

LESSON 3 JOY

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is Our Joy

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 35; Luke 2

GOD'S BIG STORY: After many years of waiting, a Savior is born. His name is Jesus, and He brings joy to the world!

WORD OF WONDER: Faith is being sure of what we hope for and sure of what we do not see.
—from Hebrews 11:1

Activity: Joy Gift

Activity: Celebration

Worship

God's Big Story

Word of Wonder

Prayer and Blessing

Activity: Find Baby Jesus

Wonder@Home™

Designed for families to engage in the wonder of God together at home. This resource includes a video, worship playlists, activities, and more!

Activity: Joy Gift

SUPPLIES: empty cardboard box, wrapping paper (prep only), scissors (prep only), tape (prep only), baby blanket, party horn or hat, gift bag (optional)

Ahead of time, wrap a big box with wrapping paper (or use a big gift bag). Put a baby blanket and a party horn or hat inside the box.

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

Hello! Welcome to church! Come see what we have today! Show kids the wrapped box or gift bag.

We have a present today! Do you like presents? Allow the kids to respond. **I wonder what it is.**

Shake the present. **Let's lift it to see how heavy it is.** Let kids lift the present. **Let's shake it.** Let kids shake the present. **I love presents. Do presents—or gifts—make you happy?** Allow kids to respond.

The present I have today will help us think about today's story. I think we should open it! Let kids help open the present. Let the kids help take out the baby blanket and party supplies.

This is an interesting present. Today, we're going to hear a story from the Bible that has to do with these things ... a baby blanket and a party horn (or hat). What does that have to do with the Bible? We'll learn that God gave a present to the world. A baby was born and brought great joy!

Activity: Celebration

SUPPLIES: party supplies (such as party hats, party horns or blowers, balloons, ribbons or streamers, etc.)

In God's big story today, we'll learn about when God sent baby Jesus to the world. We'll learn that Jesus brings great joy! Joy means we can have so much happiness in our hearts and that we can cheer and celebrate! We'll have our own celebration to show joy.

Pass out the party supplies and let the kids use them to celebrate, cheer, and jump. Tell them the party supplies remind us we can have joy and celebrate Jesus. You can make it a game by saying "joy" and inviting them to celebrate, and then "Freeze" and tell them to be still.

We'll learn today that because of Jesus, we can have joy. Joy is deep gladness—or happiness—because of Jesus! Joy is something no one can take away because God loves us always. Joy comes from God and lasts forever!

Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS IS OUR JOY.**

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

JESUS—Pretend to rock a baby.

IS OUR JOY—Hands up above your head (party hands).

Worship

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: songs from the [Waiting for Jesus Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#)

Today we'll hear that Jesus' birth was good news of great joy for all people! Jesus brought joy to His people long ago, and He brings us joy today. Let's worship Him! Play songs from the [Waiting for Jesus Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#) and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible, baby doll (male, if possible)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Joy God's Big Story Video](#), Bible Story Picture (optional)

Our God's big story today is a great story from the Bible about when Jesus was born! Encourage the kids to say, "Jesus." **Let's find out from the Bible what happened!**

Show the kids the God's Big Story Video, read the story from the Bible, or use the script provided. You can also print the Bible Story Picture to give the kids a visual depiction as you tell the story.

Many years before Jesus was born, God's people were sad and worried because they needed to be close to God and be forgiven for things they said and did that were wrong. That is sin. Can you give a thumbs-down? Encourage the kids to give a thumbs-down.

God told a man named Isaiah an amazing promise to share with people. He said that one day, God would send a Savior to fix everything that sin messed up and let us be close to God again! Can you clap and cheer? Encourage the kids to clap and cheer. **So the people waited.**

God was talking about Jesus! Jesus was born 700 years later. A man named Joseph and a woman named Mary were Jesus' parents on earth. When it was time for Jesus to be born, his mom, Mary had the baby and put him in a manger—that's a feeding bin for animals. Let's all rock the baby and remember when baby Jesus was born. Hold up the baby doll and rock it, then pass it around and let all the kids take turns rocking the baby.

After Jesus was born, God sent an angel to tell a group of shepherds the good news. Shepherds are people who take care of sheep. Can you say, "bahhhh"? Encourage the kids to say, "bahhhh." **Then a whole bunch of angels came, and they all praised God. The shepherds were so excited to hear the good news about Jesus that they rushed off to go see the baby! Let's all rock the baby again.** Encourage the kids to rock the baby doll.

The shepherds were filled with excitement and joy. We can have joy because of Jesus too! Jesus came to bring true joy that lasts forever. Jesus is our joy!

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Word of Wonder Slide or [Video](#) (optional)

WORD OF WONDER

Faith is being sure of what we hope for and sure of what we do not see.

—from Hebrews 11:1

Ahead of time, display the Word of Wonder Slide or [Video](#), if using. **Our Word of Wonder for the Waiting for Jesus series is from Hebrews 11:1. Let's practice saying the Word of Wonder together.**

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **FAITH**—Make prayer hands.
- **IS BEING SURE**—Make a fist with one hand and put it down on your other hand (open palm).
- **OF WHAT WE HOPE FOR**—Put your fist down onto your open palm once for each word (what, hope).
- **AND SURE**—Hands on your hips.
- **OF WHAT WE DO NOT**—Hold one finger up and shake it back and forth (“No, No”).
- **SEE.**—Put your hands by your eyes like binoculars.
- **FROM HEBREWS 11:1**—Hands open like a book.

Prayer and Blessing

Let’s pray and talk to God. When I say, “joy” you can clap your hands. God, we thank You for the gift of **joy** (clap). When we are scared or worried, thank You for loving us and reminding us that You’re with us, and we can always have **joy** (clap) because of Jesus! We love You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: God kept His promises to His people and brought them joy through Jesus. God will keep His promises to you too because He knows you, loves you, and leads you. Rejoice this week because Jesus is our joy!

Activity: Find Baby Jesus

SUPPLIES: toy nativity set

Set out a toy nativity set and hide the baby Jesus somewhere in the room when the kids aren’t looking. Let the kids play with the nativity set.

Ask kids questions or give prompts to help them find the baby Jesus. Let the kids go to each of the following locations to see if baby Jesus is there. Say things like ...

But baby Jesus is missing. Can you find baby Jesus ...

- By the window?
- By the door?
- Behind the trash can?
- On the table?
- In the toys?

When they find the baby, tell them to say, “Jesus is our joy!” **The shepherds came looking for Jesus after the angel told them the good news, kind of like we looked for Him. They were so excited and filled with joy. We can have joy because of Jesus too!**

Using the toy nativity set, go through the people and animals in the set and retell the story to kids. Let kids help set up the nativity scene as you share.