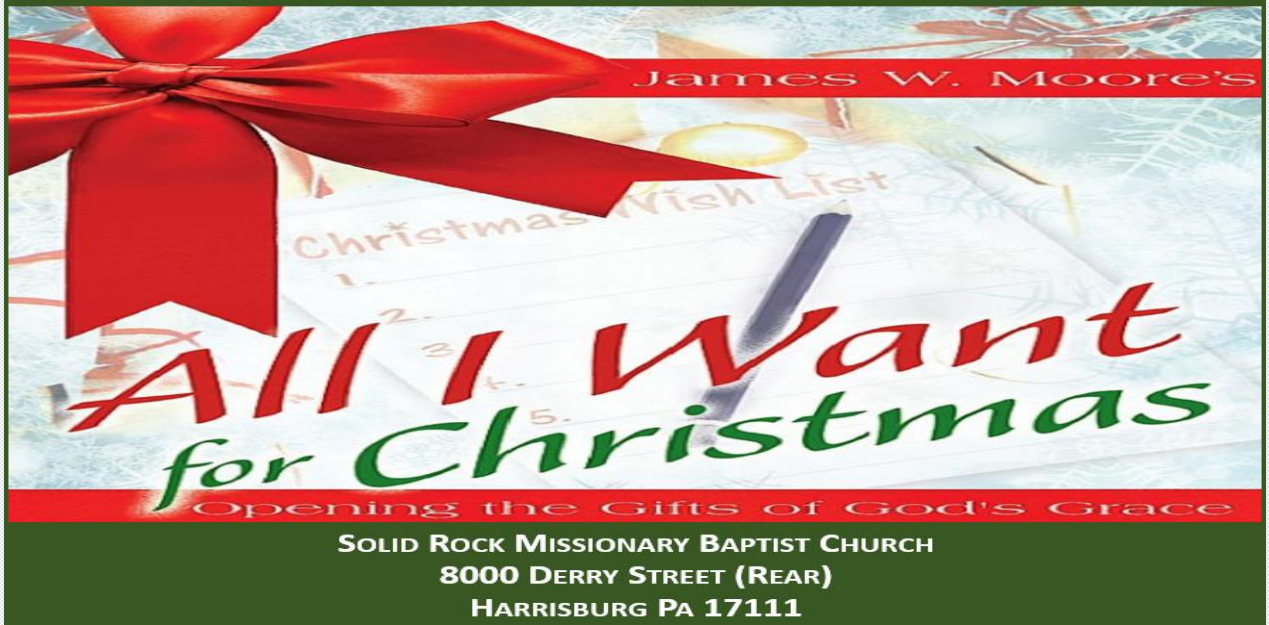


SRMBC FAMILY BIBLE STUDY



All I Want For Christmas - Opening The Gifts of God's Grace

SRMBC Bible Study Schedule Nov – Dec

Date	Lesson Topic	Scripture
11/20/2019	The Gift of Good News	Matthew 1:18 – 25
11/27/2019	Thanksgiving Break	No Study
12/4/2019	The Gift of a New Understanding	Luke 1:39 – 56
12/11/2019	The Gift of a Strong Foundation	Luke 2 :1 – 20
12/18/2019	The Gift of a New Style of Living	Matthew 2:1 – 18

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Lesson 3: *The Gift of a Strong Foundation*

Luke 2:1 – 20

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Group Discussion: What do you like best about the way you and your family currently celebrate Christmas?

How The Grinch Stole Christmas



The Grinch is a bitter creature who hates Christmas. Annoyed, he steals all Christmas presents, trees, and food in Whoville. After spending all night stealing, the Grinch expects the Whos to let out bitter and sorrowful cries.

Questions

- Why do you think the Grinch wanted so much to “steal” Christmas from the Who’s in Whoville.
- What was the Grinch expecting? How did the reaction of the Who’s change his mind?
- What things threaten to steal our Joy regarding the Birth of Christ?
- What some ways we can remind ourselves and others that “Christmas doesn’t come from a store?”

Who Were Mary and Joseph?

Mary The Virgin: The Mother Of Our Lord.

- She was of the tribe of Judah and of the lineage of David.
- She was a cousin to Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist.
- She was engaged to Joseph of Nazareth; but with child Holy Ghost,
- She became the mother of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.
- Mary's is seen at the foot of the cross and has been entrusted to be cared by the Apostle John.
- Mary was with the disciples in the upper room to receive the Holy Spirit with power. (Acts 1:14)



Joseph: The Foster-father Of Our Lord

- After discovering Mary with child, Joseph received angelic visitations to reassure and direct him.
- He is called a "just man." and of the house and lineage of David
- He lived at Nazareth in Galilee (Luk 2:4).
- He was by trade a carpenter (Mat 13:55).
- He is last mentioned when Jesus was twelve years old.
- It is probable that he died before Jesus entered on his public ministry.



Joseph and Mary

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Luke 2:1 – 7 (NKJV)

Christ Born of Mary

1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.

3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,

5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

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Luke 2:8 – 12 (NKJV)

Glory in the Highest

8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.

11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

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Luke 2:13 – 17 (NKJV)

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

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Luke 2:18 – 20 (NKJV)

18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

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1. The distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem was about 70 miles. What would it be like to be Joseph taking that weeklong walk from Nazareth to Bethlehem?

- **Uncomfortable** – A long walk to go – for this Child who is not his.
- **Inconvenient** – To have to take a long trip – while Mary is 9-months pregnant (why not 3 -4 months earlier?)
- **Confusing** – What's going to happen next? How can I, a mere man be father to the Son of God?
- **Sacrificial** – Joseph's love for Mary and for God pushes him forward without complaining.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NKJV)



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2. What would it be like for Mary?

- **Uncomfortable** – Riding a Donkey – for week and then not even finding a nice place to stay in Bethlehem to have the baby.
- **Inconvenient** – taking a long trip – while Mary is 9-months pregnant (why not 3 -4 months earlier?).
- **Helpless/Trusting** – Mary's not able to be of any help to Joseph – yet she is also trusting him while she is also trusting God.
- **Expectant**– Pondering the great purpose that this Child would fulfil for Israel and the world.

But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

1 Peter 5:10 (NKJV)

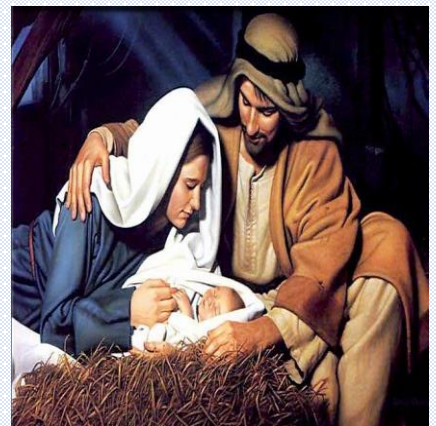


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3. Luke's account of Jesus' birth reads like a newspaper article (vv. 4-7). What key facts do you learn?

Key Facts

- **The Process** – The forced trip to Bethlehem: to comply with the decree of the Government.
- **The Place of His Birth** – Bethlehem (Prophesied In the OT - Micah 5:2).
- **The People** - Mary and Joseph: both of the lineage of King David.
- **The Problems** – Although Jesus is the Newborn King there was no room made for Him.
- **The Particulars and the Person** – Jesus, Mary's 1st Born Son is born (Just as God said) – laid in a manger.



**Mary, Joseph and
The Baby Jesus**

Note: Reflecting on the lowly and humble state of Jesus' birth can remind us of the values of God's kingdom—God is not interested in our material comfort but in our spiritual state.

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4. The shepherds back then they were an outcast group. So, what in the angel's message would be incredible to them (vv.9-14)?

- The OT prophecy of the coming Messiah is being fulfilled right before their eyes – in their lifetime.
- The announcement of great Joy and peace – the savior, the Messiah and the King of Earth and Heaven and they were invited to see for themselves.
- Finding a Baby, the Son of God, not in palace or temple but in a stable/manger.
- To see and hear not one, but a great company of angels makes the birth announcement personal.
- This announcement is unforgettable and is foundation for their witness to others (especially to Mary and Joseph).
- Shepherds (social rejects) are the 1st to hear of the birth of God's Son. Grace is the foundation of the Gospel.



The Shepherds and the Great Announcement by the Angels

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5. What do you notice about the shepherds' response to what they experience (vv. 16-20)?

- **They Immediately Verified:** *"And they came with haste...found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him..."*
- **They Personally Testified:** *"they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds."*
- **They Excitedly Glorified:** *"Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them."*



Points to Ponder – Jesus and the Shepherds

- **Jesus the Good Shepherd** - Jesus/Messiah is like a shepherd leading His sheep with tender care.
- **Jesus, the revelation of God's glory** - Jesus' as a descendent of King David, and who (along with Moses) was also a shepherd.
- **Jesus, the sacrificial lamb** - Because of Messiah's perfect life and death as a sacrificial lamb, we have a restored relationship with God.

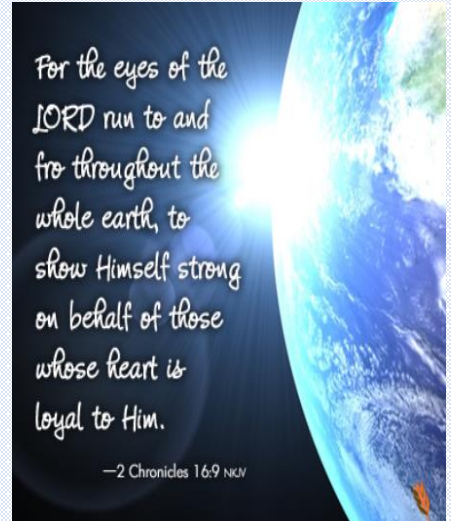


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6. God had been preparing the characters of Mary and Joseph to be Jesus' earthly parents.

From all that you have seen of them so far, what qualities of strong character do you perceive?

- **Obedience** – One who obeys – does the right –regardless of the cost.
- **Faithfulness** – Being someone that God and others can count on to do what is right
- **Love (Agape)** – Mary & Joseph demonstrate sacrificial love for Christ/God and each other
- **Perseverance** – The willingness to go through hardships for the greater good
- **Resourcefulness** – Even though there was no room at the Inn – they still made it work.
- **Contentment** – No complaining during difficulty by accepting God's will for the situation



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7. What aspects of their character would you like to emulate and why?

Obedience	There are things the Lord is calling me to do in 2020 that are out of my Comfort Zone.
Faithfulness	God, my Church and my family are counting on me to be faithful – so as to please God and receive His blessings.
Love (Agape)	I want to be known as a disciple of Christ by sharing His love with others.
Perseverance	I want to be “in it – to win it.” Even despite the obstacles and oppositions.
Resourcefulness	To be able to think “outside the box” to watch God make a way when there seems to be no way.
Contentment	To learn to be satisfied with salvation and relationship with God - along with the things He has blessed me with.

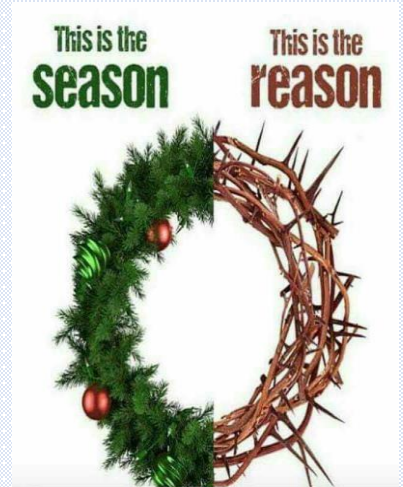


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8. What can you do to nurture the experience of the holy wonder of Christmas for your friends and family?

Share The Christmas Joy:

- Spread Jesus' love by helping others who might not see a reason to celebrate.
- Together as a family, visit a nursing home.
- Serve meals at a mission or church.
- Pack and deliver Christmas baskets for food pantries.



Share the Christmas Story:

- Invite friends and family to your Church's Christmas Services.
- Have family Advent Candle lighting Ceremonies at home.
- Give gifts to non-Christian friends (include a note or tract that explains the meaning of Christmas).
- Join a Christmas Caroling group to share the good news of Christ and Christmas.

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Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus, we know that you are our firm foundation. Thank you for being the Solid Rock that we can lean and depend upon.

Thank you for the gifts of church and family by which you support us. Give us grace to lean on you along with the wisdom to stay away from weak worldly foundations. Help us to live our lives trusting in your faithfulness, at Christmas and always.

Amen.