



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 Invites People to Meet Jesus

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2

WORD OF WONDER: From Isaiah 9:6

When our son was born, we couldn't wait to share the news, to send out the first pictures, to let friends and family know his name. His birth was important to us. A new life had arrived, and our world was changed.

Read Luke 2:1–20. When Jesus was born, God didn't wait long to let people know. He sent a host of angels to a group of shepherds. The Savior had come. The Messiah. The Lord. A real flesh and blood person who could know people and be known by them. Immanuel. God with us.

"Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about" (Luke 2:15). That's how the shepherds responded. How will you respond?

God invites people to meet Jesus—to know Him and be known by Him. Jesus isn't hiding from us. He isn't distant. He's available. He has time for us. How will you meet Him this week? Through prayer? Through His Word? Through worship and participation in the life of the church?

Jesus has come, and the world is changed. He isn't far off. God invites you to meet Him, day by day, and to know the depths of His love and power.

—**Michael Rade**

Care & Support Ministry Assistant; Itinerant Preacher

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

An angel announced Jesus' birth to a group of shepherds. Shepherds were part of the lower class in Israel, sometimes despised by others. They lived outside during much of the year, sleeping among their flocks in order to protect their sheep from thieves or predators.

WHAT?

Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem because of the Roman census. After Jesus was born, an angel announced Jesus' birth to a group shepherds, who came to meet Jesus. The shepherds spread the news of Jesus' birth and identity to everyone they met.

WHERE?

Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth in the northern region of Galilee to Bethlehem in the southern region of Judea. Bethlehem is about five miles south of Jerusalem. The shepherds were tending their flocks in the fields near Bethlehem.

WHEN?

Caesar Augustus reigned between 31 BC and AD 14. Jesus was born shortly before the death of Herod, king of Judea in 4 BC, which means the census must have taken place toward the end of Herod's life.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Jesus' birth fulfilled expectations that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem and would be a descendant of David. These prophecies point to the fact that the Messiah is royalty. Jesus, the everlasting King, would go on to proclaim God's kingdom, establishing it through power greater than death itself.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: baby doll

Before the activity, hide the baby doll somewhere in the room.

We are going to learn about a special baby who was born long ago. I have hidden a baby doll somewhere in the room. Can you help me look for this baby doll?

Lead kids to look around the room for the hidden baby doll. If time allows, hide the doll and let kids look for the doll a few times before moving on. **Do you know who the special baby was?** Allow the kids to respond.

Yes, it's Jesus! We'll learn about His birth and who came to meet Him first!

Our Wonder Truth today is GOD INVITES PEOPLE TO MEET JESUS.

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

GOD INVITES—*Point above.*

PEOPLE—*Point to others around the room.*

TO MEET JESUS—*Cradle arms like rocking a baby*



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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: **Dear God, thank You for being with us today. We are so grateful for Your Son, Jesus. Please help us listen closely to Your story and what You want to say to us today. 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

The Beginner's Bible, pages 271-281
Baby Jesus is Born & Shepherds Visit

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

**A child will be born to us. A son will be given to us.
He will be called the Prince of Peace.**

—from Isaiah 9:6

Our verse tells us that a child will be born who will be the Prince of Peace. God made this promise hundreds of years before Jesus was born. God's people waited and waited, and Jesus was finally born! He came as the King who would bring peace to the world, just like God promised.

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you. Repeat this several times.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- Why do you think God chose shepherds to be the first to meet the promised King?
- Why is it important that Jesus was born?