

Nativity 2 / Make a nativity scene 2

Joseph's angle – Leaders version

For a one hour study, just do the starred * questions

I used Nativity scenes 1,2,3,4, from www.activityvillage.co.uk/nativity-scene-printables and prepared the big-sheet (see below) in advance

Check in – with the group sitting in a semi circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

1. What do you remember from the last study we did?

What does the passage say and mean?

60 minutes

2. **STICKERS** Joseph and Mary were engaged. How do you think Joseph responded to the news when Mary told him that she was pregnant and an angel had visited her?

You may need to tell the group that Mary and Joseph would not have slept together before they were married, remember that she was a virgin.

3. Read Matthew 1:18-19. How did Joseph respond to Mary's pregnancy?

He decided to divorce her (being engaged was as good as being married, except they wouldn't live / sleep together, so to end an engagement meant divorce, which, in that society, was a terrible disgrace). But Joseph was going to divorce her quietly, so that she was not publicly exposed – Joseph acted with Mary's best interests in mind, which shows us his good character.

4. The angel came to Joseph in a dream. What did the angel say in Matthew 1:20-23 and what did Joseph do in v24-25?

The angel said that Mary was conceived from the Holy Spirit i.e. she was still a virgin, and that Joseph should marry her. The angel repeated the message about the baby being a boy, who would be called Jesus ('the Lord saves'). Joseph obeyed the angel.

5. Read Luke 2:1-7. What does this tell us about how rich or poor Jesus' parents were?

There was no room for them in the inn – they were nobodies, they had no influence to get a room in a crowded city, and ended up in a stable. Imagine how much of a nobody you need to be to be ignored when you are in labour!

6. God's Son, the King of the world, was not born in a palace, but a stable. What does this tell us about Jesus?

Jesus didn't use human authority or status to achieve his purposes. God the Father chose a nobody, Mary, to give birth to God the Son, and to care for him and bring him up. The Son of God was not born in a palace with special privileges. Rather he knows what it is like to go without, to suffer, to be cold, to be hungry, to grieve etc. Jesus has been there – remember that he is interested in people that the world overlooks. God didn't want people to follow Jesus because of his humanity (fame / privileged status as a prince of the realm) but to follow him because of his divinity.

7. Why do you think it is important that we remember Jesus' birth, and not just what he did when he was grown up?

His birth reminds us of the miracle of the incarnation – God becoming a man. Jesus was 100% God and 100% human.

8. Why it is so important that God became a man?

A chance to explain the gospel!

How can I live according to these truths in my life?

10 minutes

1. Having learnt about Jesus' birth, do you want to learn more about his life and teachings?

Have some suggestions – reading the Bible, attending a Bible study, running the Christianity Explored course etc.

2. If someone asked you why we celebrate the birth of Jesus, what would you say?

Make a Nativity scene.

30 minutes

Complete the Nativity scene you started last session.

- Add Jesus, some shepherds, sheep and wise men – again, I used Nativity scenes 1,2,3,4, from www.activityvillage.co.uk/nativity-scene-printables printed at least double original size.
- Display this in your chapel for all to see!

Check out – with the group sitting in a semi circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.

Nativity 2

Joseph's angle

1. What do you remember from the last study we did?

What does the passage say and mean?

2. **STICKERS** Joseph and Mary were engaged. How do you think Joseph responded to the news when Mary told him that she was pregnant and an angel had visited her?

3. Read Matthew 1:18-19. How did Joseph respond to Mary's pregnancy?

4. The angel came to Joseph in a dream. What did the angel say in Matthew 1:20-23 and what did Joseph do in v24-25?

5. Read Luke 2:1-7. What does this tell us about how rich or poor Jesus' parents were?

6. God's Son, the King of the world, was not born in a palace, but a stable. What does this tell us about Jesus?

7. Why do you think it is important that we remember Jesus' birth, and not just what he did when he was grown up?

8. Why is it so important that God became a man?

How can I live according to these truths in my life?

1. Having learnt about Jesus' birth, do you want to learn more about his life and teachings?

2. If someone asked you why we celebrate the birth of Jesus, what would you say?