

ALLEY Rundown – December 14-15, 2024

Today's Bible Story: Born to Save (Jesus Is Born) • Luke 2:1-7

Today's Key Question: What does Christmas mean to you?

Today's Bottom Line: Celebrate because God sent a Savior.

Monthly Memory Verse: "[Mary] is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That's because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21 (NIRV)

CAMPUS SUPPLY: Slips of paper with the names of Christmas songs in a bowl/bag

PRE- SERVICE VIDEOS: *Dude Perfect*

Welcome the students and introduce yourself to the group. Set expectations for behavior during the large group. Review "Alley Cash" and bathroom procedures. Invite the students to bring up offering if they brought it.

SLIDE: *Theme*

Hey, everyone! What's everyone's favorite Christmas song this year? On the count of three, everyone say it at the same time! One . . . Two . . . Three! (*Get response*) Those are my favorites, too! If you've been around this month, you already know we're all about the Christmas Playlists and celebrating the reason for the entire season: Jesus!

And to keep the celebration going, we have a game to play! It's called: 'Ba-HUM-bug!'

SLIDE: *"Ba-HUM-bug!"*

Okay, okay . . . Yes, 'Ba-HUM-bug' and celebrations don't usually go together but stay with me here. This is a fun, musical game for two teams of two. Who thinks they know their Christmas music . . . and wants to volunteer to play?

Host brings four volunteers up on stage and pairs them up.

The rules are simple. In a moment, one person will hum a Christmas song, and the other person will take a guess at which song it is. Try and get your partner to guess as many right answers as possible from this card simply by humming the tune. You may not sing. You may not motion. You may not speak any words. You can only hum, hum, hum. As soon as you get one right you can move on to the next one. We'll see how many you get right in 30 seconds. Got it? Let's go!

Host hands a slip of paper with a song title on it to the first team who will hum. When their partner gets it correct, they draw another slip from the bowl. After 30 seconds (use your phone timer), count how many they got correct. Then give the second team a turn. After 30 seconds (use your phone timer), count how many they got correct. Declare a winner.

SLIDE: *Theme Background*

Christmas is SO close, and I've been having a great time at home getting the place full of the Christmas spirit! What sort of Christmas decorations do you put up at home?

Allow kids to answer

We have all sorts of decorations, wreaths, ornaments in every sort of Christmas shape imaginable, bright twinkling lights, tinsel garland. It's full of celebration.

Sometimes Christmas can feel like this, right? There can often be a LOT going on. We have *Christmas* concerts at school. Some of us have to take *Christmas* photos for *Christmas* cards. We're thinking about the *Christmas* presents we'll give . . . or get. And of course, we blast our favorite *Christmas* playlists. It's a whole lot of Christmas, but not a *Christmas* focused on the actual reason for *Christmas*: Jesus! So maybe we put a small nativity ornament or a nativity scene under the tree. We say Jesus is the reason for the season and call it good.

I know that I've done this . . . but I wonder if there's a better way. I wonder if we can discover how to celebrate Christmas with all the fun and decorations and events but also make a big deal about why we celebrate Christmas in the first place: Jesus came to earth for us!

So, I guess that's the question for today: how can we stay focused on the real meaning of Christmas? How can we make sure that we don't lose sight of the joy we find through God's love for us to send Jesus so we can be friends with God forever? These are big questions, especially because of how busy and hectic this season can become. Thankfully we have a great place to start when it comes to finding an answer to our biggest questions: the Bible, which is full of wisdom written by real people who experienced God and wrote down what they learned about God so we could learn something all these years later. Let's jump into our story for today.

VIDEO: The So and So Show (15:59)

Here's the question we started with—sometimes it feels like there is SO MUCH going on around Christmas. How do we stay focused on what Christmas is REALLY about? How do we truly celebrate God sending us Jesus, our Savior?

Here's the thing, in our efforts to enjoy the holidays and get the most out of the season we can actually lose sight of Jesus in the midst of it all.

We can forget that Jesus is the whole reason we are celebrating in the first place! We celebrate because God sent a Savior, and that changes everything! So, as we move closer and closer to Christmas Day and the excitement continues to grow remember JESUS is the reason we celebrate! And that is certainly a GREAT reason TO celebrate!

As you go to your groups today, think about this—

SLIDE: Key Question

What does Christmas mean to you? Talk with your Small Group about what it means to truly celebrate our Savior this season, even with everything that's happening—because there is often a LOT that is happening! Maybe you're not sure what Christmas really means to you right now, and that's okay, too. Small Group is a great place to talk about this and ask questions. But before you head to groups, let's pray and thank God for sending us the greatest gift: Jesus, our Savior.

SLIDE: Theme Background

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.