

CITY LG – November 30 - December 1, 2024

Today's Bible Story: The Word (In the Beginning Was the Word) • *John 1:1-5, 14*

Today's Bottom Line: God always had a plan to send Jesus.

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 (NIV)*

Monthly Virtue: Christmas—Celebrating Jesus, God’s greatest gift

Oh What a Glorious Night

Silent Night

SLIDE: Theme

Merry Christmas, everybody! I’m so glad you’re here! I just love this time of year. There are so many super-fun things to do. I love Christmas parties . . . the yummy Christmas treats . . . and all the really fun Christmas songs!

Of course, the best part of all is the reason we’re celebrating in the first place. At Christmas, we celebrate how God sent Jesus to be our Savior! We celebrate how Jesus, God’s greatest gift, was born in Bethlehem.

There are a lot of great tunes that I love to sing at Christmastime. Do you like those songs too? (Pause for response.) Are you really good at knowing the words to Christmas songs? (Pause for response.) Then I’ve got the perfect game for us to play today. I call it, ‘Finish the Lyrics.’

This game is very fun and very simple. We’ll play a Christmas song, and we’ll all sing along together. Then when the music stops, we’ll KEEP singing and see who knows the next part of the song! Do you think you can finish the lyrics for all of them? (Pause for response.) Let’s give it a try. Here we go!

AUDIO: “All I Want for Christmas Is You” by Mariah Carey—stop at 0:32

For each song, sing along with the kids while the music is playing. When the music stops, hold your hand to your ear and let the kids keep singing to see if they know what comes next. The game isn’t a competition—just have fun seeing who knows the lyrics that come next in each song.

AUDIO: “Jingle Bell Rock” by Bobby Helms—stop at 0:20

AUDIO: “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch” by Thurl Ravenscroft—stop at 0:23

AUDIO: “Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!” by Frank Sinatra—stop at 0:16

AUDIO: “Frosty the Snowman” by Bing Crosby—stop at 0:37

Way to go, everybody! Give your neighbor a high five! I want ALL of those songs on my Christmas playlist.

Today we're looking in the book of John. This book is one of the four Gospels, or books of the Bible that tell us about the life of Jesus.

The book of John was written by a man named John, who was one of Jesus' closest friends. John was there to see Jesus perform miracles. He saw how Jesus spent time with everyone, including people who were left out AND people who did wrong things. John wrote down what he saw and heard to help us understand that Jesus truly is the Son of God.

You might not realize this, but the story of Christmas didn't just begin when the angel came and told Mary that she would have a baby. The story of Christmas actually began at the very beginning of the whole world! Let's check out the Story Lab.

VIDEO: Bible Story (11:12)

It's really cool to think that Jesus' birth was planned from the very beginning. It's like what our bottom line says for today...

VIDEO: Bottom Line
SLIDE: Bottom Line

God always had a plan to send Jesus.

Even before there was anything, God had a plan to send Jesus. When people turned away and broke their relationship with God . . . God's plan was still at work.

There's so much to love about Christmastime, but the best part of all is knowing that God sent Jesus for us.

SLIDE: Virtue
Christmas is about **celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift.**
SLIDE: Theme

Because of Jesus, we can know God personally. We can know what God is like. Not only that, when we follow Jesus, we can be friends with God. Our broken relationship with God is made whole again!

Our Memory Verse for this month is what the angel said to Joseph, who was engaged to be married to Mary, Jesus' mom. Here's what the angel said:

SLIDE: 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, NIV)

I'm so glad to know that **God always had a plan to send Jesus.** Let's pray and thank God for that truth.

God, thank You for helping us see today that You have always been there . . . and You always WILL be there. You always had a plan to send Jesus to this world. Jesus showed us how to live . . . and because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, we can have a relationship with You that will last forever. We know that we can trust You no matter what—and we are so thankful! We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

CHECK THE TIME: There should be 20-25 minutes for small group. If LG is running late, skip the next part.

OFFERING:

We have been raising money for an organization called Hope Mobility. It was founded by Michael Panther who grew up as a child with a disability in Sudan. Check out Michael's story.

VIDEO: Michael's Story

Our focus will be raising money for wheelchairs for kids. Each pediatric wheelchair costs \$275 and we will see how many wheelchairs we can purchase to help kids in Africa!

SLIDE: Theme