Christmas

Lesson Introduction

Do we forget to take time to smell the roses? More importantly, "Do we forget to take time to enjoy the **"Reason for the Season?"** Leaders, we are often the most guilty of being so busy we forget to enjoy the **reason** for our ministry. **Loving** dedication to a ministry or job is wonderful. Dedication without **love** is destructive.

Giving without loving is possible. Loving without giving is impossible. When we serve the Christ child, our King, is our motive **love or duty?** A dutiful servant who is not motivated from a heart of **love** has not discovered the **true reason** for the season.

Some have argued that "**we**" are the "**reason**" for the season. They say read it, "John 3:16 God so loved the **world**..." Back up a moment. It was **"God's Love"** that motivated Him to come live amongst fallen lost humanity.

The true reason for the season is God's Love! Will we embrace **His love?**

Flash Point

Christmas!
God came to love me!
What a present indeed!

LESSON TWENTY- SIX

Memory Verse

Flash Point

Christmas!
God came to love me!
What a present indeed!

PREPARATION LIST

Prepare all songs and story pictures. Trace and color the songs and pictures onto transparencies or larger pieces of paper. If any items are not available, attempt to locate acceptable substitutions.

Welcome: Cake
National Anthem: National flag
Game #1: 2 containers of candy
Game #2: Assorted clothing to match the game
Special Emphasis: Newspaper tape
Offering: Containers for the offering
Announcements: Flyers for next week's meeting
Lesson Introduction: Clothing representing...
Memory Verse: Poster or transparency
Bible Story: Bible story costume
Object Lesson #1: Small tree, wood, hammer, nails
Object Lesson #2: Crazy clothes, paper,
Object Lesson #3: Box, small baby blankets
Object Lesson #4: Costume for Angel, santa claus, gift etc.

Kids Club Rally

Welcome: Merry Christmas
KIDS Rules
Prayer _____
National Anthem _____
Theme Song _____
Praise Songs _____
Review Questions #1 _____
Game #1 Candy Man
Review Questions #2 _____
Game #2 Mary & Joseph
Special Emphasis Good News
Offering _____

Worship _____
Special Ministry _____
Announcements _____
Lesson Introduction Wise Men
Flash Point: Christmas
Memory Verse Luke 2:10
Bible Story Afraid, Not
Object Lesson #1 Trouble Tree
Object Lesson #2 Tree Dub Ones
Object Lesson #3 Our Gift To God
Object Lesson #4 Fear Not
Story Time Reason For The Season
Ending Prayer

Welcome
Merry Christmas

Props: Cake.
Preparation: Decorate a special birthday cake for Jesus. Do it as nice as you can.
Presentation: Invite some small children to come forward to help you lead the song Happy Birthday to Jesus. Afterwards allow these children to help by blowing out the candles.
(Consider distributing the cake to your audience if there is enough. If not it could be a special treat for the winners in today's games.)

Opening Prayer
KIDS Rules

Ask a child to assist in the opening prayer of the meeting. Sample prayer:

Dear Jesus,

Happy Birthday Jesus! You are my special friend and we invite you to come celebrate your birthday party with us. Please Jesus come and have fun with us. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

National Anthem - Pledges
Praise Songs

Key to Success

Leaders, **desire** is not enough. Some people love children and desire to teach them, but it takes more than just desire.
It takes willingness to humble yourself. A good children's worker must be willing to laugh at themselves. Be willing to admit they make mistakes. Be willing to have fun.
Yes! Be willing to go to the toy section of the store and buy yourself a toy! Then play with it. Be willing also to share and play with your little friends.

Review Questions #1

For the four players of Game #1 to qualify, have them answer a question or quote (one or all) the **Four Rules of Life**, last week's **Flash Point**, or answer a question of your choice.
1. What was last lesson's Flash Point?
2. What was the last lesson's story about?
3. What was the memory verse?
4. Whose birthday are we celebrating. Jesus

Game #1
Candy Man

Props: Two containers of candy, two empty containers (or acceptable substitute), and fun music.
Preparation: Place equal amounts of candy in two containers.
Participants: Four players - two teams of two each (more or less your choice). Score keepers.
Playing: Each child is allowed to grab one handful of candy, as much as they can hold. They then take their single handful of candy and place it in their teams empty container. Candies that drop before reaching the empty container are not to be counted. Once the candy is transferred both teams are given ten seconds to guess (not count) the number of candies their team has successfully transferred. Record their guesses. Score keepers quickly count the candies transferred. The team that has the most accurate guess wins all the candy that was transferred by both teams. The candy remaining in the original bowls may be evenly distributed between the second place team and or the audience.

Review Questions #2

For the additional players to qualify, have them recite a favorite memory verse, last week's **Flash Point** or answer a question about Christmas.

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1. What was last lesson's memory verse?
2. What does the newspapers sell? Bad news.
3. What did Jesus come to bring? Good News.
4. What is the best Birthday present we can give Jesus? Give Jesus our heart.

Game #2
Mary & Joseph

Props: Assorted clothing to match the game, and fun music.
Preparation: Place equal number pieces of clothing for two team to dress up as Mary and Joseph. For the girls team you might have a pillow to place for her pregnancy. If you have two teams of boys you could modify the teams to represent Joseph and his donkey.
Participants: Four or more players forming two teams.
Playing: The players start by facing the audience about three meters from two separate piles of clothes, place in front of each team. Announce to the two teams that there are enough clothes in each stack to dress as Joseph and or Mary.
At the signal to start, the relay dressing contest starts. Each team member races to get dressed. Allow one helper from each team to assist their partners in the dressing. When they are completely dressed the player should turn around once to demonstrate that they are completely dressed, then they can quickly take off the clothes, replace them in the pile and the next player takes their turn. The team whose members complete the relay first is declared the winner.

Special Emphasis
Good News

Props: Newspaper tape, paper and marker pen.
Preparation: Write on separate pieces of paper, your own good news.
Tape these notes on the separate pages of your newspaper. Included in your version could be recent birthdays, include all kinds of things you and your audience can be thankful for.
Participants: Leader and helper.
Presentation: Start to browse through the newspaper. Hey kids, "Wow!" I have a great newspaper it is full of 'good news.' Look at this, Here it says that today (or this week) is Randy's birthday (insert child's name). Let's sing happy birthday to him. Turning to another page. Here is some 'great news,' it says that the first person with green on, that knows the Four Rules of Life, and raises their hand, and is called on will receive a free cookie (or alternate appropriate gift).
Turn to another page. Look here is more good news. It says that (if someone in the church or community) had a baby (insert their name and make it a 'good news' item). Yet here is another good news item. It says there is now a cure for the most deadly disease known to man. This cure is free. What is the most deadly disease we can have. (Allow a response). The correct answer to the most deadly disease is sin. It will cause a person to die and go to hell. Nothing is worse than that. The cure has been found and that is the best Good News ever. Jesus offers to heal us of the most deadly disease.
Kids did you know that Jesus came to bring us Good News. When we become followers of Jesus he gives us a job. We are to distribute Good News. Not bad news, but Good News. How many of you want to be a Good News deliverer? Let's make it our goal to obey Jesus by telling others the Good News.

Children in Special Ministry

For the Christmas lesson, encourage and prepare your children to provide special ministry at this point of your lesson.

Announcements
Offering
Worship Songs

Lesson Introduction
Wise Men

Props: Clothing representing Bible days, flashlights (or candles).
Preparation: Find clothing to represent the three wise men from the Bible story.
Participants: Three volunteers (from audience) or helpers from ministry team.
Presentation: The three come in with there flashlight (or candle). They whisper to the audience. "Hey, we can all be afraid sometimes. (Have them take turns, listing things that people can be afraid of.) Some people are afraid, of the dark, some are afraid of thunder and lightning. Some are afraid of fire and others can be afraid of water, getting sick and even dying. We are the wise men. We came to bring you the Good News. You don't have to be afraid anymore." Did you hear us you don't have to be afraid. We found some Good News. There is no need to be afraid. "Look! Have them lead assist in teaching today's Scripture Memory verse and **Flash Point: God came to love me! What a present indeed!**

Memory Verse

Don't be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Luke 2:10

Props: Memory Verse and Flash point.
Participants: Helpers from the Lesson Introduction continue to assist in teaching the memory verse.
Preparation: Practice the verse. Add appropriate actions for the words. Prepare transparency or a poster to display the Memory verse and Flash Point using the clip art provided in the back of the manual.
Presentation: Leader and the three helpers lead today's Scripture verse. Emphasize the Good News that we don't have to be afraid any longer. **Flash Point: God came to love me! What a present indeed!**

Quiet Seat Time

Bible Story
Afraid, Not

Luke 2:1-20

Props: Bible story costume and oil lantern.
Preparation: Read the Scripture passage and think about how Jesus, who came as a baby King, has helped you to not be afraid. Modify the lesson to best fit you.
Participants: Leader dressed in Bible time costume.
Presentation: Leader comes in dressed in Bible story costume, carrying a oil lamp. The following story is an example. We suggest you insert your own real life experience or if you choose adapt this story to fit your lesson.
Kids, we all have things that can make us afraid. Some of those fears are good and protect us from danger. For instance we should be careful when we cross the street. A healthy fear of being run over by a truck or car helps us to be careful. However there are some fears that are not good. Some things we are afraid of, and maybe we've never even told anyone. People can be afraid of many things. What are some things people can be afraid of ? (Allow a response). The list can include cancer, AIDS, dying, crowds, pain, and much more.
For example when Uncle Darrell (the writer of the Family Circus manuals) was about seven years old, his family were in the country visiting friends on a farm. The friends had a very large guard dog on a chain. The owner decided to demonstrate how the dog would go and retrieve a stick that he would throw for the dog. He told the visiting children they would be safe as long as they were not afraid and did not run from his dog. He warned the children not to move or run if the trained attack dog started to come towards them.

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All the children stood very still next to the adults to watch the owner.
He took the chain of his dog and turned to throw the stick. Instead the dog sniffed around and came towards Uncle Darrell with a growl. Uncle Darrell stood very still just like the owner told him. Suddenly the large guard dog attacked leaping at his throat. The little boy (Uncle Darrell) was so surprised because he had obeyed the owner, the dog was not supposed to attack him.
Kids sometimes things happen to us that never should happen. These things can make us afraid. Jesus wants to help us conquer our fears. We may still be afraid but with Jesus with us it is OK.
As Uncle Darrell was laying on the ground, under the attacking dog, he was crying for help. His father and the owner pulled the dog off and rushed to the hospital to get the care he needed.
After the day the dog attacked Uncle Darrell, whenever he even saw a dog he was afraid of it. It was not something he could control. Even small dogs could made him afraid.
In the time of Jesus many people were afraid. The Romans were a strong foreign power that had come and conquered Jesus' nation. On many of the country roads there were bandits who beat up people, stole their money, and left the travelers for dead. People were full of fear.
The night Jesus was born, there was a strange light came and shown down. It made people afraid. The angels came, and they scared people even though they had come only to announce the birth of Jesus. The shepherds in the field who saw this were very frightened. The great news the angels brought was that the shepherds and people did not have to be afraid. This was great news. We have **Good News** for you. If you are afraid of something which controls your life you can come to Jesus and ask him to take away your fear. When your fear leaves you can have great joy. This is for all people big and small.
Uncle Darrell is no longer afraid of dogs. He is careful, if they are bad dogs. But he is very glad that Jesus helped him to overcome his fear of dogs. Let's pray. If you are afraid of something you can ask Jesus to help you to not be afraid. If you have something you are afraid of and would like Jesus to help you, raise your hand, and we will pray for you.

Suggested prayer:

Dear Jesus,
Please help all of us to trust you and please help us to not be afraid. You have come and you are our friend who is in us at all times. We do not have to be afraid. Jesus is with us. Amen.

Flash Point: God came to love me! What a present indeed!

Object Lesson #1
Trouble Tree

Props: Small tree (or tree branch), wood, hammer, nails, and a saw.
Preparation: Add additional props as desired.
Participants: Leader.
Presentation: Demonstrate the use of the tools for the children. Kids as you get older you will need to find work to support yourself and if you are married to take care of your family. Sometimes when you work you may have a bad day.
One man a carpenter had been hired to help fix up an old house. It was the carpenters first day on the job and it was a rough one. He had a flat tire on his old pickup that had made him late to work. His power drill quit, and then on the way home his old pickup truck over heated making him even later to return home for dinner and his family.
You can imagine the unhappy look on his face as he finally drove up to his home. As he walked up the path to his house he paused a moment by the door. He stood silently looking at the small tree growing there. He reached out and touched the tips of the branches with both hands, it appeared that he put something on the tree but there was nothing to be seen.
When the carpenter opened the door to his house, he face suddenly changed from being worried and unhappy, to having a big smile for his small children and wife. He hugged his children and gave his wife a kiss.

The next morning when he came back out of his house, to go to work, he reached down to the little tree and once again both hands went to the tree and this time it look like he took something from the tree. The carpenter did this every day. His neighbor saw him doing this and finally asked him why he did that to the tree every day. At night and in the morning he would always put his hands on the tree.

The carpenter answer was, "Oh, that's my trouble tree. I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but I also know that my troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and children. So every night I just hang them up on the tree when I come home. Then in the morning I pick them up again. "Strange thing is, "when I come out in the morning to pick them up, there are not nearly as many troubles as I remember hanging up the night before." Kids, Jesus came to take our troubles and fears if only we will choose to give them to Him. **Flash Point: God came to love me! What a present indeed!**

Object Lesson #2

Three Dub Ones

Drama

Props: Crazy clothes, paper, marker pen, and additional props.

Preparation: Write the word DUMB on a piece of paper. Fold it to be kept in one of the actors pockets until they pull it out at the conclusion of the drama. On the back of this paper write the DUB Club Rules. Dress your three helpers or volunteers in crazy looking outfits. Add additional props as desired. Modify as desired.

Participants: Three helpers or volunteer.

Presentation: The three helpers come out dressed in funny, crazy looking clothes. They stumble over each other attracting attention. One says, “What shall we call ourselves?” #Two replies. Let’s call ourselves, “The three dub ones.” That’s what our teacher wrote about us!” (Laughter). # Three replies, **“**That’s a great idea. I read her note and she thought we were so great we didn’t even have to go to school anymore.

That’s so cool!” (Laughter and back slapping). Another says, “We have some rules in case we find more Dub ones like us.” Making a Dub club sounds like fun! (Laughter). There must be some more Dup ones in the world. Putting heads together, whispering, turning to the audience and pull out a sheet of paper with the DUB Club rules to announce the audience.

DUB Club Rules

1. School is not for Dub ones.
2. Look out for #1. That means yourself.
3. Never worry about tomorrow.
4. Eat all the candy you can.
5. Know how to spell Dub.

The three look at each other, “Let’s show everyone our teachers secret note. They may not be Dub ones yet but they need to know how to spell dub. The hold up a slip of paper. Look, Dub is spelled like this! “DUMB!” As they get ready to leave they ask for a show of hands how many want to join their Dub club, it’s a lot of fun, eating candy, no school, and helping yourself. They exit laughing tripping over one another.

Leader enters. Kids, there were wise men who heard that Jesus was going to be born and they travelled far to find him. We need to all be wise and find Jesus for ourselves. None of us really want to be in the Dub club. We need to accept the best Christmas present, ‘Jesus.’ That’s not **dub** that’s smart. **Flash Point: God came to love me! What a present indeed!**

Object Lesson #3

Our Gift to God

Props: Box, small baby blanket.

Preparation: Fix up the box to show an opened Christmas present with a small baby blanket inside. **Participants:** Leader and audience.

Presentation: Kids, Christmas is all about Jesus. If Jesus did not come there would be no Christmas.

Kids, we know that Jesus is no longer in the manger where he was born. (Hold up the opened present.) God gave us a precious present. This opened box represents God's gift. When you ask Jesus into your heart you have opened God's gift and then the box is empty. (Turn the box upside down and shake it, allowing the baby blanket to fall out.) Holding the blanket, see Jesus is not here, and he's not a baby anymore. But now we have an empty gift wrapped box. It wasn't the box or the manger that was important, it was the baby. What was the baby's name? (Allow a response). Yes his name is Jesus.

Let us all take a moment to fill this empty box and give it back to God with a special gift for Him this Christmas. Kids hold out your hand. Now take your finger and let's pretend your finger is now a pen or pencil. Pretend you have an invisible piece of paper on your other hand. (Demonstrate). Now write on your invisible piece of paper that you love Jesus. Even if you don't know how to spell that's OK, he knows your heart. Once you write, "I love you Jesus." On your hand, take your invisible piece of paper, fold it up real small. Then take it and gently toss, your invisible paper into this open box.

Everyone's words of love are now in this gift. Lets close it and say a short prayer over it before we send our words and gift of love to God.

Suggested prayer: (Have children repeat it.)

Dear Jesus,

I love you very much. Will you please come and live in my heart. Help me to live for you everyday. Please forgive me of the bad things I've done and thank you for forgiving my sins. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Hold the gift wrapped box up in the air and have the children repeat with you. Here Jesus, here is a special gift. We love you Jesus. Lower the box. Children God sees what we do and say. Our words of love make Jesus happy. You have just sent Jesus a special Christmas gift. **Flash Point: God came to love me! What a present indeed!**

Object Lesson #4

Fear Not

Drama

Props: Costumes for angel, king, Santa Claus, sword, gift wrapped box, doll or baby.

Preparation: Make sure that Santa's beard is attached with a rubber band or in some manner that can demonstrate that it is not real. Add additional props as desired.

Participants: Leader and actors.

Presentation: Actors enter one at a time. Each on dramatically say their parts. Then freeze in their places. The angel says, Fear not I bring you great news, and points to a gift wrapped box with a baby in it. The King enters holding up a sword, and frowning shouts, "Fear not, I just want to worship the little baby king, I don't really want to kill him. Trust me." Santa enters, Ho! Ho! Ho! Fear not the beard is fake, let's have a party."

Leader steps forward, all actors remain motionless while the leader talks.

Leader, asks the audience which one they would trust. The King? He said he just wanted to worship the chid. Do you believe what he says? No? Why not? (Allow a response). Yes, (pointing) his sword speaks louder than his words. How about Santa Claus, would you trust him with your life. Pull on his beard. Look it's not even real. I think I wouldn't trust Santa with my life though a party might be fun. It's not enough to live my life by.

How about the angel. Would we trust an angel who came to deliver God's message. I hope so, because that is what happened. God's messenger came to give us an important message. Jesus is born. Now we don't need to be afraid. Watch out that you don't trust your life to the wrong people. Important people, even if they are a king or important person, they can be wrong. Party people, even if they look like Santa, can be false. Only Jesus is worth trusting with your life. **Flash Point: God came to love me! What a present indeed!**

Story Time

The Reason for the Season

Props: Colored posters, red material.
Preparation: Make posters of the **Reason for the Season**. Clip art included in the back of the manual. The poster have pictures of various characters from **Family Circus**. If desired, you may substitute your own characters. Any of the pictures may be modified to more accurately reflect your culture.
Participants: Leader and eleven volunteers.
Presentation: Have all the children enter, each carrying a poster. Make sure they do not reveal the back side of their posters until the appropriate time.
Turning to the audience, select one member from the audience who will make a guess of a number between 1 - 10. (**Note:** *Learning the technique to select the right poster is very important. Practice until you feel comfortable with each number.*) If you practice and do the trick properly your audience will be amazed how the child chose the correct poster. They will also learn **"The Real Reason for the Season."** Announce to the audience that the one who is chosen is trying to see if they can guess which poster holds the secret of **"The Reason for the Season."** After they select a number, following the key to the lesson, take the red cloth, and drape it over the poster represented by the number they chose. (Be creative as you describe the various cards. We have written a brief suggested script for each card.
Note: The key to this lesson is tricky, yet it is easy to learn. Take time to make sure you understand it. If some of the posters are switched in order, that is not a problem as long as the fourth one from the left has the picture of Jesus on the back side, **this is the poster that always needs to be selected.** Go to the other posters, one at a time and turn them over to explain why the poster was not the reason for the season.

(If you desire you may select the posters at random). Lastly turn over the selected poster (Fourth from the left) and explain why **Jesus** is the **"Reason for the Season."**

Picture #26-1: The Reason. Blank on the back.

Picture #26-2: Front has a picture of Uncle Darrell. Back has a picture of a child on a carabao. Wow! This looks like fun. Christmas is a time many children get to go to the countryside and visit their grandparents. Some of them may even have a carabao they can ride. Even though we enjoy visiting our family at Christmas, 'No,' this is not the **"Reason for the Season."**

Picture #26-3: Front has a picture of Super Elephant. The back has a picture of a candy cane and candy. Yeah! This is it. This is the right one, isn't it? Isn't candy a good reason to celebrate? Is candy the **"Reason for the Season?"** (Allow a response). No! It isn't. Since the next poster was selected, we will look at the others first to see if the real **"Reason for the Season,"** is hidden there.

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Picture #26-4: Do not turn this poster over until you have revealed all the other posters. The front is Hing Hong the friendly helping gorilla of Family Circus. This poster should have the red cloth draped over it which marks it as the chosen one. When all other posters have been turned over then, show the back of this poster revealing that **Jesus** is **"The Reason for the Season."** This is the selected poster. I wonder, will it show the **"Reason for the Season?"** Turn it over hold it so that all can see the picture of Jesus. Look! I think many of you already knew, Yes, you are right. Jesus is the real **"Reason for the Season!"** Have the kids give their applause for the child selecting the right one. The angels came and announced they had Good News and that Jesus had been born. This is **Good News** that can take away our fears. Let's bow our heads and give Him our prayer of thanks.

Picture #26-5: Front has a picture of Ken the Clown. Back has a picture of a Bunny with an Easter basket. Kids, is this the reason for this season? (Encourage a response.) No! Christmas is not Easter. We know that Easter is fun and it has a special meaning to us, but that is not the **"Reason for the Season."** Let's check another poster.

Picture #26-6: Front has picture of "Mali a Family Circus Clown." The back has a picture of a child carrying a large load of presents. Isn't this what Christmas is all about? Getting gifts? Don't we all get excited about getting gifts at Christmas? Kids, yes we like getting and giving gifts, but this is not the **real "Reason for the Season."** Let's keep looking.

Picture #26-7: Front has clip art of "David the Clown," the back has a picture of children singing and ringing bells. Christmas is about special programs and celebrations. These things happen at Christmas, but the Christmas programs are not the **real "Reason for the Season."**

Picture #26-8: Front has clip art of "Leo the Lion." Back has a picture of a chicken in shock. Many of us enjoy eating at Christmas. One of the things we like to eat is chicken. This chicken is saying, "No, No! Not me!" The chicken knows that the **real "Reason for the Season"** is not eating.

Picture #26-9: Front has clip art of puppet "DJ" and back has scary picture of Halloween. This is not the **real "Reason for the Season."** The angels came to tell us that we don't have to be afraid. Let's check out the last poster.

Picture #26-10: Front has clip art of "Aunt Sandy." Back has pictures of children playing. Often at Christmas we have time off from school. We get to play and have a lot of fun. Once again, this is not the **real "Reason for the Season."** Fun and playing is great, but the **real "Reason for the Season"** is not here. Let's go check out what was selected as the **real "Reason for the Season."** Go the selected poster and show Jesus.

Picture #27-11: Front has **"For the Season."** Back is blank.

Close in Prayer

Suggested prayer:

Dear Jesus,

Thank you that you came. May we never forget that you are the **real "Reason for the Season."** Thank you Jesus for forgiving my sins. Please Jesus live in my heart and help me to live for you! In Jesus name. Amen.

Christmas Party

We recommend having a Christmas party for your children. The best time for it might be after today's **Story Time**.

Leader's Notes