

Life Group Leader's Guide

# The Christmas Story

*Special Edition*



*First Baptist Church of Eugene*

*Published 1/15/2012*

*Life Group Curriculum*

# The Christmas Story

*....when love was born.*

<b>Passage</b>	<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Passage Title</b>
1	Luke 1:26-38	An Angel Tells Mary about Jesus
1	Matt 1:18-25	An Angel Tells Joseph about Jesus
1	Luke 2:1-7	Jesus is Born
2	Luke 2:8-20	Shepherds Visit Jesus
2	Matt 2:1-12	The Magi Visit Jesus
2	Matt 2:12-23	Jesus' Family Escapes to Egypt

### *Optional Passage for Week 3*

<b>Passage</b>	<b>Scripture</b>	<b>Passage Title</b>
3	John 1:1-18	The Ultimate Relationship
3	John 3:16	The Measure of God's Love for Us

### **Communion**

Appendix	Communion	Leaders Guide
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*Revised Jan 15, 2012*



# The Christmas Story

## Part I

- *An Angel Tells Mary about Jesus* Luke 1:1-26,
- *An Angel Tells Joseph about Jesus* Matt 1:18-25
- *Jesus is Born* Luke 2:1-7

### **Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)**

This month, more than a billion people will celebrate Christmas. The reason to celebrate Christmas has transformed to mean many things to many people over the ages. But for those of us who seek the truth about its meaning will never get tired of hearing about the wonder and miraculous birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord.

This passage begins six months after the angel, Gabriel, visited Zechariah and announced that his wife Elizabeth, who was old and barren, would be with child and give birth to a son. They were to name him John (to be known as John the Baptist). John would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth and was sent by God to turn the hearts of His people to repentance and to make ready for the coming Lord Jesus.

**Facilitator Note:** *Suggest that three people tell the story. Approx 2-3 mins per passage.*

### **Tell the Story: (6-8 Minutes)**

*Tell the story:* as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

**Rebuild: (6-8 Minutes)** Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

### **Basic Questions:**

1. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
2. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
3. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus or the Holy Spirit)
4. What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Other Application Questions:**

1. How did Mary and Joseph respond to the angels instructions? How do you think you may have responded?
2. What are a few of the character attributes that you admire most about Mary and Joseph? Which ones would you like to develop more for yourself?
3. What are some of the names and plans that were revealed by God regarding His Son Jesus? Have any of these been fulfilled? Which ones?
4. What were some of the things that you think Joseph was concerned about at the time in addition to caring for his wife and child? What things concern you in the midst of caring for your family?
5. In what ways do you see Faith in this story? Love?, Giving?, Forgiving?, Rescuing?, Changing?, Rejoicing?

### **Life Application Question(s):**

1. Why do you think God specifically gave us these passages about the birth of His Son?
2. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

### **Prayer Thoughts:**

God, we praise you and bow down to worship in with all of our hearts. Let us not lose sight of the wonder, joy and miraculous display of your splendor, love and grace for us as told in the Great Story of all Time. We are clearly the object of your immeasurable love, demonstrated your unmerited gift in the birth, life, death and resurrection of your one and only Son.

# The Christmas Story

## Part 2

- *Shepherds Visit Jesus* *Luke 2:8-20*
- *The Magi Visit Jesus* *Matt 2:1-12*
- *Jesus' Family Escapes to Egypt* *Matt 2:12-23*

### **Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)**

The miraculous birth of a child was foretold to both Mary and Joseph by the angel. They were told the child would be a boy, they were told what God's plan for the boy would be and they were even told what to name the child. What an amazing display of faith and obedience by both Mary and Joseph. All of this was to happen in a totally unnatural way. God provided all of the information that was needed for both Joseph and Mary to follow His plan up until the child is born. Let's see how the rest of the story unfolds.

**Facilitator Note:** *Suggest that three people tell the story. Approx 2-3 mins per passage.*

### **Tell the Story: (6-8 Minutes)**

*Tell the story: as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.*

**Rebuild: (6-8 Minutes)** Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

### **Basic Questions:**

5. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
6. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
7. What does this passage teach you about God?(Jesus or the Holy Spirit)
8. What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Other Application Questions:**

6. Why do you think God sent the Angel and Heavenly Hosts to the lowly Shepherds in the fields?
7. What part of the Shepherds role do you think we are intended to play?
8. What were some of the worldly events going on amidst the amazing work God was doing? What affect did it have on God's plan for His Son?
9. What are some of the events taking place around you and what affect are they having on God's plan for you?
10. God gave both warnings and instruction to several people in this passage. Have you experienced either of those this week? Would you be willing to share that with us?
11. In what ways do you see Faith in this story? Love?, Giving?, Forgiving?, Rescuing?, Changing?, Rejoicing?

### **Life Application Question(s):**

3. Why do you think God gave us the details in this passage about the birth of His Son?
4. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

### **Prayer Thoughts:**

Father God, we praise you for the way you have not only revealed yourself to us through your word but also the plans that you have for each of us. We pray the truth of the Christmas Story remains deep in our hearts and we celebrate the greatest gift ever given in the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

# The Christmas Story

## Part 3-Optional

- *The Word Became Flesh*                      *John 1:1-18*
- *The Measure of God's Love for us*              *John 3:16*

### **Transition to this week's Story: (2 Minutes)**

After Jesus was born, on the eighth day, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present an offering and be circumcised in the keeping of what is said in the Law of the Lord. When everything required by the Law of the Lord was complete they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him. The Gospel of John helps us see the birth and preparation of Jesus, the Son of God, and His relationship to God, to John the Baptist and to all mankind. Let tell tonight's story.

**Facilitator Note:** *Suggest that two people tell the story. Approx 2-3 mins per passage.*

### **Tell the Story: (5-6 Minutes)**

*Tell the story:* as best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story.

**Rebuild: (6-8 Minutes)** Chronologically rebuild the story asking questions. If necessary, have the group look for what may have been added or left out. Stay focused on the main characters, locations and events.

### **Basic Questions:**

9. What is one thing that struck you or was new to you from this passage?
10. Is there anything you disliked or confuses you about this passage? Please explain.
11. What does this passage teach you about God? (The Trinity?)
12. What does this passage teach you about people?

### **Other Application Questions:**

12. What was John the Baptist's purpose? What does it mean to witness to testify concerning that light? Can you testify as a witness?
13. What are some of the changes that have taken place in our relationship with God since the birth of Jesus?
14. What are some of the difference between God's law and judgment as emphasized by Moses and the mercy, love and forgiveness highlighted by Jesus.
15. Why do you think people call the Bible God's Love Story?
16. In what ways do you see Faith in this story? Love?, Giving?, Forgiving?, Rescuing?, Changing?, Rejoicing?

### **Life Application Question(s):**

5. Why do you think God gave us the details in this passage about the birth of His Son?
6. What has God put on your heart to do with this passage?

### **Prayer Thoughts:**

Dear Father, this season always brings a reminder to the greatest love story ever told. It is a love that surpasses all of our understanding and comprehension. We simply do not have the capacity to fully grasp the depth of love you have for us. Thank you for your undeserving love. Thank you for a love that does not have conditions for us to earn. Thank you for a love that is so freely and willfully given in such abundance. Let your love captivate us in the way that causes us to live and become a witness that radiates your light to all those whom you have chosen to have eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts to understand; You are the Christ Jesus.