.net/go2](http://cbcfamily.net/go2)) or share this 4G series with them.
- Ask them if they see the difference. *It's not what you can do to make peace with God. It's what He did to make peace with you.*

# Christmas at Calvary

## Children's Christmas Musical Performance

Sunday, December 11,  
5 PM, Bastrop Campus  
Cookie Reception Following



## Christmas Eve Message

*"Jesus Is The Light"*

Saturday, December 24  
Bastrop & Smithville Campuses  
5:00 PM - Childcare Provided  
6:30 PM - No Childcare

## Christmas Day Message

*"Jesus Is The Life"*

Sunday, December 25  
Bastrop & Smithville Campuses  
9:45 AM  
(No Other Activities)

## New Years Day

### Bastrop

9:00 Classic & 10:15 Modern\*  
(No 11:30 Service or Activities)

### Smithville

9:45\* & 11:00\*  
\*With Kid's Activities

# REACHING THE NATIONS, TOGETHER.



[Imb.org/lottiemoon](http://Imb.org/lottiemoon)

100% of your gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering go to enabling gospel transformation among the unreached.

## Family Event – Bastrop Campus

### Wednesday, Jan. 4, 6-7:30 PM

*The Amazing Chemistry Show*



God Time Day 1: We are In Need of a Gift



Throughout all of history, every culture has had beliefs and common practices for dealing with the sense of guilt we all have for the wrong we do. Often these beliefs and practices include sacrifice or some other way of compensating for the evil of our actions. Anything which can effectively remove or alleviate our guilt is what we call *atonement*.



Read Micah 6:6-7

*6What should I bring before the Lord when I come to bow before God on high? Should I come before him with burnt offerings, with year-old calves? 7 Would the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand streams of oil? Should I give my firstborn for my transgression, the offspring of my body for my own sin?*

Rather than us trying to atone for ourselves by requiring some less-than-holy or immeasurable effort, God has taken the initiative, through Jesus, to atone for our wrongs.

Give thanks to God for His gift! The true Christmas message.

God Time Day 2: Jesus is the Lamb of God



Ever since God gave Adam and Eve animal skins to cover their shame after they had sinned, people have been sacrificing animals as part of atonement. One of the most sacrificed has been sheep, particularly a young lamb.



Read John 1:29

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"*

It is significant that the way John the Baptizer introduces Jesus with the term "*Lamb of God*" because it highlights how Jesus will save and how this salvation is God's gift. Also, read John 3:16 and note the phrase, "*God so loved the world that He gave...*"

Explain in your own words what it means that Jesus is the *Lamb of God*, the sacrifice God made for us:

---

---

God Time Day 3: Jesus Provides Forgiveness



When we understand and accept that Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb of God, we begin to understand how He offers forgiveness and opens the way for us to be close to God.



Read Matthew 26:27-28

*27 Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them and said, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

Read Acts 4:12

*There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.*

Read Colossian 1:14

*In him [Jesus] we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Read Hebrews 9:11-14

*11 But Christ has appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come. In the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands (that is, not of this creation), 12 he entered the most holy place once for all time, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow, sprinkling those who are defiled, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works so that we can serve the living God?*



Circle any words or phrases in these verses about salvation and forgiveness.

Underline "*cleans our consciences*" in the last verse.

Explain in your own words what forgiveness does for the one who receives it.

---

---

Have you received this gift? Receive it here:



God Time Day 4: Jesus Provides Access to God



When God first made people, they walked together with God through paradise. Sin destroyed that close relationship. Ever since that time people have been looking for ways to be at least “okay” or acceptable to God. Jesus came to open the door for our full reconciliation with God, to cancel the debt of sin which stood between us and Him.

Read John 14:6.

*Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*



Read Colossian 2:13-14.

*<sup>13</sup> And when you were dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive with him and forgave us all our trespasses. <sup>14</sup> He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it away by nailing it to the cross.*



Circle what Jesus erased (verse 14).

Underline how He erased it.

When the debt of sin no longer stands between us and God, we are brought back into close fellowship – reconciled.



Read 2 Corinthians 5:18.

*Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.*

Read Romans 5:1-2a.

*<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup> We have also obtained access through him by faith.*

We now have “*peace with God.*” This peace is at the heart of the Christmas message and the angels’ words of “peace/goodwill to men” in Luke 2:14.

What should you be doing with your access to God this Christmas?

(Hint: Reread 2 Corinthians 5:18 and in your bible continue reading verses 19- 21. Give the gift of Jesus this Christmas!)

God Time Day 5: Jesus is a Gift



When we believe that Jesus is the Lamb of God (God’s gift to erase the sin which stands between Him and us) and accept that gift, our lives are transformed. We are no longer stuck trying somehow to do enough good to outweigh our bad and make atonement for our misdeeds.



Read Revelation 5:8-14.

*<sup>8</sup> When he [Jesus] took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and golden bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song:*

*You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slaughtered, and you purchased people for God by your blood from every tribe and language and people and nation. <sup>10</sup> You made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign on the earth.*

*<sup>11</sup> Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels around the throne, and also of the living creatures and of the elders. Their number was countless thousands, plus thousands of thousands.*

*<sup>12</sup> They said with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!”*

*<sup>13</sup> I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, on the sea, and everything in them say, “Blessing and honor and glory and power be to the one seated on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!” <sup>14</sup> The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped.*

Just like you would be if you received an unbelievably generous Christmas present, the Bible describes a glorious picture of all creation giving praise to Jesus as the Lamb.

Underline the reason(s) they say He is worthy.

How will you respond to God’s gift? Who will you tell?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Family Time

### Main Idea:

### A Christmas Gathering



### Key Verse: John 8:12

*Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*



### Say:

Christmas is about celebrating Jesus and being together. We can't be with everyone we love. We send Christmas cards to remember and show we care about others. God's Christmas card was Jesus. What are some ways Jesus is like a Christmas card? (He brings good news, He expresses love, He wants to be with us, etc.)

### Ask:

Christmas is full of lights, stars, and hope, pointing to Jesus as the light of the world.

Why is light so important?

We decorate our tree with lights and ornaments. They help us remember certain events that happened in our family story and the story of Christmas.

What are some of our favorite ornaments? Why?

### Activity:

Reflect as a family on the year's significant events for each family member: a notable achievement, significant learning, a developing passion, skill, or character trait.

Give everyone a sheet of paper and have each person create an ornament that would remind you of that event.

Another great way to reflect on others during this Christmas season is to wrap a shoebox or some other small box. As Christmas cards arrive place them in the box in the order you receive them.

At dinner, take out a card and spend some time praying for that family. After you pray for the family represented by their card, ask:

- What do you know about the family?
- Do you remember the last time we saw them?
- What is your best memory of this family?

Do this until you have been able to pray for each family that sent you a card.



### Pray:

*Dear God, Thank you for sending Your precious Son to be our sacrifice. We know You did this because You love us. You want us to be together, to be close. Help us to love and know you more this Christmas.*

*In Jesus' name. amen*



Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Christmas At Calvary  
Message 3

Jesus Is The \_\_\_\_\_ Of The World.

*John 1:4-10*

Jesus Is The \_\_\_\_\_ Light.

*John 1:9*

*John 1:5*

We \_\_\_\_\_ to The Light.

Do You \_\_\_\_\_ The Light Of The World?

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

Light / True / Point / Know



Gathering Time (Sermon Outline)

Gathering Notes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Christmas At Calvary  
Message 4

Jesus Is \_\_\_\_\_.

*John 1:4*

*John 1:10-13*

Life Begins by \_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus.

*John 14:6*

Do \_\_\_\_\_ Believe?

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

Life / Receiving, Believing / You

God Time Day 1: Jesus is the Light



Light. It's such an integral part of our Christmas celebrations. A star on the Christmas tree, the flames of advent candles, or a string of bulbs that decorate houses— in the cold, dark days of winter gloom, Christmas lights twinkle, merry and bright. These all serve as reminders of how much beauty and warmth a little light can bring. Light is beautiful, but also necessary; we need it for safety, protection, and guidance.

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the light of the world. Because of Him, we don't have to walk in spiritual darkness. Through a trusting belief in Him, we can have light— the light called "eternal life."



Read John 1:4.

*In him [Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of men.*

What lights have you seen lately? (E.g., stars, candles, bulbs, etc.) Make a point to use them as reminders to thank God for sending Jesus, the light of the world.

Spend time thanking Him now.

God Time Day 2 - The Light Shines in the Darkness



Read John 1:5.

*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

Did you know that you can see a flame from a single candle 1.6 miles away without the aid of binoculars? With a pair of binoculars, that flame can be seen from 10 miles away. The only real stipulation is that the light needs to shine in the darkness. Darkness can't overpower the light, but the light can certainly expel darkness!

Our world is spiritually dark, but it is no match for Jesus! The darkness cannot overpower Him. How does that fact reassure you today?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you haven't already, consider memorizing John 1:1-5.

God Time Day 3 - Point to the Light



Read John 1:9-12.

*<sup>9</sup>The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was created through him, and yet the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name.*



In verse 9, circle who the true light gives light to.

In verse 10, underline what was created through the true light.

In verse 11, put a box around what His own did not do.



In verse 12, circle what Jesus will give to those who believe.

Read John 8:12.

*Jesus spoke to them again: "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."*



Read Philippians 2:15.

*... so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God who are faultless in a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world...*

When we put all those passages together, we see this:

**Jesus is the true light who gives light to everyone.**

Sadly, some will reject the light. Others will accept it by believing in Him and will never have to walk in spiritual darkness again! (Oh, what joy!)

When we walk in His spiritual light, we then can shine bright too – pointing others to Him.

Who will you share the Light with today? Plan and do it!

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



God Time Day 4 - Jesus is the Life



Not only is Jesus the Word, the Lamb of God, and the Light, but He is also the Life. But what does that mean exactly? We've already touched on it, but the fact that Jesus is the Word, Lamb, and Light all reveal what He came to the earth to do: to give eternal life.



Circle all occurrences of the word "life" or "live" in these verses:



John 1:4

*In him [Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of men.*

John 10:10

*A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I [Jesus] have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance.*

John 11:25

*Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me, even if he dies, will live."*



John 14:19

*In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Because I [Jesus] live, you will live too.*

Jesus is *life* because He is fully God. When Father God created, He did so through His *Word* (who is the Word? See Week 1). He then breathed life into humankind by the power of His Spirit. Thus, Jesus has the power to give life, lay down His life, and resurrect life. And not only does Jesus have the power to do all of that physically, but He has the ability to breathe into us spiritual, eternal life. (John 3:16).

This Christmas season, take a breath and slow down. Grab a separate piece of paper and write a prayer to the Father, thanking Him for sending Jesus to give you eternal life.



God Time Day 5 - Do You Have Life?



Read John 1:12-13.

*<sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of natural descent, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.*

In verse 12 above, underline the two rhyming words that describe the type of people who Jesus gave the right to be God's children (*all who did \_\_\_\_\_, and those who \_\_\_\_\_*).



In verse 13, circle whose *will* these children were born by.

Yes! A person is born into a new life when they receive Jesus and believe in His name (trust Him for salvation). A person can make the decision to do this, but the mysterious process of this new birth actually happens by God. (Verse 13 explains that this birth does not result from human passions or desire; it's all done by God.)



Read John 14:6.

*Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

When sin originally entered the world, it broke humanity's relationship with God, separating us from Him. The only way back is through belief in His Son, Jesus. This is why Jesus came to earth, was born in Bethlehem, laid in a manger, lived a sinless life, demonstrated godly love, gave Himself on the cross, bled for our sins, and rose again, defeating death. It was all a plan to restore the relationship with God that humanity had lost.

The question is: have you received and believed in Jesus so that you are in a restored relationship with God?

- If so, celebrate His coming by listening and worshipping along to *Joy to the World*. After you've listened, put the hymn into your own words, and then share the message with others.
- If not, do it today and share your newfound joy!



## Family Time



## Main Idea:

## The Birth of Jesus



## Key Verse: Luke 2:10-11

<sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: <sup>11</sup> Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord."



## Picture It:

When a leader wants to know how many people live in his kingdom or nation, he can call for a census, which is just a fancy word for counting the people. As the ruler of Rome, Caesar Augustus wanted to count all the people in the whole Roman Empire. To make counting people easier, he told everyone to go back to the town their family came from. This is why Mary and Joseph had to return to Bethlehem.

Remember that back in Mary and Joseph's day they did not have cars. They had to walk.



## Read:

Read Luke 2:1-7 and Matthew 2:1-6



## Talk it Out:

In Matthew, we see the wise men come to find baby Jesus. He also included words from the prophet Micah. Long before Jesus was born, even before Mary and Joseph were born, God told Micah that a Savior would be born in Bethlehem. That tells us that Jesus was not born in Bethlehem by accident. All of it was a part of God's plan.

How did the chief priests know that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem?



## Read:

Luke 2:8-21

## Ask:

- Can you think of a Christmas song that tells part of the story we just read?
- What did the angel of the Lord tell the shepherds?
- What did Mary do with the story the shepherds told her?
- Why was the angel's message, that Jesus was born, considered good news?

Sing your favorite Christmas hymn, and then thank God for the good news that Jesus was born.



**The 3-Step “1-on-1 Encouragement” Process**

*Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, since he who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching.*

Hebrews 10:23-25

1. Partner-up: Partners should be of the same gender. If there is an odd number three is okay but work swiftly.
2. Partners ask each other these five questions:

	1) Did you spend specific personal time in the <b>BIBLE</b> <u>each day</u> this past week?	These are “Yes” or “No” questions.
	2) Did you spend specific time in <b>PRAYER</b> <u>each day</u> this past week – not just for meals?	Any hesitations or “Well...” responses are circled “No.”
	3) Did you do something specific to show Godly <b>LOVE</b> to someone this past week?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If so, the partner briefly shares the encounter(s) with their partner and, on the provided line, writes the name(s) of the person(s) they showed love to, shared the gospel with, or disciplined.</li> </ul>
	4) Did you intentionally share the <b>GOSPEL</b> with anyone this past week?	
	5) Did you <b>DISCIPLE</b> anyone this past week? (Ex: Sharing with others from any of the Gathering, God, Group, or Family Times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If not, leave the line blank.</li> </ul>

3. Each partner prays for the other: No matter how or what the partner has done over the past week, this is an intentional prayer of **encouragement** for the coming week!