

Week 3: Love



Introductory Question: ***What is a gift you have given to someone you love?***



Last week, we focused on the theme of joy and read about when Mary and Elizabeth rejoiced that Mary would give birth to the Savior. This week, the story continues in **Matt. 1:18-25** and **Luke 2:1-7**. (Incorporate your family's or group's answers to the Introductory Question – for example,) *Benjamin gave his son a bike, and Jenny gave her sister a doll. Just as we give gifts to show others that we love them, in our story today, we read about how God showed His love for us by giving us the gift of a Savior. **John 3:16** says it like this: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Here is the story of how God gave us the gift of His Son...*

Tell the story from **Mt. 1:18-25**, **Lk. 2:1-7**, and **1 Jn. 4:9-10**, including main events such as:

- While Mary was engaged to Joseph, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit.
- In a dream, the angel of the Lord told Joseph, "Do not be afraid to marry Mary. What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (**Mt. 1:20-21**). Joseph woke up and did everything the angel had commanded him.
- All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet (**Is. 7:14**) – "the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel," which means "God with us." (Also see **Heb. 1:3**, **Col. 1:15**, and **Jn. 14:9**.)
- Joseph took Mary to his hometown, Bethlehem, to register for the census. While they were there, Mary gave birth to a son, and they named Him Jesus, as the angel had said.
- **1 John 4:9-10** sums up the story like this: "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation [payment] for our sins." (*See Appendix A: Salvation Prayer on p. 18.)



Invite your family to spend a few minutes in Listening Prayer and Journaling: *As we've listened to these words from the Bible, God has been speaking to us through them. What is God telling you about: Himself, yourself, others, and what to do? You can talk to God about anything.*

Additional prompt: How can you show God's love to others this week?



When everyone begins to finish Journaling, give each person an opportunity to share what God has been speaking to them. After each person shares, pray for them.

KEY VERSE: John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Additional Verses: Hebrews 1:3, 1 John 4:9-10, Colossians 1:15, John 14:9