

The Greatest

Luke 2:21-40

God Story

Baby Jesus at the Temple
Luke 2:21-40

Big Idea

Jesus is God's greatest promise.

Key Verse

"We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."
John 6:69 (NIV)

Leader Tips

As your group returns from the holidays, welcome them and take some time to review your expectations for the kids.

Life Story

1. Conversation Starter

2 MINUTES

Chat about how it feels to wait a long time for something, then introduce the Big Idea.

2. Intro Activity

5 MINUTES

Highlight examples of kept and broken promises to help the kids understand today's theme.

God Story

3. Weekly Video

12 MINUTES

Watch the video, which includes host, God Story, Key Verse, and Life Story segments. Recap and discuss the teaching together.

My Story

4. Small Group Activity

12 MINUTES *

Create a timeline to help the kids picture how long it took God to follow through on his greatest promise to us: Jesus!

5. Wrap-Up Activity

8 MINUTES

Review the new Key Verse, then practice saying it with a ball game.

Our Story

6. Dismissal

Connect with parents and give them the take-home materials.

*Extend as needed and adjust timing for other activities

Life Story

1. Conversation Starter

Supplies

- None

Leader Tip:

This is meant to be a casual conversation as the kids arrive. Move on quickly to the Intro Activity so that you have adequate time for it before watching the teaching video.

Instructions:

- Welcome everyone and gather the kids together.
- Ask:
 - What's the longest you've ever had to wait for a meal? At a doctor's office? To go on a vacation?
 - Was the time you spent waiting really that long, or did it just feel that way?
 - What made it seem like such a long wait? (e.g., I was hungry/nervous/excited)
- Depending on the size of your group, have the kids share their answers with the people sitting closest to them or with everyone.
- Explain that God had a plan when he promised people a rescuer, but it took hundreds and hundreds of years to fulfill!
- Introduce this week's Big Idea: Jesus is God's greatest promise.

2. Intro Activity

Supplies

- A Promise Kept and A Promise Broken signs (contact paper attached to coloured paper)
- Wall-safe tape
- Pom-poms

Before the Activity:

Hang the signs close together at the kids' eye level in an area with enough floor space for them to line up (see instructions for more details). Remove the contact paper liners to reveal the sticky surfaces on the signs.

Instructions:

- Line up the kids about 1.5 metres (5') from the signs.
 - Give each person a pom-pom.
 - Briefly review some examples of keeping and breaking promises (e.g., getting a promised treat after helping a parent; not sharing a toy after promising to). Ensure that kids understand the concepts before continuing.
 - Guide everyone to take turns throwing their pom-poms at the signs. Depending on which sign the pom-pom sticks to, the thrower will share an example of a kept or a broken promise. Help the kids with ideas as needed.
 - Repeat the activity if time allows.
 - To wrap up, explain that there will be plenty of times in the kids' lives when promises will be kept and broken. Today, we're learning about a BIG promise that God kept—but it took a really long time!
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God Story

3. Weekly Video

Supplies

- Video file

Instructions:

- a. Play the video. It includes:
 - Host segment
 - God Story (Baby Jesus at the Temple | Luke 2:21-40)
 - Key Verse segment
 - Life Story (God promised to open doors for Natalie Burtch as she followed her heart to a career in stage management).
- b. Discuss:
 - What was the Life Story about in today's video?
 - What was the God Story about?
 - How do you think these two stories and today's Big Idea (Jesus is God's greatest promise) connect?

4. Small Group Activity

Supplies

- Measuring tape
- People cutouts

Instructions:

- a. Gather your small group to sit together in a line facing you.
- b. Ask: How many years did people wait for Jesus, our rescuer?
- c. Use the measuring tape and people cutouts to create a timeline showing how long people waited for Jesus:
 - Explain that in today's story Jesus travels with his parents to a temple.
 - Explain that 30 cm (1') equals about 1000 years.
 - Place Adam and Eve at one end of the line of kids.
 - Mark out 60 cm (2') and add Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
 - Roll out another 60 cm (2') and add Jesus.
 - About 30 years after Jesus' birth, add the disciples. (This is a tiny fraction of measuring tape, which is a good way to emphasize how much happened in 1,000 years!)
 - Roll out 60 cm (2') and add the people that represent us today.
- d. Discuss:
 - How do you think people felt waiting so long for Jesus?
 - How do you think people felt when they found out Jesus had come to earth? (Hint: How did Anna and Simeon react?)

5. Wrap-Up Activity

Supplies

- Key Verse Sign
- Wall-safe tape
- Ball

Before the Activity:

Place the Key Verse sign where everyone can see it.

Instructions:

- a. Gather the kids back together in a large group.
- b. Review the new Key Verse for this series. Practise saying it together slowly a few times. Point out the words on the sign as you say them.
- c. Discuss:
 - Who is this verse about? (Jesus)
 - What do you think it means that he is the "Holy One of God"? (Jesus is the chosen one – God's son and his greatest promise!)
- d. Pass the ball around the group.
- e. As the kids receive the ball, prompt them to say one word from John 6:69.

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- f. See how fast your group can work together to say the verse!
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Our Story

6. Dismissal

Supplies

- Crafts
- Take-home cards
- Key Verse cards
- Key Verse Colouring pages

Leader Tip:

Organize the take-home materials so they're easy to access. It may be helpful to sort them before the lesson, then set out any crafts later. Consider having one leader focus on handing out everything.

Instructions:

- a. Greet parents as they arrive to pick up their kids. Take a moment to share a highlight or two from your time together today.
 - b. Give everyone a weekly take-home card as well as the monthly Key Verse card and colouring page.
 - c. Remind the kids to take their crafts.
 - d. Make sure their security numbers match before they leave your group's space.
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