



A Sweet Christmas Story

Key passage: Luke 2: 1-20 & Matthew 1: 18-25 (just for reference)



Aim: To know the Nativity story and all the characters involved.



Learning outcome: to know that Jesus is the Son of God and he came to earth for each one of us. We can choose to follow Jesus and know him in our own lives.

*** This talk is given after the reading has been read first from the Bible earlier in the service or a video clip Christmas song/story has been shown**

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Setting the scene in context:

This is the nativity story. Taken from Matthew chapter 1v17-ch2 v12. It is the account of how Jesus was born. Jesus is the Son of God and yet came into the world in a very lowly, unceremonious way.

We would imagine a king to be born with much wealth and comfort but Jesus' birth was in a dirty, dusty, smelly stable surrounded by animals. What a contrast to the expectations of the world around us, in both Jesus' day and in our own today.

God's son came to earth as a baby, a baby who is helpless and depends on others.

Jesus knew what it is like to be like us, he was born human but he was also born of God and so was divine as well.

Jesus came to show God's kingdom on earth.

Resources required:

A Christmas stocking, to fill with the chocolate

A table to place the chocolate on

Bars of chocolate (15)

Kinder Surprise

Snickers

Breakaway

Animals

Starburst

Timeout

Revels

Smarties

Milkyway

Twirl

Twix

Wispa Gold or Gold Bar

Flyte

Bounty

Mars

Candy canes with labels attached to give away at the end of the service

FAMILY SERVICE TALK

Does anyone know what this is? Hold up a Christmas stocking.

Why do you think I have one of these today?

Yes that's right it's getting very close to Christmas and we think about putting one of these up in our houses. Who has a Christmas stocking?

This stocking is full of something. Can you tell what it is full of?

Well this Christmas stocking is full of things that are going to help us tell the real meaning of Christmas, which is the actual Christmas story.

It's full of sweets! Yes sweets are going to help us tell the story. So you need to listen carefully.

Let's see what we have. **(Take out the sweets and say what they are and place them on the table)**

There are lots of different bars of chocolate, but how are these going to help us know the Christmas story?

(Lift up each bar in turn again and shout out the name).

I am going to read the Christmas story and you have to shout out the bar of chocolate that fits the missing word and then you will win that bar of chocolate.

For example ' I think I'm pretty clever or a real "SMARTIE" **(lift up the smarties)**

Let's get started.

A long time ago a young girl called Mary had a visit from an Angel telling her that she would be the mother of God's Son. She was going to have a baby! But how could this be? She was more than **KINDER SURPRISED**.

She wasn't even married to Joseph yet. To have a baby now would cause lots of **SNICKERS** in the village. Joseph also heard of God's plan, but before the baby arrived both Mary and Joseph had to return to Bethlehem to be counted for the census - it was a long journey for the pregnant Mary but Joseph thought the **BREAKAWAY** would be good.

When they arrived, Joseph tried to find a place to stay, but everywhere was full up. No rooms, they all said. Finally an innkeeper let them stay in his stable. It was there that the baby was born. He was named Jesus, which means Saviour. He was laid in a manger, lined with straw, surrounded by **ANIMALS**.

That night, some shepherds heard Angels singing "Glory to God in the highest" and they were told to take some **TIMEOUT**, to go on a wee break and go to Bethlehem to see the new born child.

When they got there, they found Mary and Joseph and the baby Jesus, who was lying in the manger. It wasn't really a nice place - smelly and dirty. Not really fit for a baby to be born. When the Shepherds saw the baby Jesus, they were overcome with joy and excitement and **REVELLED** in the wonder of it all. Could this be just as the prophets had foretold? God's own son. The shepherds returned to the hills praising God as they went.

FAMILY SERVICE TALK

Meanwhile, in a far away country to the East, there were some very wise men. They were pretty clever; in fact they were real **SMARTIES**. They were busy looking up at the sky, scanning the **MILKYWAY** when they saw a **STARBURST** through. Was it one of the planets, **MARS**? No it was a special star as a sign of the birth of a king.

They followed the star until they reached King Herod's palace. Herod was very interested to hear about the birth of a special king. He told the wise men to find the king and then come back and tell him. The wise men turned around quickly. They **TWIRLed** around and followed the star until they found Jesus and offered their **BOUNTY** and their gifts of frankincense, Myrrh and **WISPA GOLD**. God then warned them in a dream that Herod was up to his old **TWIX** again. So they fled and took **FLYTE** to return home by another way.

Now that's the familiar story - told at Christmas. It has little to do with reindeer, tinsel, santa or snow.

The true story is not as nice. Jesus was born a refugee. His parents had to flee Bethlehem and take him to another country, to Egypt.

Some people see His birth as a threat, like King Herod, while others see that Jesus' birth had special meaning, like the Shepherds and Wisemen. Jesus was born so that all people would know that God's Son is Jesus.

Christmas is a time for celebrating; it's a time to remember how God sent his son as a baby into our world to show us God's true love and invite us to know him for ourselves.

Many people this Christmas will be looking for some meaning or something extra in their life in these difficult times. The Christmas story really is "good news for all people."

FAMILY SERVICE TALK

TAKE AWAY - REFLECT & PRAY

We want to think about what we have just heard and take time to think through what this message has to say to us.

Has our Christmas just become a story we hear once a year or does it make a difference in our own lives?

Do we know Jesus?

Let's take some time now.

We are going to hand out candy canes to everyone. We don't want you to eat them but to look at the attached label and read what it says. ***(Let everyone have time to read the label, then read out the label slowly)***

It reminds us of Jesus and what he has done for us. Coming to earth as a baby, growing up, healing and teaching and dying on the cross for our sins.

Jesus is here for us today and he is the "good news for all people."

Can we pray together? Let's pray.

Hold the candy cane in your hand and close your eyes.

Thank you Lord Jesus for coming into our world.

Thank you that you were born as a baby and knew what it was like to grow up in our world.

Thank you for being willing to die for our sins.

Help us remember that you are a gift to the world. The best present we could ever hope for.

Help us to learn to trust you in our lives, to invite you into our lives and to live our lives for you.

Amen

YEAR 1
UNIT 4: CELEBRATING JESUS
FAMILY SERVICE



Connecting God's Big Picture

CANDY CANES

look at the *candy cane*,
what do you see?
stripes that are *red*
like the *blood* shed for me
white for my *Savior*
Who's sinless and *pure*!
"J" is for *Jesus*,
my Lord, that's for sure!
turn it around
and a *staff* you will see
Jesus my *shepherd*
is coming for me!
author unknown

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