

This is Jesus: The One We Say Yes To

Bible Passage: Matthew 1:18-23

Key Passage: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"(which means "God with us"). **Matthew 1:23**

Big Picture Question: What does Christmas teach us about who Jesus is? Jesus is God's Son who was born, died, and rose again to give life to all who believe.

Christ Connection: Jesus was born to bring peace between us and God.

Leader Notes:

Context

It is impossible to tell the Christmas story without sharing the faith of two young people – Mary and Joseph. Mary was told that she would give birth though she is a virgin. She believed that what is impossible with man is possible with God so she said yes to His plan. Joseph, when He heard that Mary was pregnant, said yes when he was asked by God via an angel to raise His Son. By faith, Joseph and Mary set an example for us to always be saying yes to God and His plan for our lives. This begins by saying yes to Jesus as our Savior and it continues by saying yes to Him every day as the King of our lives.

- Mary was told by angel she would give birth to a Son and name him Jesus (Yahweh is Salvation) and He will be the Son of the Most High
- Mary wanted to know how? God's Son would enter the world thru the power of the Holy Spirit and Mary voluntarily submitted
- Mary worshipped God with Elizabeth through her song in Luke 1:39-56
- Mary was the mother of the Messiah (Luke 1:26-56)
- God created Joseph for a specific purpose: to be the earthly father of God's Son (Matthew 1:18-25)

TODAY'S PASSAGE

18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. **19** Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **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."

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: **23** "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Matthew 1:18-23

TODAY'S TAKEAWAYS

- *It takes faith to say yes to God.*
- *Mary and Joseph show us how to say yes to God.*
- *The first yes that you can give God is to believe in Jesus for life.*
- **BL:** Jesus was born to bring peace between us and God.
- We don't say yes to God only once. We say yes to Him every day as we live for Him.

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (15 minutes)

Activities that encourage preschoolers to enter the classroom and begin engaging with peers and Small Group Leaders by providing age appropriate and hands on fun while introducing new concepts they will hear in the day's Bible story.

Prepare to offer the following activities to 3-, 4-, 5- year olds as they arrive.

Nativity Memory Game

What you Need: Nativity Memory Game

What You Do:

- Help kids layout all the cards face down on a flat surface.

- Give each kid a chance to turn over 2 cards. If they match they get to keep the cards. If they do not match play continues to the next person.
- Keep taking turns till all the cards are gone.
- As you see them turn cards over, ask them if they know what is on the card and how it fits in the Christmas Story.

What You Say:

“Who got the most cards? Who got the least? Did you know that Jesus came so that everyone could have a relationship with God? That is what the Christmas Story is all about and in groups this month we are going to look at all the details God planned out to make it happen.”

Worship Time

Gather children on a rug or in a specific area of the classroom to tell the story. Some kids (especially the younger ones) may wander. That's okay. They're still listening and learning!

Play the DVD of All Star Kids worship (choose 1 song for today)

What You Say: “Way to go! You are such amazing singers. Now let's sit down to learn from the Bible today.”

Story Time: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

Bible Story

What You Need: Bible

What You Do: Place a bookmark at Matthew 1:18-23 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it.

What You Say:

“The Bible is called “the Word of God” because it contains God's words to us. Everything that God says is true, and all the words of the Bible are true. Today's story is from the first book of the New Testament called Matthew. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

PLAY BIBLE STORY VIDEO

Talk about the Bible Story:

It is impossible to tell the Christmas story without sharing the faith of two young people – Mary and Joseph. Mary was told that she would give birth though she was not married. She believed that what is impossible with man is possible with God so she said yes to His plan. Joseph, when He heard that Mary was pregnant, said yes when he was asked by God via an angel to raise His Son. By faith, Joseph and Mary set an example for us to always be saying yes to God and His

plan for our lives. This begins by saying yes to Jesus as our Savior and it continues by saying yes to Him every day as the King of our lives.

Learn the Big Picture Question

What You Say: Our big picture question is, *What does Christmas teach us about who Jesus is? Jesus is God's Son who was born, died, and rose again to give life to all who believe.*

Practice the Memory Verse

Open your Bible to Matthew 1:23. Read the memory verse aloud several times.

What You Say: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" which means "God with us") Matthew 1:23 Jesus was the person God promised in Genesis would bring peace between us and God.

Transition to small group.

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (25 minutes)

Create a safe place to connect through activities that are written to reach every learning style while reinforcing the Main Point that was introduced during the Bible Story and applying it to real life experiences. In addition, these activities provide preschoolers with an opportunity to build relationships with their Small Group Leader.

1. Find the Nativity

What You Need: Nativity Full Set (you are going to hide all the pieces before kids move to the small group space), need Mary, Joseph, Jesus, animals, shepherds, kings, and stable

What You Do:

- Hide all of the animals and people before kids get to the small group space.
- You can keep the Stable and say "It looks like we are missing everything from our Stable. I need your help finding all the pieces. As you find one of the characters yell 'Yes I found _____.'" "
- Give the kids time to find all the pieces. As they are found, tell everyone that "Kids name found the name the nativity piece."
- When everything has been found spend time with kids looking at all the characters and remembering what we learn from each piece.
- You can say, "Joseph said yes to marrying Mary. Mary said yes to having God's baby. Jesus said yes to living and dying for us. The animals said yes to sharing their space. The shepherds said yes to telling others about Jesus. The Wise Men said yes to bringing gifts and worshipping the Savior."

What You Say "Today we looked at the Christmas Story through the eyes of Joseph and Mary. When they heard about the baby to be born they both had to decide how they were going to respond. Joseph asked if he should marry Mary. Mary asked how it could happen to her. When you consider Jesus in the manger, what questions do you ask? God brought Jesus at this exact time in this exact place so that we could say yes to believing in Jesus for our whole lives. Do you believe Jesus was God's Son? Do you believe that God had planned for Him to

live, die and rise again so that we can have a relationship with God? Do you still need a savior today? What else about Jesus do we need to say yes to?"

2. Practice signing the Memory Verse

What you need: Memory Verse Poster

What You Do:

- Show the poster to the kids
- As you say the words point to them on the poster
- Create simple hand motions to teach toddlers the memory verse. Sample hand motions include "**The virgin** (act like you are flipping your hair or brushing long hair), **will conceive** (move hands in front of your belly like motioning a baby bump) **and give birth to a Son** (swaddle a baby and rock) **and they will call him Immanuel** (point to the ground, God with us)
Matthew 1:23
- Our memory verse tells us that Jesus was the promised Savior who came to live as a man on earth.

What You Say: Our Bible verse tells us that Jesus was the promised Savior who came to live as a man on earth. We needed Jesus to do this so that we can have peace with God. Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection allowed us to have life with God forever when we believe.

Pray and Dismiss:

What You need: Coloring page, crayons

What You Do:

- Pray- " God thank you for making a way for Jesus to be born to Mary and Joseph. Help us to live in their example by saying yes to you our whole lives. Help us all to see Jesus' birth as Good News that is for all people.
- Pass out the coloring page and crayons if time allows.

What You Say: Tell parents something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Send home the coloring page, and encourage kids to tell their family about who said Yes to God.