

# Lesson Three

## *A Savior Is Born*



### Growing as a Teacher

#### Scripture

Luke 2:1–20

#### Bible Truth

When the shepherds learned that the promised Savior had been born, they praised God for all they had heard and seen, and told others of the Savior's birth.

#### Lesson Aim

To praise God for the birth of Jesus and to share the good news about him with others.

Christmas has become too busy for many of us. Calendars are filled with school, church, family and social events. We spend countless hours shopping, decorating, wrapping gifts, baking, cooking and hurriedly writing cards. What do many of these things *really* have to do with the One whose birthday we celebrate?

When we look back at Bethlehem, we see that our Savior was born in quiet and humble circumstances. There was very little fanfare and no glittery decorations—just a make-do manger, Mary and Joseph, and probably an assortment of curious animals. Then the King of Glory's birth was proclaimed to ordinary shepherds tending their flocks. And what did *they* do after visiting the newborn Christ? They quickly spread the good news that the Savior had arrived!

Think about this meek, yet profound, coming of God's Son. He stripped himself of heaven's riches and became poor for our sakes. He came to die on a cross for us so that we might have eternal life. What an immeasurable gift!

How will you respond to God's great saving love for you? Like the shepherds, will you praise God for his Son and joyfully tell others about him, especially the children in your class? Will you share his love with those around you in significant ways, concentrating on the Gift rather than the glitz of Christmas? Pray that you and your students will be able to stay focused on the true meaning behind this time of celebration.

All who heard the good news were amazed!

#### Bible Background

Jesus was born in the Judean town of Bethlehem, the birthplace of King David (1 Samuel 17:12). The newlyweds, Mary and Joseph, had been summoned there by decree of the Emperor Caesar Augustus. From all over the empire, Jews were required to return to their ancestral homes to be registered for tax purposes.

When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem, the only lodging available to them was a stable (perhaps a cave used to house domestic animals). It was in this unlikely setting that the eternal Son of God was born.

To the lowly shepherds—not the high and mighty—was given the privilege of first spreading the surprising and exciting word about Jesus. And the Bible tells us that all who heard the good news were amazed!

#### Memory Verse

Review:  
MALACHI 3:1a  
1 JOHN 4:14b

## Lesson Three at a Glance

Step	Minutes	Children's Activities	Supplies (complete list, p. 11)
<b>1</b> Welcome	5–10	Play <i>Surprise Gift!</i> to introduce the idea of gifts and the excitement they bring.	<input type="checkbox"/> Gift bag <input type="checkbox"/> Small gift items, such as candy canes, stickers, bookmarks or erasers (1 per child) <input type="checkbox"/> Gift wrap, tape
<b>2</b> Bible Time	15–20	Hear the story of the birth of Jesus and the response of the shepherds. <b>5</b> Sing “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” (Songbook, p. 15).	<input type="checkbox"/> TA 3 Jesus’ Birth* <input type="checkbox"/> <i>At Home 3</i> ** <input type="checkbox"/> Songbook
<b>3</b> Memory Verse	5–10	Play <i>I Spy</i> to review Malachi 3:1a and 1 John 4:14b.	<input type="checkbox"/> TA 1c Memory Work* <input type="checkbox"/> Cardboard tube
<b>4</b> Activities	10–15	Do an activity that reminds us of God’s great gift to us—his Son.	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>At Home 3</i> ** <input type="checkbox"/> Markers or crayons
<b>5</b> Final Focus	5	<b>5</b> Sing “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” (Songbook, p. 15). Pray together.	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>At Home 3</i> ** <input type="checkbox"/> Songbook

Total time: 40–60 minutes

\* *Younger Elementary Teaching Aids Pack*  
 \*\* *Younger Elementary Student Activities Pack*



## Practical Preparation



**Younger Elementary Vol. 2 Songbook**  
 All the songs for this quarter and the entire year are in the Songbook (included in the Fall Teacher’s Kit).

**5**

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”  
*Younger Elementary Vol. 2 CD*



Order CD and/or extra Songbooks from Great Commission Publications at 800-695-3387 or [www.gcp.org](http://www.gcp.org).

To prepare for this lesson, collect the items you need from the Teaching Aids Pack and Student Activities Pack. Separate TA 3 Jesus’ Birth along the perforations ahead of time (see sidebar, p. 7) and be sure that the memory verse poster is displayed in the classroom. Note that each student will work from a copy of *At Home 3* for the Bible Time, Activities and Final Focus steps.

For the Welcome segment, have small gift items available (one for each child). Use a variety of inexpensive items such as stickers, bookmarks and small puzzles. Wrap each item ahead of time and place in an attractive gift bag. Or you may gift-wrap one item in several sheets of paper—a bag of candy canes, for example—for the class to share.

Have available a cardboard paper-towel tube for *I Spy* and the memory verse review game; check that you have bright markers or crayons for the Activities step. If you do not already know the Christmas spiritual, become familiar with “Go, Tell It on the Mountain.” The words are found in *At Home 3* and on page 15 of the Songbook.



## Welcome

5–10 minutes

When it is time to begin, have the children sit in a circle. Show them the gift bag filled with small, wrapped presents. *Say* **It is a lot of fun to receive a gift and open it, isn't it? When was the last time you were really surprised by a gift you received?** *After the children have expressed themselves, say* **We are going to play a game called *Surprise Gift!*** Then tell them how to play the game.\* Pass the gift bag around the circle; when you call out “Surprise gift!” the child holding the bag selects a small gift from the bag. Before opening it, have the child guess what it is. Continue playing the game until every child has had an opportunity to pick a gift, guess what might be inside and open it.

After the game is over, ask the children how they felt when they opened their gifts. *After some discussion, conclude this step by saying* **Playing the game was a fun way of reminding us that gifts are special. Today we are going to hear about the most special gift of all—Jesus, our Savior. His coming was a big surprise, even though many people had been waiting for his coming for a long time.**

Before telling the Bible story, be sure that the gift bag, wrapping paper and gifts have been put away. The students may retrieve their gifts at the end of the lesson.



## Bible Time

15–20 minutes

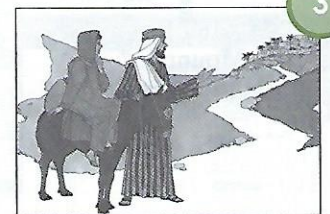
Get the children ready for today's story, then open your Bible to the second chapter of Luke. *Display the picture of Mary and Joseph on TA 3 and say* **After Mary and Joseph were married, they left Nazareth and took a long journey south. At that time, Israel belonged to the Roman Empire. The Emperor Augustus wanted to make a count of all his people to make sure that they all paid their taxes, so the people had to go back to their hometowns to be counted. Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, the land of King David, Joseph's ancestor.**

When they finally got there, Mary and Joseph found the town crowded with people. All the houses and rooms were so full that they couldn't find a place to stay. Joseph must have been anxious as he searched for a room for them. It was almost time for Mary to give birth to the baby she was carrying.



Supply children with paper, pencils and crayons or markers. Have them identify ways they can give their love and worship to Jesus. Some children will be able to write down their responses; other students can draw ways to honor the Savior. Encourage the children to show their suggestions to their parents after class. If there is time, you can share some of the ideas in class.

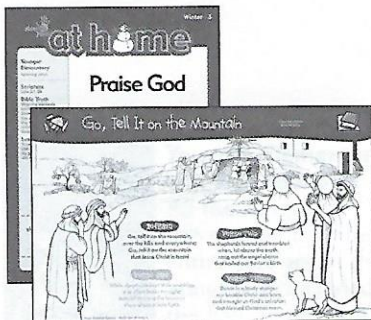
*\*Adapt the instructions if you are using one class gift rather than individual ones.*





## Joseph's Quiet Faith

Joseph the carpenter was engaged to Mary when he learned about her pregnancy. His first thought was to cancel the marriage plans. But when an angel of the Lord informed him that the baby in Mary's womb had been conceived by the Holy Spirit, Joseph believed the angel's testimony and married Mary (Matthew 1:18–25). Joseph went on to raise Jesus, and he taught the Son of God his own trade (Matthew 13:55).



**5** "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"  
Songbook, p. 15

Finally, the tired pair settled down in an animal stable. Here, Mary gave birth to her first child, a son. After wrapping the newborn baby in strips of linen cloth, like good mothers in Bible times did to their newborn babies, Mary carefully placed the child in a manger, a feed box for the animals, because there was no other place for the baby to sleep.

In the fields near Bethlehem, shepherds were taking care of their animals when a brilliant light suddenly shone all around them. It was an amazing sight! An angel of the Lord appeared out of the brightness and spoke kindly to the terrified shepherds. "Don't be scared," the angel assured them. "I have come with great news. Today, in Bethlehem, the Savior has been born. He is Christ the Lord. You will know you have found him when you find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."



Suddenly the sky was filled with heavenly beings. *Show the children the picture of the angels and the shepherds (TA 3).* They praised God and spoke of peace on earth. Then the angels left the sky and returned to heaven.

The shepherds knew that the message had come from the Lord, so they left the fields and hurried to Bethlehem to find the baby. When they found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in a manger, they knew that this tiny child was Christ the Lord, the long-promised Savior. *Display the picture of the shepherds visiting the stable (TA 3).*

Astonished at what they had seen and heard, the shepherds hurried away and told everyone about the bright angels, the message from God, the good news of the Savior's birth and the manger in Bethlehem. Everyone was amazed and surprised when they heard the news, and the shepherds praised God for his greatness and goodness.

Let us thank God for sending his very own Son to earth so that his people from all over the world could have their sins forgiven. This is the best gift of all!

Hand out copies of *At Home 3*. Ask the children to open their papers to the song "Go, Tell It on the Mountain." Tell them that they are going to sing about the Bible story they just heard. Use *Younger Elementary Vol. 2 CD* if available. Lead the children in singing the refrain (chorus). Although a few children may be familiar with this well-known spiritual, be prepared to teach it to the class. Some children will be able to read the words; encourage them to try as you teach the song. Once the children are familiar with the chorus, go on to sing the first verse and repeat the chorus. Conclude by singing the second verse and then the chorus.

If you wish, you may have the children put down their papers and sway or clap to the beat of the music or march around the room as they sing.



## Memory Verse

5–10 minutes

Review Malachi 3:1a and 1 John 4:14b by playing a simple version of the game *I Spy*. Using the cardboard tube, go up to the poster and, using one eye, look through the tube. Call out one or two words from the section of the verse you can see through the tube. (For example, if you see the words *has sent* from 1 John 4:14b, say “I spy—*has sent*.”) Ask a volunteer to guess which verse the words belong to and then have that student or another volunteer say the entire verse without looking at the poster.

Able readers may volunteer to look through the tube and identify words from the memory work. Beginning readers may be asked to guess the Scripture reference or recite the verse.

At the end of the game, put away the tube and have the class repeat the verses. If there is time, discuss how the students used the scroll necklaces or armlets they made last week to review the memory work.

## Memory Verses

“See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me.”

MALACHI 3:1a

The Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

1 JOHN 4:14b



## Enrichment

During the month of December, children can work on Christmas devotional booklets. They can write poems and prayers, and include favorite Bible verses. Invite other children to submit poems, prayers and writings. Include an attractive cover and deliver these booklets to children who are confined to home or hospital during the holidays.

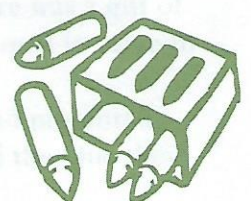
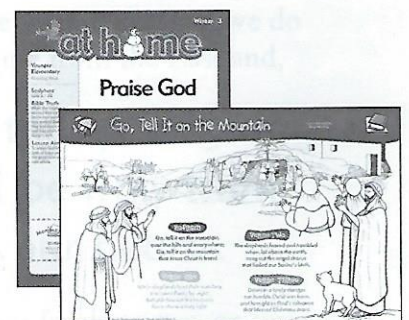


## Activities

5–10 minutes

Hand out crayons or markers and ask the children to color the picture surrounding the song “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” in *At Home 3*. Encourage them to take their time and to do their best coloring. *Say* **When you and your parents have finished the *At Home* paper at the end of this week, you may want to make this song and coloring page into a poster. Paste the paper in the middle of a large, brightly colored sheet of construction paper, then put it on the wall in your room.**

While the children are coloring, read the third verse of the song aloud to the class. *As the children become familiar with the words, remind them that* **Each one of us needs salvation. We need a Savior to take the punishment for our sins. That is why Jesus came. He came to take the punishment for his people’s sin by dying on the cross. That is why we must tell the good news that Jesus Christ was born, lived on earth, died on the cross for our sins and rose again.**





**5** “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”  
Songbook, p. 15



### Note to Teacher

Be sensitive to children who may not have whole families: foster children, single-parent families, orphans and so forth. Be ready to listen and offer encouragement.



### Items to Send Home

○ *At Home 3*



## Final Focus

5 minutes

When the children are finished coloring, put away the markers and crayons and have them look at the back page of *At Home 3*. Discuss the do-it-together activities listed on this page. Suggest that this week the children and their families choose to do one or more of these activities to tell others about the coming of the Savior and show them his love.

Before closing in prayer, ask everyone to sing the third verse and chorus of “Go, Tell It on the Mountain.” As the children prepare to leave, make sure that they have their small gifts, take-home papers and any optional work they did before class.

