

The Wise Gift

LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON PLAN

Theme: Bringing Gifts to Jesus - Matthew 2:1-12

Scripture: Isaiah 60:6

Memory Verse: All from Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord. - Isaiah 60:6

The Children's Sermon

Hey kids! Have you ever thought about what you would give to Jesus if you could? We know about the three wise men who brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh to baby Jesus. But we don't have those things. So, what can we give Him? We can give Him our love, our worship, and our life to tell others what Jesus' birth, death, and rising again means for them. Let's pray and thank God for the gift He gave us of His Son.

Christmas is a time when we think a lot about giving and receiving gifts, isn't it? We make lists of what we want and think hard about what to give our family and friends. But the most special gift of all is Jesus. God sent Jesus to us as a tiny baby, and that's the best gift anyone could ever get. It's a gift that lasts forever, not just for a little while like toys or clothes.

Now, you might be wondering, "How can I give a gift to Jesus? He's not here like my friends or family." Well, every time you show love, kindness, and help others, you're giving a gift to Jesus. When you obey your parents, share with your siblings, or even smile at someone who's feeling sad, you're giving those Christmas gifts and good news that Jesus loves.

Christmas gifts and good news aren't just about the things we can touch or see. They're also about the good things we can do and share. Jesus taught us to love one another, and when we do that, we're spreading the Christmas spirit all year long.

Let's talk about the shepherds in the Christmas story. They were just doing their job, watching their sheep, when suddenly angels appeared to them! The angels had a special message: "Don't be afraid. We have good news that will bring great joy to all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." The shepherds were so excited! They went quickly to see baby Jesus and then told everyone about the Christmas gifts and good news they had received.

You see, the shepherds didn't have fancy gifts to bring. But they gave something very important: they shared the good news of Jesus' birth with everyone. And just like the shepherds, we can share the good news too. We can tell our friends and family about Jesus, how much He loves us, and how He came to be our friend and Savior.

Sometimes, we might feel a little shy or unsure about sharing. But remember, sharing the good news is one of the best gifts we can give, not just at Christmas, but all year round. It's like passing on a never-ending gift that keeps on giving.

Now, let's think about how we can give our love to Jesus. We can pray and talk to Him, just like we talk to our best friend. We can say thank you for all the good things He gives us, like our family, friends, and even our pets. We can also ask Him to help us be kind and loving to others, so we can be like little lights shining bright with Christmas gifts and good news.

And what about worship? Worship is when we sing songs, say prayers, and learn more about Jesus, like we're doing right now! When we come together to worship, it's like we're giving a big "thank you" party for Jesus. We're showing Him how much we love and appreciate Him.

Lastly, we can give our lives to tell others about Jesus. This might sound like a big job, but it's really about living in a way that shows others how much Jesus means to us. It's being kind, forgiving, and helpful, just like Jesus would be. It's about choosing to do the right thing, even when it's hard. And when people see how happy and peaceful we are because of Jesus, they'll want to know more about Him too.

So, even though we can't give gold, frankincense, and myrrh like the wise men, we have so many other wonderful gifts we can give to Jesus. Our love, our worship, and our lives are the most precious gifts of all. And the best part? These gifts don't cost any money, but they're worth more than anything in the world.

Let's make a special promise this Christmas. Let's promise to give these gifts to Jesus not just on Christmas Day, but every day. Let's be like the shepherds and share the good news of Jesus with everyone. Let's be like the wise men and bring our best to Jesus. And let's remember that the best Christmas gifts and good news are the ones that come from our hearts.

So, this Christmas, let's give Jesus the best gifts ever: our love, our worship, and our lives. And let's spread the Christmas gifts and good news to everyone around us. That's the true spirit of Christmas, and it's the best way to celebrate Jesus' birthday. Merry Christmas, everyone! Let's pray and thank God again for the amazing gift of His Son, Jesus.

Bible Memory Verse

All from Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord. - Isaiah 60:6

You Will Need:

- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Gold glitter or gold foil
- Perfume or essential oil (optional for incense effect)

Get Ready:

- Cut out star shapes from the construction paper ahead of time.
- Prepare a small, clean workspace for each child with all materials accessible.

Do This:

1. Give each child a star shape and ask them to decorate it with gold glitter or gold foil to represent the gold brought to Jesus.
2. If using, allow them to dab a tiny bit of perfume or essential oil on their star to represent the incense.
3. While they work, discuss the importance of the gifts brought to Jesus and how we can offer our own gifts to Him today, such as kindness, obedience, and love.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- Gold, frankincense, and myrrh stickers or pictures
- Star cutouts
- A large map of the night sky (fabric or paper)
- Small gift boxes or envelopes
- Crayons or markers
- "Journey to Jesus" game board (create a simple path on a large poster board with various stops along the way)

Get Ready:

- Place the star cutouts on the map of the night sky, leading a path to a designated "Bethlehem" area on the map.
- Set up the "Journey to Jesus" game board on a table or the floor, with the starting point labeled "The East" and the end point near a picture or representation of Jesus.
- Prepare the small gift boxes or envelopes by writing simple, kind deeds or prayers on slips of paper to put inside (e.g., "help a friend," "say a prayer for someone in need").

Do this:

1. Start by reading Matthew 2:1-12 together, focusing on the journey of the wise men and the gifts they brought to Jesus. Briefly mention Isaiah 60:6 to explain the significance of the gifts.
2. Invite the children to take a "journey" on the map of the night sky. Each child picks a star cutout and follows the path of stars to "Bethlehem." Along the way, discuss the importance of following Jesus and how we can bring Him gifts today by showing love and kindness.
3. Play the "Journey to Jesus" game. Children roll a dice (or spin a spinner) to move along the game board. At each stop, they pick a small gift box or envelope, read the

deed or prayer inside, and discuss how doing that deed or saying that prayer can be a gift to Jesus, just like the gifts of the wise men.

4. Conclude by encouraging the children to think of one kind deed they can do this week as their gift to Jesus. They can draw or write this deed on a gold, frankincense, or myrrh sticker/picture and place it on the "Bethlehem" area of the night sky map as a symbol of their offering to Jesus.

Snack Activity: Gifts to Jesus Trail Mix

You'll Need:

- Pretzel sticks (representing the wood from the manger)
- Shredded wheat cereal (to symbolize the hay in the stable)
- Goldfish crackers (to represent the gifts of gold)
- Mini marshmallows (symbolizing the purity of Jesus)
- Small paper bags or cups

Get Ready: Gather all your snack ingredients on a clean table and give each child a small paper bag or cup.

Do this:

1. Start by telling the story of the Wise Men visiting Jesus and bringing Him gifts, based on Matthew 2:1-12. Explain how each item in the trail mix represents a part of the story or a gift to Jesus.
2. Let each child take turns adding a handful of each snack item into their bag or cup, while you repeat the significance of each item. For example, 'The pretzel sticks remind us of the humble manger where Jesus was born.'

3. Once their mix is complete, lead a short prayer thanking Jesus for coming to us and ask for hearts willing to give Him our best gifts. Then, enjoy the snack together as a reminder of the gifts brought to Jesus.

Game Activity: Journey to Bethlehem

You'll Need:

- A large open space, preferably outdoors
- Chalk or tape to mark the ground
- Small gift boxes or objects to serve as 'gifts'
- Music player for background music (optional)

Get Ready: Use the chalk or tape to create a large star shape on the ground, with several starting points leading towards the center of the star. Place the 'gifts' in the center of the star. If using music, choose a selection of joyful tunes to play in the background.

Do this:

1. Divide the children into small groups, assigning each group a starting point on the star's outer points. Explain that they are the wise men on a journey to bring gifts to Jesus, following the star to Bethlehem.
2. When the music starts (or on 'Go' if not using music), the children must hop, skip, or walk along the lines of the star towards the center, carrying their 'gift'. They must not step outside the lines of the star, symbolizing the importance of following God's guidance.
3. Once all children have reached the center and placed their 'gifts' near the baby Jesus (imaginary in the center of the star), gather them to discuss the significance of the

gifts brought by the wise men in Matthew 2:1-12 and how we can offer our own gifts to Jesus today, such as kindness, obedience, and love.

Craft Activity: Gifts for Baby Jesus

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (gold, frankincense purple, myrrh brown)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Markers or crayons
- Gold glitter
- Small box or container

Get Ready: Cut the construction paper into small, manageable pieces for the children to handle. Prepare a small example gift to show the children what they're aiming to create.

Do this:

1. Explain to the children that in the Bible, wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to baby Jesus. Show them Isaiah 60:6 and Matthew 2:1-12 to give context.
2. Have the children choose which 'gift' they want to create first. They can cut the construction paper into shapes that represent gold (circles for coins), frankincense (teardrop shapes), and myrrh (small box shapes). Encourage them to use their imagination.
3. Once they have their shapes cut out, they can glue them onto the small box or container to represent bringing gifts to Jesus. They can decorate their 'gifts' with markers, crayons, and especially gold glitter for the gold pieces. Encourage them to

write a message or draw something on their gift that shows their love for Jesus, just like the wise men showed their love and worship by bringing gifts.

Prayer Activity: Gifts for Jesus

You'll Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors

Get Ready: Cut out star shapes from the construction paper ahead of time.

Do this:

1. Read Matthew 2:1-12 together, focusing on the gifts the Wise Men brought to Jesus. Explain how these gifts were special and showed love and respect.
2. Share Isaiah 60:6, highlighting how people from all over the world will bring gifts to honor God. Discuss how we can also give gifts to Jesus, not physical gifts, but gifts of love, kindness, and obedience.
3. Ask each child to think of a 'gift' they want to give to Jesus this week. It could be helping a friend, listening to their parents, or spending time in prayer.
4. Have the children write or draw their gift on the star shape and then share with the group if they're comfortable. Encourage them to pray, asking God to help them give this gift to Jesus throughout the week.
5. Collect the stars and create a display on a wall or bulletin board as a reminder of their commitments to bring gifts to Jesus.