



A Christmas Series – Lesson 3

Writer: Chelsea Jacobs
Artwork: Kindred Canvas
Project Supervisor: Robert Quinn
Editor: Sue Vernen

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Leader Outline

Lesson: Spreading Joy

Main text: Luke 2:10-14

Description: When you think of Christmas, you probably think of things like parties, exchanging gifts with your family, and your favorite Christmas movies. But Christmas is about more than that! It's about spreading joy—real joy. There's a reason that it's called good news!

Supplies:

- Enough red paper for everyone to have one piece
- Enough white paper for everyone to have one piece
- Two Santa hats
- The names of Christmas songs written on small slips of paper
- Random subjects written on small slips of paper (examples: pizza, cats, etc.)
- Three or four containers of whipped cream

Game: Crazy Caroling

Small Group Questions:

1. When you think of Christmas, what is the first thing that you think of?
2. Do you think it's easy to get caught up in the season and forget what Christmas is actually about?
3. Have you ever stopped to think about how when Jesus was born, it was so He could one day die for our sins?
4. How does knowing that Jesus was born so you could spend forever with Him make you feel?
5. What are some ways you can spread joy this season?
6. Is there anyone in your life that you want to tell about Jesus? Do you think Christmas is a good time to do that?
7. We said that when Jesus was born, He brought us hope. What's an example of how He's brought you hope in your personal life?

8. Jesus only had to be born because we are sinners. Even though we weren't born yet, God knew we would be born into a world of sin. Does that change the way you think about Christmas?

9. When God looks at you, He doesn't see sin; He sees forgiveness. How should that change the way you live?

10. Is this Christmas going to be different than previous ones because you've learned about this? How so?

Game

Split the group into teams of four (or more, depending on the size of your group). Put the Christmas songs in one Santa hat, the random objects in the other Santa hat. Each team has to draw one slip of paper out of each hat. One will be the name of a Christmas song and the other will be a random subject. The team has to rewrite the Christmas song making it about the subject they drew from the hat.

For example, if they drew “Oh, Christmas Tree” and “Pizza,” they would have to make up a song called “Oh, Pizza Pie” to the tune of “Oh, Christmas Tree. Any time the tree is described, they’d have to describe pizza instead.

Once they’ve come up with a song, they have to sing it for the rest of the group.

Bring out the containers of whipped cream. Let the teams vote to choose a winner and a loser. The winning team gets to pelt the losing team with whipped cream “snowballs.”

Teach

Doesn't it seem silly to sing songs about (*whatever they sang about*)? I have to tell you, though, it was very entertaining, especially the end. Christmas always makes me think of a good snowball fight.

When you think of Christmas, what do you think about? Christmas trees, presents, or Christmas cookies? Family dinners, Christmas movies, or decorating your house?

What if you asked your parents what Christmas looked like for them when they were your age? Probably a little bit different, but not too much. And what if you asked your grandparents? They're teenage Christmases were probably a lot different than yours are.

No matter what era it was, though, I'm sure that something they will associate with Christmas is joy. No matter if there are presents or friends or anything, Christmas always seems to bring a little extra joy with it.

Tonight, let's throw it way back, further than your grandparents or even their grandparents.

Let's throw it back to the very first Christmas ever.

I think sometimes we get a little confused about what Christmas is all about. We make it about lots of things—parties, songs, snowmen, and candy canes—all very fun things. But are those things what it's about? No!

Christmas is about celebrating the news that the Savior of the world was born! Did you notice that Charlie Brown called it good news?

Read Luke 2:10-14:

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." - Luke 2:10-14

Not just good news, but good news that will cause **great joy** for *all* people.

When you think about Christmas, joy should be the first thing that comes to your mind! Great joy to all people. Think about what that means! When Jesus came, He brought great joy to all people. Why? Because when He came, He made a way for our sins to be forgiven and for us to be with Him forever. If that doesn't bring you joy, I don't know what will!

Christmas is the perfect time to spread joy. Think about it—we give gifts, we sing songs, we're nicer to each other—we share joy during the holidays! I think the best way to spread joy is to share the best news ever, the news that is cause for so much joy.

Let's talk about three reasons why the first Christmas came with good news.

1. When Jesus was born, He brought us joy.

The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy. – Psalm 65:8

Have you ever just stopped and looked around you when you were outside? If you haven't, you should. You should especially watch a sunrise or a sunset.

The earth is always full of things that God created that should just bring us to our knees in awe, but especially at the beginning and end of a day. There's this brilliant masterpiece of color called a sunrise or a sunset, and it happens *every single day*. This thing God created illuminates everything else He created, and it is beautiful.

It causes awe and joy to think about that. But here's the thing—we don't only have the shallow joy that comes from seeing something pretty. No, we have the deep joy of having a personal relationship with the one who created it.

It is true joy because, when Jesus was born, He changed things. He changed us from having no hope to having hope, from having no chance at peace to having every chance at peace. He made it so that we can have a personal relationship with Him.

When you look around and see His creation, it's a reminder of that. Not only did the creator of what you see make those beautiful things. He also made you.

And He didn't just stop there. He sacrificed so much so you could be with Him forever.

Next time you see a sunrise, think about that.

2. When Jesus was born, He brought our hope.

Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord. – Psalm 31:24

No matter what comes our way, we can face it with strength and hope. We can have heart and trust that things are going to turn out great in the end. Why? Because of where our hope is.

When Jesus was born, He provided us a way to be with God forever. So if we have accepted Jesus as our savior, we can know that no matter what happens, at the end of our life, we will be with Him. He is our eternal hope. It doesn't get much more joyful than that!

3. When Jesus was born, He brought our forgiveness.

Perhaps the most amazing thing of all that came with the first Christmas is our forgiveness.

“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”
– Isaiah 1:18

The whole reason Jesus was born is because of sin. Humanity had become so overcome with sin, that there was no hope for us to be able to spend eternity in heaven with Him.

And so He came, knowing full well that He would have to sacrifice Himself in order for us to be with Him. Can we just take a second to think about what kind of love that is? He was born so He could die for you. Even though you weren’t alive yet, the world was full of sin, so you had no hope. He came so that He could be that hope for you by being your forgiveness.

Pass out the pieces of paper. Make sure that everyone gets one white and one red.

This is a really powerful verse, so I wanted to give you a visual example.

Look at this red piece of paper. It’s bright and intense. If you tried to write on it with a white pen, it wouldn’t work. Because the red is such a strong color that if you mixed it with white, you’d just get more red.

Now look at that white piece of paper. It’s so clean and pure. Nothing has messed it up.

Now hold them up together. Look how drastic of a difference there is between these colors.

When God looks at you, He should see you as your sin. He should just see red; no white in sight.

But that’s not what He sees.

He sees you as if your sins were as white as snow. How is that possible?

It’s possible because of the very first Christmas.

It’s possible because Jesus was born for you, lived a sinless life for you, and died for you.

So when you think of Christmas, you should think of more than just songs and gifts that fit under the tree. You should think of the greatest gift anyone has ever given you—the gift of forgiveness.

When you're spreading joy this Christmas, think about these things. If you have friends that don't know Jesus, the greatest gift you could possibly give them is telling them about Him, about what He did.

Tell them about the first Christmas, about how significant it is. Explain to them exactly *why* Christmas is such a joyful time by telling them about the joy, hope, and forgiveness Jesus came to give us on that very first Christmas.

Small Group Questions

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Teach – Wrap-Up

Christmas is a really amazing time, and it's usually a really fun time. And there's nothing wrong with that! There's nothing wrong with Christmas trees or gifts or songs—Hey, the angels sang the first ever Christmas song!

It's just important to remember what Christmas is actually about. Not only was Jesus born, but He was born to die.

I'm going to play a song for you guys, and you can read along with the lyrics.

Play this video (or feel free to play another worship song of your choice):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Vw9cn92iTY>

How amazing is that? Think about those words.

*“The first time that you opened your eyes did you realize that you would be my savior?
And the first breath that left your lips did you know that it would change this world
forever?”*

That's what Christmas is about, guys. Jesus was born to be your savior. He was born to save your life. He was born so that He could one day die for your sins and give you the hope of spending eternity in Heaven with Him.

He was born to bring you hope, joy, and forgiveness.

And *that* is what Christmas is all about.