



Waiting for Jesus

DECEMBER 14, 2025

ADVENT WEEK 3 | GOD LOVED US BY SENDING JESUS

ISAIAH 11; JOHN 1

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God loves His people and promised to send a Savior to rescue them. Jesus—God's Son—is the promised Savior. God sent Jesus because He loves us!

MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 11:1

PREPARE



Take time to reflect
on today's lesson.

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

*So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. **God is love**, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. – 1 John 4:16 (emphasis ours)*

It's hard to have a single favorite attribute of God; they're all so good! But for me, His love is the thing I find myself grateful for over and over again. Not only grateful, but also in awe of how He can love a broken sinner like me. In His perfect love, God sent His one and only Son to pay the price for my sin and give me the eternal life I don't deserve. What a gift!

One of my favorite illustrations I've heard to help kids understand the magnitude of Jesus coming to earth in the form of a man goes like this:

Imagine you just drew a picture. This picture is of a field on a sunny day, with flowers all around and a stick figure in the middle. You've worked hard on this drawing, going so far as to find just the right shade of purple for those flowers. Now imagine that you, a full fledged human being, choose to enter into the drawing and become a stick figure. That's what Jesus did. He entered into His creation and became like us, and His whole reason for doing so is simply that He loves us.

God is not just a loving God. 1 John 4:16 tells us that God *is* love. The embodiment of love itself is Jesus Christ. Love is who God is and His nature cannot change. No matter how far gone we may think we are, no matter how many times we've chosen our own way and sin against Him, His love for us will never diminish. Not only that, but we can't do anything to make God love us more because He already loves us perfectly!

As we get closer to Christmas and talk about God's love this week, take some time to sit and reflect on the magnitude of Jesus coming to dwell with us. All because of a love so deep and lasting for His creation. All because He *is* love.

WELCOME



Connect with kids as they arrive.

OPENING ACTIVITIES

Greet each kid as they arrive. Use this time to build relationships and help new kids connect to your group. Before heading to Large Group, you can play a game, chat with kids, or do the Memory Verse Activity below as a group!

MEMORY VERSE

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1, ESV

MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Each month, we'll have a new memory verse that goes with the lessons we're learning from the Bible. Choose one of the provided activities in your room's Memory Verse bin to review the verse with the kids. A hand motion video is also available to learn and review on your room's TV.

Note: Our next Bible Bucks Day will be on December 21!



LARGE GROUP LESSON



Review what we're learning in Large Group.

GOD LOVED US BY SENDING JESUS

Even before there was an earth and before there was a heaven, Jesus was with God. Jesus *is* God. The Word, who is Jesus, has always existed. Nothing in the universe was created without Jesus. He made stars and planets, oceans and forests, animals and insects. He made everything!

God created humans in His own image. They were in charge of this creation, and because they walked with God, the whole earth would praise God for what He made! Sadly, humans disobeyed God and hid from Him. This is called sin, and because of sin, death and hardship entered into the world. Sin got in the way of humans being with God. But God did not stop loving His creation, or their children, or their children's children. God had a rescue plan in mind.

One day, God planned to send a Savior who would take on the consequence for all sin so that God's children could be in His presence again. Many years went by, but God never forgot His promise. He chose to carry out His plan through Abraham's family. God promised that one day the Savior would be born through a part of the family called the tribe of Judah. However, at one point in God's big story, things were not looking good for Judah. The people were surrounded by enemies on every side. Many of them were killed. It didn't look like the people of Judah would survive to carry out God's rescue plan for the world. But God was not finished. He spoke a promise to the people of Judah through a prophet, or messenger, named Isaiah.

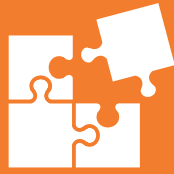
God promised that the Savior would come from the line of Jesse, who was born from the tribe of Judah. Isaiah called the promised Savior a "Branch" that would grow from the root of Jesse's family tree. Even if the whole tree was cut down, the Branch would grow again. God promised through Isaiah that when the rescuer arrives, the creatures of the world will behave in a new way. The wolf would live with the lamb, the leopard would lie down with the goat, and the cow and the bear would eat together. Children would have nothing to fear, because all the earth would be safe at last.

About 700 years after God gave these words to Isaiah, a baby was born—the many-many-great-grandson of Jesse. This baby was not like any other. He was the Branch in Judah's family tree that Isaiah had prophesied about—the very promise God had spoken so many years before. This baby was Jesus. And on that night in Bethlehem, Jesus, the Word of God who was with God from the beginning, became a human and entered into the creation He had made. God loves His people—He loves us—so much that in Jesus, God left heaven to make His home with us.

During this season, we take time to remember that night when Jesus was born. For us, Christmas comes every year. But for God's people, the waiting was much, much longer. Perhaps that's why God sent prophets like Isaiah to remind the people of His love and His plan. At a time when God's people were discouraged, God spoke through Isaiah to help them understand His love for them. Isaiah described a beautiful future when Jesus would be King and all creation would know God. Because God promised it, we know that this day will come. God showed His love for the world by sending Jesus that first Christmas day. And Jesus promised to return again... all because God loves us.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY: God loves His people and promised to send a Savior to rescue them. Jesus—God's Son—is the promised Savior. God sent Jesus because He loves us!

ACTIVITIES



Do crafts and games with kids after Large Group.

ACTIVITY 1: SPECIAL MESSAGE RELAY

Have kids get into teams of six or less. Mark a starting line on one side of the room with painter's tape and put the provided branch images on the other side of the room (one image per team).

Give a disposable straw to each kid and a stack of the provided leaves to each group. Tell kids they will carry the leaves one by one across the room by inhaling through the straw with the leaf stuck on the other side. If they drop the leaf, they can simply use the straw to pick it back up again and keep going. Once all their leaves are moved, have the kids put the leaves in the correct order on the branch. The first team to finish wins!

To end the activity, talk about how Isaiah told God's people that a Savior would come and that He'd be a "branch" that grew from the root of Jesse's family tree. 700 years later, the promise was fulfilled. God showed His great love for us when He sent Jesus.

ACTIVITY 2: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

Ask kids if they know what advent means. Explain that advent means the coming or arrival of an important person: Jesus! God's people waited and waited for Jesus to come to earth the first time. We are waiting too because Jesus promised to come back, and everything will change because God's followers will get to be with Jesus forever!

Pick 2-3 kids and have them stand in front of the group for 30 seconds so the group can take a good look at them. Then, have the kids step into the hallway where the rest of the group can't see. Give them 45 seconds to change three things about themselves (e.g., pull a sock up or down, take off a shoe, change their hair, etc. They can also use some of the provided costume items.). After 45 seconds, bring them back in front of the whole group so kids can guess what three things they've changed. Play multiple rounds so everyone gets a chance to play.

Ask kids if it was always easy to recognize things that were different about our friends when they came back. We had to pay attention and know what they look like in order to know what was different or the same. We don't know everything about when Jesus will come back—like when or where He's returning. But we do know that Jesus *will* come back, and it will be a celebration for His followers because we will get to be with Him forever!

CLOSING ACTIVITIES



Continue to engage kids before parent pick-up.

BIBLE STORY REVIEW

Ask the following questions and lead your small group to discuss.

1. Jesus has always been with God, and Jesus is God! What are some things that Jesus created?
2. Who was the prophet who told God's people that a Savior would be born from the family tree of Jesse?
3. God sent Jesus because He loves us! What is God's love like?
4. Jesus, who is God, became human and was born as a baby to live among us. How does this show God's love for us?
5. What are some ways God shows His love to you? What are some ways you can show God's love to other people?

HAVE EXTRA TIME?

If you have extra time or your group needs to get out some energy, play one of the games/activities in your extra time bin in the cabinet or the "extra time" folder on the TV.

If there's a new game or activity you want to have available for your group in the future, let Taylor know!

BEFORE YOU GO...

Second service leaders, please clean up by doing the following:

1. Put all extra supplies and binders back in the curriculum bins.
2. Clean all trash off the tables.
3. Put all crayons, markers, etc. back in the appropriate containers and cubbies.
4. Erase the whiteboards and put markers/erasers back in the holder.
5. Turn off the TVs as you leave.

THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!