



LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Sent Jesus to Save Us

SCRIPTURE: [Matthew 1](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [Isaiah 7:14](#)

Growing up, I was always jealous of my sisters' names. They have fairly common names. Their names are not hard to pronounce, and every time we went on vacation, they found a personalized memento. As a six-year-old, this was heartbreaking!

One summer, my dad found me crying by myself after another trip to a souvenir store. I begged to know why he had chosen such an odd name! He told me that he and my mom had picked my name out of a list of other options because it meant something to them. Apparently, Callie means "beautiful!" Who knew?

Names have always held special meanings for their owners. But the most important naming is found in [Matthew 1:21](#): "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (NIV). How wonderful that Jesus' name has a special meaning not just for Him, but for us as well! Every aspect of Jesus proclaims that He has come to save us—right down to His name.

This Christmas season, remember Jesus' name and that He came to save us from our sins. But also remember that He has promised to come again! And one day, every knee will bow, and every tongue will say, "Jesus is Lord."

—Callie Bogle

Children's Ministry Associate

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The gospel of Matthew does not name its own author, but early Christians ascribed it to one of the 12 disciples of Jesus named Matthew. He was a former tax collector.

WHAT?

[Matthew 1](#) provides the genealogy of Jesus, the list of His ancestors back to Abraham. It also tells the story of how Jesus' adoptive father, Joseph, found out about Jesus' miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit.

WHERE?

The story takes place in Nazareth, which was the hometown of Joseph and Mary. Mary would have given birth there instead of Bethlehem had a Roman census not forced them to travel to Bethlehem, which fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus' birth in [Micah 5:2](#).

WHEN?

The story takes place shortly before 6–4 BC. We know this because King Herod, who tried to have Jesus killed, died in 4 BC.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Long after God's promise to Abraham, He sent His Son, born as a baby to a young girl and her fiancé. Jesus, a descendant of Abraham, was the fulfilment of all God said He would do—finally, God sent Jesus to save the world.



Curiosity

LESSON 4 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

Present Surprise

SUPPLIES: box, baby doll, tape, scissors, wrapping paper, gift bow

Before the kids arrive, put the baby doll in the box and set out the gift-wrapping supplies.

What do you think all these supplies are for? Allow kids to give answers. **Today, we're going wrap a very special present.** Allow the kids to look inside the box. **Baby Jesus was a very special present for His parents, Joseph and Mary, and also for the whole world!**

Let the kids help you wrap the present. It doesn't have to be perfect; the point is to provide fun for the kids. When complete, pass the present around and allow the kids to hold it and look at it, and then let them unwrap it.

Jesus wasn't wrapped in paper with a bow, like we just wrapped our present. But He was sent as a gift to the world. We're going to learn about how Joseph, Jesus' father on earth, found out that Jesus is a gift to the world and was sent to save us! Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD SENT JESUS TO SAVE US.**



Belief

LESSON 4 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Guide kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words:
God, thank You so much for this day. Thank You for the gift of Jesus. Holy Spirit, come and fill our hearts. Help us learn more about You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible.

Ask: What is this called? *The Bible*

Ask: Why is the Bible important? *Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.*

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Big Picture Bible p176

Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

He will be called Immanuel.

—Isaiah 7:14 (NIRV)

Our Word of Wonder comes from **Isaiah 7:14**. Our Word of Wonder says, "He will be called Immanuel." This verse is talking about Jesus—He will be called Immanuel. Immanuel means "God with us." Say the verse again slowly and have the kids repeat it back to you. Then add in the motions.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **HE WILL BE**—*Point up.*
- **CALLED**—*Cup hands around mouth.*
- **IMMANUEL**.—*Make prayer hands (with palms pressed together).*
- **ISAIAH 7:14**—*Hold your hands in front of you with palms together, as if opening a book.*

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

Why do you think God sent Jesus to earth?

How does it make you feel to have God with us?



Faith

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Paper Plate Angels

SUPPLIES: white paper plates (1 per kid), circle cut-outs (1 per kid), tape, glue sticks, coloring utensils, glitter, silver pipe cleaners

Do you remember who came to Joseph in God's big story? Allow the kids to answer.

You're right—it was an angel! The angel told Joseph that Jesus is the Savior of the world. What a wonderful gift we get to celebrate at Christmas! Today, we're going to create our own angels to remember the message given by the angel: that Jesus was sent to save us!

Give each child a paper plate to color front and back with crayons. When they are finished assist them in folding and glue in place. Give them a circle cut out to draw their angel's face, then help them glue the face and 2 hands (wings) in place. Next, glue or tape a halo to the back of the head. Lastly, have the children put glue on the front of the angel's wings and sprinkle with glitter.



9:00 Service



Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish the activity, pray with them, thanking God for sending Jesus to save us.

Dear God, thank You for loving us so much that You sent Jesus to save us. Help us remember this Christmas that Jesus is the great gift You have given us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May the light of Jesus shine through you this Christmas. May you always remember that Jesus came to save you! Because Jesus saves, may you celebrate Him this Christmas.

Angel Says

You will play a game similar to Simon Says, but you will play the game using the phrase “Angel says.”

Do you remember who came to Joseph in a dream? Allow the kids to answer. Yes, an angel came to Joseph! The angel gave Joseph some instructions. He was told that he should marry Mary and name the baby Jesus. We're going to play a game where we will have follow directions, like Joseph. I'm going to give you a command, and if I say, “Angel says,” you should do it. If I don't say, “Angel says” before my command, don't do it!

Let's practice! Angel says ... hop up and down. Good job! You hopped when I said, “Angel says.” Let's try again. Pause. Are you ready? OK! Now ... turn around in a circle. Oh no, I didn't say, “Angel says.” Now are you ready to play?

Call out various silly things for the kids to do, saying, “Angel says” before you give some of the commands. If you don't say, “Angel says” before a command, and kids do it anyway, they're out of the game (or they can just keep playing). You can use the following commands (or make up your own), varying when you say “Angel says” before giving the commands:

- Sit down.
- Spin in a circle.
- Touch your nose.
- Clap your hands.
- Stomp your feet.
- Jump up and down.
- Run in place.
- Do a dance.
- Touch your toes.
- Put your hands on your hips.
- Lie down on the floor.
- Wave your arms in the air.

9:00 Service