

07 THE SON HAS COME

LEADER GUIDE



A SON WAS BORN FOR YOU

**“A CHILD WILL BE BORN FOR US, A SON WILL BE GIVEN TO US.”
(ISAIAH 9:6)**

A Son will be given—a gift, a present. Isaiah lived in days shadowed by gloom, but God granted a flicker of hope, a ray of light. A Son would be given, a descendant of King David would come, an eternal kingdom would be established—one marked by justice and righteousness.

Yet God’s people were shrouded in gloom for their lack of justice and righteousness. Their idolatry, their sin, brought God’s judgment and exile to the nations. They were meant to be a light to the nations; instead, they were nearly snuffed out. Still, a flicker of hope, a ray of light—a Child would be born. Through many dark days and years of God’s silence, the flicker remained until the Son at last was given.

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). God presents His gift, the Son. And this Son answers the question, He solves the problem of their gloom: He will save His people from their sins. Their lack of justice and righteousness will be made up in His fullness. Their idolatry and sin will be done away with in His sacrifice. The flicker rages; the ray bursts forth; the Light has come to His people—and more.

“But the angel said to them, ‘Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord’” (Luke 2:10-11).

The present, the gift, is for all the people. The Savior from sins is for all the people; the Messiah-King is for all the people. Repent of your sin and believe in Jesus, who died for sins and rose from the dead that you may have life. “See, now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation!” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

CONTENTS

What Bible Study Leaders Can Learn from Flight Attendants	6
The Gospel Project Scope and Sequence	8
How to Use the Leader Guide	12
The Son Has Come	16
The Doctrine of the Incarnation	30
Of Demons and the Devil	94
The Real Mary	118
Why We Can Trust the Resurrection	160
The Discipline of Humble Faith	162

UNIT 19: THE ARRIVAL

SUGGESTED FOR
THE WEEK OF

	Memory Verses	19
March 8	Session 1 The Birth (Luke 2)	20
March 15	Session 2 The Dedication (Luke 2)	32
March 22	Session 3 The Visit (Matthew 2)	42
March 29	Session 4 The Temple (Luke 2)	52

UNIT 20: THE PREPARATION

	Memory Verses	63
April 5	Session 1 John Prepared the Way (Matthew 3)	64
April 12	Session 2 Jesus Was Baptized (Matthew 3)	74
April 19	Session 3 Jesus Was Tempted (Luke 4)	84
April 26	Session 4 Jesus Called Followers (John 1)	96

UNIT 21: THE MINISTRY

	Memory Verses	107
May 3	Session 1 Water to Wine (John 2)	108
May 10	Session 2 Worship to Zeal (John 2)	120
May 17	Session 3 Birth to Rebirth (John 3)	130
May 24	Session 4 Heaven to Earth (John 3)	140
May 31	Session 5 Water to Living Water (John 4)	150

THE EDITOR

When Covid came and shut down societies, the world changed in many drastic ways. Society learned to work remotely, online ordering dramatically increased, worship services were livestreamed, and even taking communion was revolutionized.

And if we thought 2020 was a year that changed the world, how much more was the year Jesus came onto the scene? Though only a few knew at the time, Jesus entered the world fulfilling prophecies of old, and He came ushering in a new kingdom—one of peace, forgiveness, and salvation to those who believed.

The Messiah, the Anointed One, God Himself in human flesh, had come, not to set up a throne here on earth but to set Himself on the throne of our hearts. Humbly He was born and grew in wisdom. He was baptized, tempted, and began His ministry in a way like no other.

He brought forth a new kingdom, talked about a new birth, and commanded a new way of living. And when He called, people followed. And early on, He spoke of His crucifixion, but no one understood at the time. He was on a mission with the purpose of saving humanity through His own sacrifice.

Jesus, thus, is our everything. He is our Savior and Lord. And through Him, we are gifted life evermore. Without Jesus, we are in darkness. But because of Jesus, we are forever in the light. Because of God's love for us, He sent Jesus. And the world and our lives are forever changed.

Y Bonesteele

Team Leader

The Gospel Project for Adults



Scan this QR code to **PROVIDE FEEDBACK** of your experience with The Gospel Project for Adults materials.

The Gospel Project®

Adult Leader Guide
Spring 2026
Volume 2, Number 3

Y Bonesteele
Team Leader

Daniel Davis
Content Editor

Rachel Myrick
Content and Production Editor

Darin Clark
Design Team Leader

Chad Hunter
Graphic Designer

T. J. Norris
Contributing Illustrator

Dwayne McCrary
Manager, Adult Ongoing Bible Studies

John Paul Basham
Director, Adult Ministry

Send questions/comments by email to TGP.adults@Lifeway.com or mail to Team Leader, The Gospel Project: Adult Leader Guide, 200 Powell Place, Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027-7707.

Printed in the United States of America

The Gospel Project®: Adult Leader Guide (ISSN 2163-0917; Item 005438061) is published quarterly by Lifeway Christian Resources, 200 Powell Place, Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027-7707. © 2025 Lifeway Christian Resources.

No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher.

For ordering or inquiries including Autoship, visit Lifeway.com, call 1.800.458.2772, write Lifeway Resources Customer Service, 200 Powell Place, Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027-7707, or fax 615.251.5933. For address changes, email subscribe@Lifeway.com. For bulk shipments mailed quarterly to one address, visit Lifeway.com/Autoship, email orderentry@Lifeway.com, or write to the above address.

We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. To review Lifeway's doctrinal guideline, please visit www.lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

THE WRITERS

PERSONAL PREPARATION

Mike Brooks

(Unit 20, Sessions 1-4)

Mike serves as associate pastor at Hope Fellowship Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mike is interested in all things New England and holds a PhD in Historical Theology from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Mike and his wife, Paige, reside in the Boston area.

Daniel Ritchie

(Unit 19, Sessions 1-4)

Daniel is an evangelist, speaker, and author from Raleigh, North Carolina. He's written two books: *My Affliction for His Glory* and *Endure*. He has spoken both nationally and internationally for churches, schools, colleges, seminaries, corporations, and professional sports teams.

David Roach

(Unit 21, Sessions 1-5)

David is pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Saraland, Alabama. He and his wife, Erin, have three children.

GROUP EXPERIENCE

Emily Dean

(Unit 20, Sessions 1-4)

Emily serves as Assistant Professor of Ministry to Women at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. She is the author of *Women Leading Well: Stewarding the Gift of Ministry Leadership* by B&H Academic.

Leslie Hudson

(Unit 19, Sessions 1-4)

Leslie worships with her family at First Baptist in Dickson, Tennessee. She teaches high school youth Sunday School, plays in the praise band, and is active in women's ministry. She's studying the Minor Prophets in her quiet time this year, and she's loving the challenge.

Kima Jude

(Unit 21, Sessions 1-5)

Kima is a member of The Oaks Baptist Church in Grand Prairie, Texas, where her husband serves as pastor and she leads the women's ministry. She is a mother, grandmother, dog owner, lifelong student of the Bible, occasional hiker, and avid reader.

WHAT BIBLE STUDY LEADERS CAN LEARN FROM FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

By G. Dwayne McCrary



“May I have your attention please?”

I would guess the job of a flight attendant feels thankless at times. People board the plane expecting to be greeted and acknowledged. We aren’t concerned about the flight attendants because we’re focused on our travel plans and schedules. We expect them to hear our requests for coffee and deliver it exactly as we asked. We complain about things beyond their control, like flight delays and full planes.

Flight attendants, however, serve a vital role in our travel experience. I even contend that if we take time to observe them as they work, there is much we can learn. Let’s consider some of the actions of flight attendants that parallel what we do as Bible study leaders. At least four similarities can be drawn to help us lead our groups.

PASSENGERS BOARD WITH OTHER THINGS ON THEIR MIND

When people board a plane, the last thing on their mind is how they will interact with the flight attendants. Passengers may be consumed with how their baggage will fit in the overhead compartment, how long the flight will be, or the notes they need to review in preparation for a meeting. Flight attendants must get the attention of their passengers to give directions about seat belts, inflating flotation vests, and locating the exits.

When people arrive for our Bible study groups, Bible study might be the last thing on their mind. Issues at work or in their families, events in the news, or the person who got their usual parking spot may be occupying their thoughts. Just like

flight attendants, we need to direct their attention to the lesson. As individuals arrive, we can pose a question or invite them to participate in an activity to help them focus on the study.



Every person deserves to be heard,
moved forward in their understanding of God's truth,
and challenged to grow in their faith.

NOT EVERY PASSENGER HAS FLOWN BEFORE

For some passengers, this may be their first flight. They don't know where the seat numbers are located, that they need to face the wheels out when placing their bags in the overhead bins, or how to adjust the air vent. Some things can be figured out by watching others, but not everything. Sometimes the flight attendant needs to point out the button that reclines the seat or must explain the purpose of the bag in the seat pouch.

In much the same way, some who attend our groups have never been in a Bible study before. Even if they have been in a group at a different church, how our church and groups work may be vastly different. We can help these individuals by providing them with a Personal Study Guide and directing them to the first page of that week's session. We also can introduce them to others in the group who can walk with them for the day.

PASSENGERS EXPECT TO BE TREATED FAIRLY

If one passenger on our row gets extra snacks, we expect extra snacks too! Regular flyers don't wear badges or tags that reveal the airfare they paid or how often they fly, so the flight attendant must treat everyone like a frequent flyer or as if they paid a premium price to be there.

The people in our Bible study groups should be treated fairly as well. We value each person in the room regardless of their attendance pattern, position in the church or community, or stage of spiritual maturity. Every person deserves to be heard, moved forward in their understanding of God's truth, and challenged to grow in their faith.

PASSENGERS WILL TRAVEL WITH YOU AGAIN BASED IN PART ON HOW YOU INTERACT WITH THEM

Travelers likely will not have an opportunity to visit with the pilot, the person guiding the plane to the gate, or the baggage handlers. Their only guaranteed interactions are with the person checking tickets and the flight attendants. Therefore, travelers will equate the flight attendants with the rest of the company and decide whether to use that carrier again based on that interaction alone.

Individuals who attend our groups may not visit with the pastor or other church leaders every week. Those attending for the first time or giving our church one more try will base their decision to return in part on how we interact with them. We have the privilege of representing the values of our churches and our Savior to the people who attend our groups, giving them a reason to return.

The next time you fly, thank the flight attendants for giving you an example of how to lead a Bible study group. We can use these lessons to be better Bible study leaders.

G. Dwayne McCrary is the manager of the adult ongoing Bible study team at Lifeway and a frequent flyer. His newest book, *Marked by Prayer*, can be found at Lifeway.com.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

The Gospel Project for Adults aspires to point to the gospel of Jesus Christ through weekly group Bible studies and additional resources that show how God's plan of redemption unfolds throughout all of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. This curriculum provides theological yet practical studies that immerse your group in the **STORY** of the gospel, helping to develop a gospel **CULTURE** that leads to gospel **MISSION**.

GOSPEL STORY

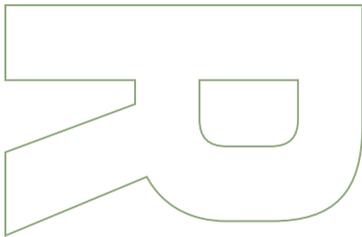
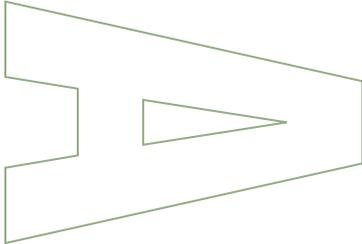
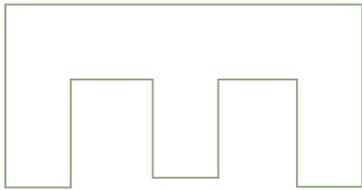
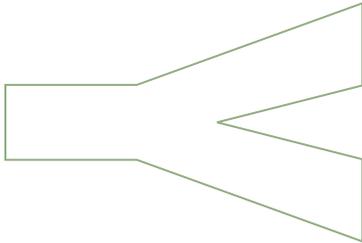
Our aim is to help people see the storyline of Scripture, the thread from the beginning to end, that weaves God's plan to rescue and redeem His creation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL CULTURE

Our hope is that the message of the gospel saturates our understanding of Christ, increasing our joy in Him, helping doubters become believers who become declarers of the gospel.

GOSPEL MISSION

Our desire is to empower believers to live on mission, declaring the good news of the gospel in word and deed for God's glory and the growth of His kingdom.



VOL 01:
CREATION AND COVENANT

(Genesis; Job)

Fall 2024

Unit 01: Foundations

Unit 02: God's Promises

Unit 03: Struggles of Faith

VOL 02:
LAW AND LIFE

(Exodus–Deuteronomy)

Winter 2024–25

Unit 04: God's Miraculous Work

Unit 05: God's Character

Unit 06: Humanity's Selfishness

VOL 03:
LAND AND LOSS

(Joshua–1 Samuel)

Spring 2025

Unit 07: God Is for His People

Unit 08: God Delivers His People

Unit 09: God Cares for His People

VOL 04:
FOOLISHNESS AND WISDOM

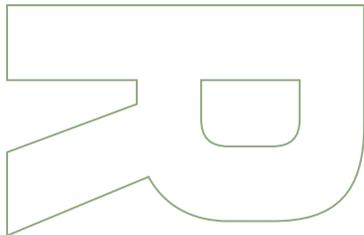
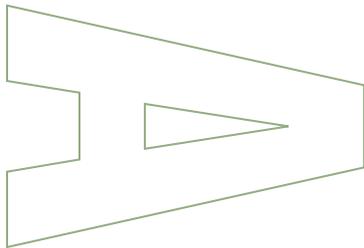
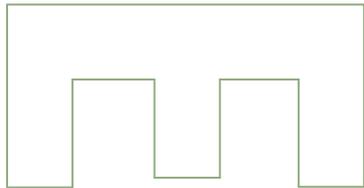
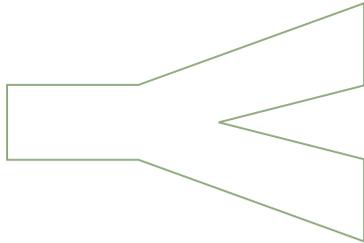
(1 Samuel–1 Kings; Wisdom Literature)

Summer 2025

Unit 10: The Foolishness of God's People

Unit 11: Everything Belongs to the Lord

Unit 12: The Need for Wisdom



VOL 05:
DIVISION AND DEFIANCE

(1 Kings–2 Chronicles; The Prophets)

Fall 2025

Unit 13: Divisions

Unit 14: Renewal

Unit 15: Decline

VOL 06:
PROPHETS AND PROVISION

(The Prophets; Ezra–Esther)

Winter 2025–26

Unit 16: God in the Exile

Unit 17: God in the Restoration

Unit 18: God in the Return

VOL 07:
THE SON HAS COME

(The Gospels)

Spring 2026

Unit 19: The Arrival

Unit 20: The Preparation

Unit 21: The Ministry

VOL 08:
THE SON HAS AUTHORITY

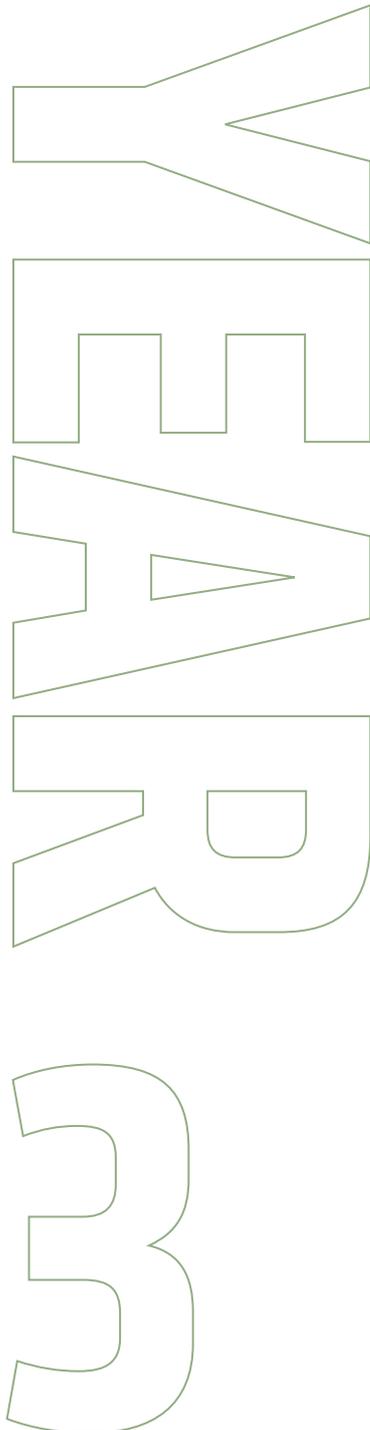
(The Gospels)

Summer 2026

Unit 22: Responses to Jesus

Unit 23: The Way of Jesus

Unit 24: The Teachings of Jesus



VOL 09:
THE SON HAS TRUTH

(The Gospels)

Fall 2026

Unit 25: The Truth of His Power

Unit 26: The Truth of His Actions

Unit 27: The Truth of His Kingdom

VOL 10:
THE SON HAS RISEN

(The Gospels; Acts)

Winter 2026–27

Unit 28: The Final Days

Unit 29: Post-Resurrection

Unit 30: The Gospel Spreads

VOL 11:
THE CHURCH HAS A MISSION

(Acts; The Epistles)

Spring 2027

Unit 31: Sharing Truths of the Mission

Unit 32: Living Out the Mission

Unit 33: Christ Focuses Our Mission

VOL 12:
THE CHURCH HAS A FUTURE

(The Epistles; Revelation)

Summer 2027

Unit 34: We Are in Christ

Unit 35: We Are Citizens of Heaven

Unit 36: Jesus

HOW TO USE THE LEADER GUIDE

The Leader Guide is an important tool in your personal and group experience with The Gospel Project for Adults. Here's how to make the most of your time with it:

1) READ THE WORD DAILY

Begin each week by reading the Scriptures according to the Daily Readings. These Bible readings will help you mentally and spiritually prepare for the group experience each week while also building healthy Bible study habits for personal growth. The daily readings will help you understand the context of the Bible story for each week's session and fill in the gaps between sessions. The weekly psalm reading will help you think worshipfully and prayerfully about the story's place in the greater redemptive narrative of the Bible. And the timeline will give you a visual perspective so you can place the Bible story in the larger context of the Bible's storyline.



- **Daily Readings**
- **Chronological Timeline**



TIMELINE

Malachi Prophesies the Messenger to Prepare the Way for the Lord (Malachi 3:1-4)

The Angel Foretells the Birth of John the Baptist to Prepare the Way for the Messiah (Luke 1:5-25)

SESSION STUDY: Jesus Is Born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-20)

The Intertestamental Period (400 Years of God's Silence)

The Angel Foretells the Birth of Jesus, the Son of God (Luke 1:26-56)

Mary and Joseph Take Baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem (Luke 2:21-39)

Daily Readings

<input type="checkbox"/> Day 1: Matthew 1:1-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 4: Luke 2:8-14
<input type="checkbox"/> Day 2: Matthew 1:18-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 5: Luke 2:15-20
<input type="checkbox"/> Day 3: Luke 2:1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Day 6: Psalm 132



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

21

2) STUDY FOR PERSONAL PREPARATION

The Personal Preparation section contains the Scripture passages that will guide you and your group to prepare for Bible study during the week before group time begins. A Bible study prompt will help you engage with the Scripture passage, but encourage your group to do more than what's asked in the prompt. Space is provided for you and your group to add notes and questions and markings that will help you study the passage more deeply and see any nuances about the words and phrases of the Scripture provided. In addition to a brief commentary with thought-provoking questions to help you and your group dig deeper into the text, leader notes will provide you with additional nuggets for understanding the Scriptures. Use this Personal Preparation to experience what your group is experiencing as they study the week prior. Consider what questions, thoughts, or challenges they might have while engaging with the Scripture passages.

• Scripture • Commentary • Questions

PERSONAL PREPARATION

**FROM THE LINE OF DAVID, AS PROPHESIED,
A SAVIOR WAS BORN (LUKE 2:4-12)**

Circle the locations mentioned in the passage.

4 Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, 5 to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. 6 While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7 Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. 8 In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: 11 Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger."

A Roman census caused Joseph and Mary to travel far away from home as Mary was late into her miraculous pregnancy (vv. 1-3). Likely the rush of people coming into Bethlehem for that same census put the couple in a bind for a place to spend the night. The best place available to them as Mary gave birth was where animals were kept. The Child who would be called Immanuel, truly "God with us" (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22-23), was born in the most humble place imaginable. The promised King from the line of David was not placed in a cradle in a palace but in a manger.

What can we see about the character of Jesus from His birth in a lowly stable?

Key Concept: The good news is meant to be shared.

LEADER NOTE: The humility seen in the birth of Christ points to the servant character of Jesus, which is reflected in the good news. Jesus "did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). Jesus would lay down His life to die on the cross so that all who would believe in Him would be forgiven of their sins and receive eternal life with Him (John 3:16).

Continuing the humble circumstances of Jesus's birth, the good news of His arrival was shared first with a lowly class of people. Shepherds were not viewed in a positive light in ancient Israel, yet some shepherds in the fields were the first to hear about the birth of Jesus, and that from an angel sent by the Lord.

What the angel said to the shepherds clues us in to the purpose of God in sending His Son to earth in this humble fashion. The news of the Messiah-King is "good news of great joy that will be for all the people" (Luke 2:10). The Messiah did not come to save just the regal and powerful, nor did He come just to save the people of Israel. Rather, He came into this world to lowly parents in a lowly stable and visited by lowly shepherds to save all people—whether Jew or Gentile—who recognize their lowly status as sinners in need of a Savior. And the angel confirmed his words with a specific sign highlighting the Messiah's humility: the shepherds would find the Savior lying in a manger.

LEADER NOTE: Jesus did not need to be born in a palace to prove He is the King of kings. In fact, from the Old Testament, we see a strong connection between God's king and the act of shepherding. David was a shepherd as a boy (1 Sam. 16:11-13). The promised Messiah-King would also be a shepherd at heart. He would perfectly follow the example of the Lord, the Shepherd of His people (see Ezek. 34:11-16; Mic. 2:12-13).

How would you have reacted to the angel's message if you were one of the shepherds?

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

GOD THE SON: Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin.

VOICES FROM THE CHURCH

"As the adopted son and heir of Julius Caesar, who had been declared divine by the Roman senate, Augustus claimed to be the son of a god. He was worshipped and hailed as the bringer of peace to the empire. But while Augustus was being flattered, the true Son of God and bringer of peace was being born in poverty in a simple peasant home that was not his own."
—Takatamjen

22 Unit 19 | Session 1 | The Birth23

3) DIRECT THE GROUP EXPERIENCE

The Group Experience for each session includes an activity and interactive questions designed to be used in the group context to engage your group in active learning. The personal prep you and your group put into the days leading up to your group time will provide a richer discussion and more thoughtful theological applications to mutually encourage each other during your group time. The first page of the Group Experience will help you engage your group members as they arrive. Dialogue suggestions describe the context, transitions, and a recap of Bible readings or previous sessions to remind your group of what has already been studied or give a framework for where the lesson is heading. The second page gives a visual representation of the activity from the Personal Study Guide. A teaching outline helps guide your members through the activity and the debrief discussion.

Key Concept: The good news is meant to be shared.

GROUP ACTIVITY

DIAGRAM: Direct your group to page 22 in their Personal Study Guide (PSG), where they will find a diagram titled "Delivering the News." Recreate this Venn diagram on a board in your room so you can record the group's findings as they interact with the Scripture text.

Delivering the News
Read Luke 2:4-20. List similarities and differences in the delivery of the message of Jesus by the angels, the shepherds, and by Luke himself.

READ: Invite a volunteer to read Luke 2:4-20 aloud.

OBSERVE: Instruct the group to find the name "David" in Luke 2:4-12 and count how many times it appears. (three) Ask: "What would the significance of David be to the Jews at this time? What might David's name have meant to the shepherds?" Briefly review God's promise to David (2 Sam. 7:8-16) and David's identity as a shepherd of sheep and God's people (1 Sam. 16:11-13; Ezek. 34:20-24).

DISCUSS: Guide the group to consider the details of the angels' message proclaimed to the shepherds. To facilitate that, ask: "According to verse 10, what was the point of the message the angel delivered? What details in the angelic chorus's message support the first angel's point in verse 10?"

OBSERVE: Invite group members to call out ways the shepherds responded to the good news in Luke 2:15-20. Ask: "How did the response of the shepherds reveal their faith and joy?"

Notes

27



- Group Activity
- Interactive Questions
- Theological Applications

4) TAKE THE NEXT STEPS

After the recap of the activity, help your group take the next steps with the day's Scripture lesson by walking them through the Head, Heart, and Hands applications. Invite volunteers to share and discuss answers to the questions for their mutual benefit. Then take prayer requests and praises as you wrap up your group time. Space is provided to jot those down in your guide for prayer during the following week. And finally, guide your group to read and pray through the designated psalm, focusing your thoughts and words once more upon God's Word as you conclude the session.

Key Concept: The good news is meant to be shared.

How can we love others, both inside and outside the church, who seem lowly by worldly standards?

HANDS: Receiving the good news of Jesus should prompt two things in the heart of the church: worship and mission. Responding to the mercy of God is seen as giving God our whole lives as a form of worship (Rom. 12:1). Every day of the week, God deserves our worship for sending Jesus as our Savior. And every day of the week, people we encounter need to hear the same good news of Jesus, the only means by which we are saved (Rom. 10:9-13).

How will you share the good news of Jesus with someone this week?

NEXT STEPS

Challenge the group to consider these actions as responses to this session.

- Take time to read through Luke 2:4-20 every day this week and ask the Holy Spirit to give you passion and joy to share the message of Jesus.
- Consider what your responses to the gospel this week, both private (worship) and public (ministering, evangelism), reveal about your faith.
- Pray for the people in your life who do not have a saving relationship with Jesus. Open your heart and hands to revealing to them His love, mercy and grace in the gospel.

Invite volunteers to share prayer needs for this week. Encourage them to record these in the space on page 23 in their PSG so they can pray for others throughout the week.

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

CLOSE: Pray through Psalm 132 with your group, focusing on verses 10-12. Praise the Lord for the gift of salvation we receive through faith in Jesus.

References
1. "Tussocks," "Luka," in South Asia Bible Commentary, gen. ed. Brian Winkler (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 124-25.

29



- Application Questions
- Scripture-Based Prayer
- Prayer Requests

THE SON HAS COME

By Leslie Hudson



Did you ever play “Opposite Day” when you were a kid? We did. Growing up, the children of my elementary school declared Wednesdays to be Opposite Day. I would tell my best friend her shirt was blue when it was really green; we’d tell each other we loved the milk in the cafeteria when we’d rather have anything else to drink; and we’d say we wanted to be the chalkboard washer when we really wanted to be the line leader. Those were “crazy” days.

But it was easy to get messed up on Opposite Day. Some people wouldn’t play along, which made it confusing. And sometimes there wasn’t an opposite for what was going on. So Opposite Day fizzled out within a school year, never to be observed again. (Until my kids started playing Opposite Day. The rules haven’t changed much.)

If you never played Opposite Day, what if I told you there exists an entire world that is basically the opposite of the world we know here? I’m serious. It’s a world where the humble are honored, the children lead, and the simplest knowledge is the most profound. In it, the weak are made strong, the poor are rich, and the blind and lame will guide those who think they know it all. What’s the name of this world? The kingdom of God.

God’s kingdom is just what it sounds like—it’s the place where God is King. But because He makes the rules, and everyone obeys them there, His kingdom seems a bit like Opposite Day for those of us who have lived all our years on planet Earth. The King of this kingdom is God Himself, omnipotent, holy, and without rival in power or authority. When God decided the time had come to send His representative—His Son—into our oh-so-normal world to reveal His kingdom, He did it in a way

nobody could have ever dreamed. He sent His only begotten Son into our sin-wrecked world as a human baby.

THE SON

The son of a king should come with adoration, honor, and glory. But Jesus came dismissively, born to two poor people, whom everyone believed had failed morally. But the heavens weren’t fooled

When God decided the time had come to send His representative—His Son—into our oh-so-normal world to reveal His kingdom, He did it in a way nobody could have ever dreamed. He sent His only begotten Son into our sin-wrecked world as a human baby.

Jesus had not come to play along with the status quo that had been established and sustained by the Pharisees and Sadducees. He had come to reveal the kingdom of God.

by Jesus's arrival. A multitude of angels praised God to some shepherds out watching their flocks, modeling for them the telling of the "good news of great joy" to "all the people" (Luke 2:10). We can only imagine how those shepherds' lives were changed in a moment, but nothing in Scripture leads us to believe anyone else saw or heard the angels.

The spiritually aware in the temple didn't miss Him either. Simeon and Anna, both elderly, spotted the infant Jesus even as His parents brought Him to the temple just like every other family had done with their firstborn sons. Even though the wise men traveled from the East to worship Jesus, their royal caravan didn't lead the people in Jerusalem or Bethlehem to see Him any differently. Life just kept on going. When Jesus was twelve years old, even His earthly parents failed to make sure He was safely on the road home to Galilee with their caravan, and they had to search for Him for three days before finding Him in the temple.

THE SON HAS COME

But as Jesus stepped into His earthly ministry, He caused a stir that would follow Him for the next three years. It began with a messenger, John the Baptist, who called the local Jewish leaders a "brood of vipers" (Matt. 3:7) and asked them who warned them to flee from God's wrath. This same John baptized Jesus. And after, the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit visibly came down on Him, and the Father identified Him as His Son.

Jesus quickly garnered a following—calling disciples, performing miracles, and even flipping over tables in the temple. Suffice it to say, Jesus had not come to play along with the status quo that had been established and sustained by the Pharisees and Sadducees. He had come to reveal the kingdom of God, where God is King, Jesus is Lord over every power, and God's people live as joyful servants who seek the kingdom with their very lives.

The Son didn't just make public connections though. He met privately with a seeking Pharisee, turned water into wine at a wedding, and brought a Samaritan woman to saving faith by telling her about living water. She'd heard a rumor of what worship would look like, but Jesus informed her that true worship in God's kingdom wouldn't look anything like she expected.

So as we walk through the earliest days of Jesus's earthly life over the coming weeks, imagine being a Jew living in Israel and hearing all the talk of His scandalous parents, His royal lineage, His mind for the scrolls, and His lack of decorum. God sent His Son, Jesus, to reveal His kingdom, and nobody who encountered Him would ever forget Him.

The Son has come! May we walk in His footsteps of faith, obedience, and hope in the kingdom of God.

Leslie Hudson worships with her family at First Baptist in Dickson, Tennessee. She teaches high school youth Sunday School, plays in the praise band, and is active in women's ministry. She's studying the Minor Prophets in her quiet time this year, and she's loving the challenge.

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

UNIT 19

THE ARRIVAL



MATTHEW; LUKE



MEMORY VERSES

“But the angel said to them, ‘Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord.’”

—Luke 2:10-11



THE BIRTH

CORE PASSAGE: LUKE 2:4-20

CONTEXT

After more than four hundred years of silence from God, an angel of the Lord appeared to the priest Zechariah, foretelling the miraculous birth of his son, John the Baptist, who would be the forerunner for the Lord's Messiah. Later, the angel appeared again to Mary, foretelling the virgin birth of her son, Jesus, who would be the promised Messiah. A Roman census forced Mary and her husband, Joseph, to travel to Bethlehem late into Mary's pregnancy. To fulfill Scripture the Lord had arranged all these things—for His Son to be born in flesh as the promised King and Savior of the world.

KEY CONCEPT

The good news is meant to be shared.

As you read Luke 2:4-20:

- Identify ways Luke made the connection between Jesus and the line of David.
- Recognize that the shepherds spread the news of Jesus's birth, and all who heard it were amazed.



Scan this QR code to **PROVIDE FEEDBACK** of your experience with The Gospel Project for Adults materials.



TIMELINE

Malachi Prophesies the Messenger to Prepare the Way for the Lord (Malachi 3-4)

The Angel Foretells the Birth of John the Baptist to Prepare the Way for the Messiah (Luke 1:5-25)

SESSION STUDY: Jesus Is Born in Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-20)

The Intertestamental Period (400 Years of God's Silence)

The Angel Foretells the Birth of Jesus, the Son of God (Luke 1:26-56)

Mary and Joseph Take Baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem (Luke 2:21-39)

Daily Readings

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1: Matthew 1:1-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4: Luke 2:8-14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2: Matthew 1:18-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 5: Luke 2:15-20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3: Luke 2:1-7 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 6: Psalm 132 |



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

**FROM THE LINE OF DAVID, AS PROPHESED,
A SAVIOR WAS BORN (LUKE 2:4-12).**

Circle the locations mentioned in the passage.

4 Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, **5** to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. **6** While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. **7** Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. **8** In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. **9** Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, “Don’t be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: **11** Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **12** This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger.”

A Roman census caused Joseph and Mary to travel far away from home as Mary was late into her miraculous pregnancy (vv. 1-5). Likely the rush of people coming into Bethlehem for that same census put the couple in a bind for a place to spend the night. The best place available to them as Mary gave birth was where animals were kept. The Child who would be called Immanuel, truly “God with us” (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22-23), was born in the most humble place imaginable. The promised King from the line of David was not placed in a cradle in a palace but in a manger.

What can we see about the character of Jesus from His birth in a lowly stable?

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

GOD THE SON: Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin.

LEADER NOTE: The humility seen in the birth of Christ points to the servant character of Jesus, which is reflected in the good news. Jesus “did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). Jesus would lay down His life to die on the cross so that all who would believe in Him would be forgiven of their sins and receive eternal life with Him (John 3:16).

Continuing the humble circumstances of Jesus’s birth, the good news of His arrival was shared first with a lowly class of people. Shepherds were not viewed in a positive light in ancient Israel, yet some shepherds in the fields were the first to hear about the birth of Jesus, and that from an angel sent by the Lord.

What the angel said to the shepherds clues us in to the purpose of God in sending His Son to earth in this humble fashion. The news of the Messiah-King is “good news of great joy that will be for all the people” (Luke 2:10). The Messiah did not come to save just the regal and powerful, nor did He come just to save the people of Israel. Rather, He came into this world to lowly parents in a lowly stable and visited by lowly shepherds to save all people—whether Jew or Gentile—who recognize their lowly status as sinners in need of a Savior. And the angel confirmed his words with a specific sign highlighting the Messiah’s humility: the shepherds would find the Savior lying in a manger.

LEADER NOTE: Jesus did not need to be born in a palace to prove He is the King of kings. In fact, from the Old Testament, we see a strong connection between God’s king and the act of shepherding. David was a shepherd as a boy (1 Sam. 16:11-13). The promised Messiah-King would also be a shepherd at heart. He would perfectly follow the example of the Lord, the Shepherd of His people (see Ezek. 34:11-16; Mic. 2:12-13).

How would you have reacted to the angel’s message if you were one of the shepherds?

VOICES FROM THE CHURCH

“As the adopted son and heir of Julius Caesar, who had been declared divine by the Roman senate, Augustus claimed to be the son of a god. He was worshipped and hailed as the bringer of peace to the empire. But while Augustus was being flattered, the true Son of God and bringer of peace was being born in poverty in a simple peasant home that was not his own.”¹

–Takatemjen

HEARING THE GOOD NEWS, WE RESPOND, SHARE IT WITH OTHERS, AND PRAISE GOD (LUKE 2:13-20).

Highlight the ways the shepherds responded to the good news they heard and witnessed.

13 Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: **14** Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors! **15** When the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” **16** They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby who was lying in the manger. **17** After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child, **18** and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. **19** But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them. **20** The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard, which were just as they had been told.

This night for the shepherds went from one miraculous moment to the next. First, they heard from an angel while being surrounded by the glory of the Lord. Then the single angel was joined by a multitude of angels praising God for the birth of Christ. Finally, they would see with their own eyes the fulfillment of all God’s promises in the Messiah, who came to bring peace between God and humanity.

LEADER NOTE: The angels sang of glory to God and “peace on earth to people he favors” on account of Jesus’s birth (v. 14). This “peace” is not referring primarily to an earthly sort of peace where wars cease, though that will come true one day (Rev. 21:4). Rather, this peace highlights the reconciliation between God and human beings because of the atoning sacrifice that Jesus would be. The gospel gives those who believe “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).

Without hesitation, the shepherds went to Bethlehem and found the baby exactly as the angel had said: wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. They heard the good news from the angel, but then they went to see firsthand what had been made known to them by the Lord, and they were not disappointed. Here we see the good news of Jesus requires a response from those who hear it.

Key Concept: The good news is meant to be shared.

Notes

What are different possible responses from those who hear the gospel?

The shepherds responded to the angel by going, by obeying the call of the Lord. They also responded by proclaiming to others what had been proclaimed to them. They relayed to Mary and Joseph and more the amazing things they had heard from the angel, and their testimony of God's good news amazed all who heard them. In this, the shepherds were doing what they had already seen from the angels; this was the beginning of the proclamation of the good news to the world.

LEADER NOTE: Shepherding was viewed as a low-class sort of job, yet God chose some lowly men of this profession to be the first witnesses of Jesus's birth. Furthermore, God chose these men to be among the first human proclaimers of the good news of the Savior. God "has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise" (1 Cor. 1:27). Regardless of what people might have thought about shepherds, these shepherds couldn't help but share what they had seen and heard with others as they praised the Lord for His great gift in Jesus. They wanted all who heard them to have the same joy they were experiencing. This same sentiment should mark all who believe the gospel.

Following the angels in one more step, the shepherds responded with worship. The angels erupted with glory to God; the shepherds went to Bethlehem to see the Messiah for themselves, and they left Bethlehem "glorifying and praising God" for all He had done for them on this night (Luke 2:20). No doubt their worship led to even more opportunities to share the good news of Jesus.

If we have received the gospel by faith, what should our following responsive actions be?

CHRIST CONNECTION

x ————— x

As prophesied in Scripture and proclaimed by an angel, Jesus, the Lord and the Messiah, was born in Bethlehem. The shepherds heard the gospel, shared it with others, and all were amazed.

ARRIVAL

INTERACT: As your group arrives, ask for a few volunteers to share some good news they received recently. After the news is shared, ask: “Whom did you tell first?” Share about a time when you were bursting with excitement and why you chose to tell a particular person first, perhaps familiarity with the situation or an expected response.

TRANSITION: Sometimes in life we decide to walk through a trying situation privately, but when good news comes, we want to tell everyone we know. God had pointed ahead to the birth of His Messiah for centuries, even millennia, and He made sure this amazing event would not go unnoticed.

CONTEXT

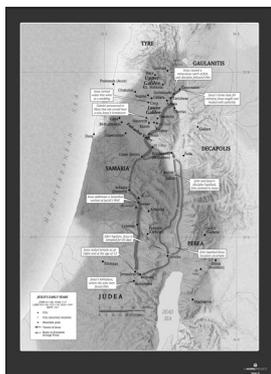
SAY: Previously we considered the priest Zechariah’s prophetic words as he described his son as the forerunner of God’s promised Messiah. But in the four-hundred-year gap between Gabriel’s message and Malachi’s prophecy, there was silence. Yet God’s silence didn’t mean He wasn’t working. God is always working His perfect plan in His perfect timing, preparing His people for what comes next. And when the good news of the Messiah’s arrival finally came, it was proclaimed in a way no hearer would ever forget.

TRANSITION: In the Old Testament, God spoke to His people through Himself, His law, His Spirit, and His prophets. As we step into the New Testament with the birth of Jesus, we see that God is still speaking through His incarnate Son.

RECAP

ASK: As you prepared from Luke 2 this week, what stood out to you in a fresh way? What did you observe in the shepherds that made you realize they were the perfect candidates for such an important message?

TRANSITION: Our core passage is considered by many to be the “Christmas story.” (*Display **Pack Item 2: Jesus’s Early Years** and point out Nazareth and Bethlehem on the map.*) Most church attenders have heard this story many times: Joseph and Mary left Nazareth and went to Bethlehem, she gave birth, the angel appeared to shepherds, and the shepherds went to see the Christ Child. Today we’ll focus on the delivery of this good news to help inform our delivery of the gospel to others.



Listen to session-by-session training every week on

Ministry Grid, Apple Podcasts, or Spotify

ministrygrid.com/gospelproject · gospelproject.com/leader-training.

Key Concept: The good news is meant to be shared.

GROUP ACTIVITY

DIAGRAM: Direct your group to page 22 in their Personal Study Guide (PSG), where they will find a diagram titled “Delivering the News.” Recreate this Venn diagram on a board in your room so you can record the group’s findings as they interact with the Scripture text.

Notes

Delivering the News

Read Luke 2:4-20. List similarities and differences in the delivery of the message of Jesus by the angels, the shepherds, and by Luke himself.



READ: Invite a volunteer to read Luke 2:4-20 aloud.

OBSERVE: Instruct the group to find the name “David” in Luke 2:4-12 and count how many times it appears. (*three*) Ask: “What would the significance of David be to the Jews at this time? What might David’s name have meant to the shepherds?” Briefly review God’s promise to David (2 Sam. 7:8-16) and David’s identity as a shepherd of sheep and God’s people (1 Sam. 16:11-13; Ezek. 34:20-24).

DISCUSS: Guide the group to consider the details of the angels’ message proclaimed to the shepherds. To facilitate that, ask: “According to verse 10, what was the point of the message the angel delivered? What details in the angelic chorus’s message support the first angel’s point in verse 10?”

OBSERVE: Invite group members to call out ways the shepherds responded to the good news in Luke 2:15-20. Ask: “How did the response of the shepherds reveal their faith and joy?”

ENGAGE: Lead the group to complete the diagram on the board and in their PSGs by filling in the circles with details of the three different groups delivering the message, highlighting differences and similarities. Clarify that Luke's message included that of the angels and the shepherds, but his was unique in his delivery, focusing on the facts of the gospel (Luke 1:3-4). *(for example: motivations for sharing the good news: Angels—praise; Shepherds—personal testimony; Luke—detailed account of the gospel)* Note that the primary focus for the angels, the shepherds, and Luke was simply telling others that the Christ was born. The angels were holy, heavenly beings, the shepherds were lowly and humble, yet both heard the good news, believed it, and shared it with others.

DEBRIEF

What were some emotions and motivations that surrounded the telling of Jesus's birth?

What does sharing the miraculous story of Jesus reveal about our faith? What does a lack of sharing it reveal?

SUMMARIZE

The story of the shepherds represents our story as well. We too have heard the good news that Jesus, God in the flesh, has come to be our Savior, Messiah, and Lord, and we are called to believe in Him for ourselves. Once we have believed, we then are called to tell others the same good news shared with us. Like the shepherds, let us give God glory as we tell others the good news of Jesus.

HEAD, HEART, HANDS

Walk the group through the Head, Heart, Hands section in the PSG (p. 23). If running short on time, specifically highlight the **Heart** section in this week's study, inviting volunteers to share their responses to the question in this section.



HEAD: Humility is something human beings have struggled with since the sin of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. As sinners, we all exhibit pride in one form or another. True humility is put on full display in Luke 2. Jesus was born into humble circumstances, and the Lord chose a humble group of shepherds to be the first witnesses to the birth of the Messiah.

What are some ways we might exhibit the humility of Jesus on display in the circumstances of His birth?



HEART: It is easy to assume many things about another person based on their appearance or occupation, but God operates on a different level: "Humans see what is visible, but the LORD sees the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7). God uses all kinds of people to accomplish His will, often those who don't look appealing in a worldly sense. We should seek to follow God's heart by looking beyond external factors, seeing others as God sees them and loving them as God does.

How can we love others, both inside and outside the church, who seem lowly by worldly standards?



HANDS: Receiving the good news of Jesus should prompt two things in the heart of the church: worship and mission. Responding to the mercy of God is seen as giving God our whole lives as a form of worship (Rom. 12:1). Every day of the week, God deserves our worship for sending Jesus as our Savior. And every day of the week, people we encounter need to hear the same good news of Jesus, the only means by which we are saved (Rom. 10:9-13).

How will you share the good news of Jesus with someone this week?

NEXT STEPS

Challenge the group to consider these actions as responses to this session.

- Take time to read through Luke 2:4-20 every day this week and ask the Holy Spirit to give you passion and joy to share the message of Jesus.
- Consider what your responses to the gospel this week, both private (worship) and public (ministering, evangelism), reveal about your faith.
- Pray for the people in your life who do not have a saving relationship with Jesus. Open your heart and hands to revealing to them His love, mercy, and grace in the gospel.

Invite volunteers to share prayer needs for this week. Encourage them to record these in the space on page 23 in their PSG so they can pray for others throughout the week.

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

CLOSE: Pray through Psalm 132 with your group, focusing on verses 10-12. Praise the Lord for the gift of salvation we receive through faith in Jesus.

References

1. Takatemjen, "Luke," in South Asia Bible Commentary, gen. ed. Brian Wintle (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 1334-35.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION

By Mike Leake



Even if you don't know much about Jesus, you've probably heard that He walked on water. It's an amazing story included in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John. You also should know that it wasn't a peaceful little pool on which Jesus did His water-walking. It was in the middle of a storm that had seasoned fishermen worried for their lives.

Mark, in his Gospel, included a neat little phrase that likely came from Exodus 33 or Job 9. He said that Jesus "wanted to pass by them" (Mark 6:48). Mark was clueing us into the fact that this was a display of Christ's deity. We're supposed to see the almighty power of Jesus all throughout this story.

As amazing as it is that Jesus walked on the water, I actually think there is another verse that is even more awe-inspiring. It's a little phrase in Mark 6:51: "Then he got into the boat with them." Do you realize what Mark was telling us there? He was telling us that the eternal I AM, the One who can calm the winds and the waves, was now climbing into a boat with common fishermen.

This is the wonder of the incarnation. God became flesh. I'm not shocked that God can walk on water. But I am shocked that He'd stoop so low to get in a boat with humanity.

GOD BECAME FLESH

We really shouldn't be that shocked by the story though. God has always been moving toward His people. You see it first in the garden of Eden—even after the first couple rebelled. God moved toward His people in the tabernacle in the wilderness. All throughout the Scriptures, God was making

Himself known. But the most breathtaking revelation of them all was when God the Son took on human flesh and entered our world.

It's theologically true that in order to redeem humanity—in order to make a fitting sacrifice—God the Son had to take on human flesh. He had to be a fitting representative (Heb. 2:17). But did He have to get into boats? Did He have to touch lepers? Did it require Him to laugh with us or weep with us? Did He have to get this close?

This is the mystery and mercy of the gospel: the God who made us became like us so as to rescue us.

FOR A PURPOSE

This wasn't a backup plan. According to Ephesians 1:4-7, this was God's Plan A. Before the foundation of the world, the triune God purposed to redeem humanity through the Son. The Father sent, the Son came, and the Spirit empowered.

We shouldn't think here of the incarnation like the show *Undercover Boss*. In that show the person in charge becomes like one of the employees to see what it's like to work there. Along the way they make a few friends, bless some of their more faithful employees, and then go back to being the CEO of the company.¹ Jesus didn't become a man just to observe our condition. He shared in it fully. He took on our human nature. Jesus hungered, wept, grew tired, and was tempted, though He was without sin (Heb. 4:15). In every respect, He entered into the reality of life in a broken world. But unlike an undercover boss, He became human for the very purpose of dying in our place.

*It's theologically true that in order to redeem humanity—
in order to make a fitting sacrifice—
God the Son had to take on human flesh.*

GOD'S SYMPATHY

Because Jesus lived as one of us, He understands us. He knows what it's like to grieve a loss, to feel lonely, and to face rejection. The Bible says, "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

The incarnation means that when we pray, Jesus truly understands our situation. When we face temptation, and even when we fall, we go to a Savior who understands the weight of living in this broken world as a dependent human being. And because He never fell to sin, He understands the full force of temptation. We have an advocate who gets it because He lived it (1 John 2:1).

The incarnation means that when we pray, Jesus truly understands our situation. . . . We have an advocate who gets it because He lived it.

GOD'S IMAGE

When Jesus took on flesh, He didn't become something less. He didn't cease being God. Rather, He revealed something more. He is "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15). What sin has distorted in us, Christ displays in fullness. When we look at Jesus, we see humanity as it was meant to be—and God as He truly is.

The incarnation shows us the value of human life. Every person is made in the image of God. And Jesus becoming one of us reinforces our conviction about the dignity of all people, from the least to the greatest, from the womb to the deathbed. Every person reflects the beauty of what Jesus came to redeem.

THE SON HAS COME NEAR

The miracle of the incarnation isn't only that God came near—it's that He came near on purpose, and that purpose was to rescue us. The Son of God not only took upon Himself human flesh, He carried our sorrows and our sins. Jesus, fully God and fully man, getting in the boat with His disciples illustrates His mission to fully enter our world and redeem us.

The Son of God has come near.

References

1. Stephen Lambert and Greg Goldman, *Undercover Boss*, CBS (Los Angeles: All3Media, 2010).

Mike Leake is husband to Nikki and father to Isaiah and Hannah. He is also the lead pastor at Calvary of Neosho, Missouri. His writing home is mikeleake.net and on Substack at *Proverbs 4 Today*, a daily devotional.