

Mary and Joseph (The Birth of Jesus) Sunday School Lesson

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Download this free Sunday School lesson on the Birth of Jesus that focuses on Mary and Joseph. It's part of our new series "[Heroes of the Christmas Story](#)" (Celebrated and Lesser-Known) that shares the Biblical story of Christmas. The printable lesson plan below includes coloring pages, activities, game, and craft ideas.

[Mary-and-Joseph-Matthew-2-LessonDownload PDF](#)



Bible Lesson: Mary and Joseph

Kids Bible Study on the Birth of Jesus (Christmas)

There are a lot of great truths to take from the story of Jesus' birth. There are also a great many clichés and worn-out elements of the Nativity narrative. In this series, we will encounter several characters and look at the story through the lens of various perspectives. Some of these figures are already well-known, but others will be among the unsung heroes, at least for many people. Lessons will highlight who they are and their significance to the life of Christ and to our lives today.

In this lesson, we highlight a couple of main “heroes” of the Nativity story, who hopefully are recognizable by anyone remotely familiar with it. This lesson explores Mary and Joseph, the stepparents of Jesus. Although they are key players in the life of Christ, it can still be easy to skip over details of who they were and what they did after the birth of the Messiah.

Character focus: Mary and Joseph, the earthly mother and father of Jesus. Both were rather simple people, but God chose them to be part of His eternal salvation plan. Mary was merely a (likely young) woman betrothed to Joseph, a carpenter. The couple took care of Jesus and raised Him. Although Joseph later fades out of Biblical mention, we know that Mary was present at Christ's death, and was eager to spread the news about who He was and what He had done.

Passage: Matthew chapter 2, selected verses.

Importance in the Nativity: God appointed Mary and Joseph to be the parents of Jesus, long before either of them were on Earth. This is evidenced through genealogy descriptions in the gospels, as well as prophecies. Mary was willing to carry Christ in her womb and give birth to Him, and Joseph trusted God's plan enough to take her as his wife and help in raising Jesus.

Significance to us: Mary and Joseph were not celebrities in their time. God used them in a remarkable and miraculous way, because He appointed them and they were willing to be part of His plan. In the same way, we can be part of God's plan, too! When we trust in Him, anything is possible.

Materials Needed for this lesson: Paper, decorative materials, toilet paper tubes, clothespins, popsicle sticks, shoeboxes, fabric or felt, Bibles, pictures, name labels.

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Lesson Opening Game Activity

Lesson Opening: Since we will be discussing the parents of Jesus, as well as following directions, try a couple of simple games that involve those themes:

- Who's your daddy? (Or mother)...print pictures of several celebrities, and also print separate pictures of their parents. Have students guess which parents go with which famous people.
- How many ancestors? Test the students' knowledge of their own family lineage by asking about ancestors. How many "great-grands" can students name of their families?
- Simon says/ "Mother may I"... play a classic game of listening and following directions, providing simple instructions that students can only follow given the appropriate introduction.

Explain to kids that they will be discussing some very important parents in the Bible. Christmas is fast approaching, and we have been learning about some key figures that accompany the Nativity story. This lesson will cover an extra special couple: Mary and Joseph!

Bible Lesson: Mary, Joseph, the Birth of Jesus

Discuss with students who Mary and Joseph were. Sure, they are likely familiar with them as the parents of Jesus, but who were they exactly? We don't know all of the details, truth be told. But we know a little about them, and we can be certain that God chose those two to take care of His son. Family was an important thing in those days, and Joseph was part of King David's family line. We know this from Luke...

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to 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, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. - Luke 2:4-7

There are several "genealogies" in the Bible. Describe to students how these lists were God's way of reminding people of His plan. He knew who Joseph would be and where Jesus would be born. The events of His birth had been planned and foretold. In this

passage, Mary is away from home, forced to have her baby in a barn. How did she come to be in this state??

And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸ And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her. -Luke 1:35-37

Mary was told that she would give birth to a very special son. It might have been a little scary for her to consider that. She was probably confused and questioning what it all meant. But look at her reaction. At the end of it all, she agrees to do what God has asked, because she is His servant. Mary was just a girl from a small town. But God used her because she was willing to do what He asked.

And what about Joseph? What do we know of him?

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus. -Matthew 2:20-25

Continue reading...

Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” ⁵⁷ And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.” ⁵⁸ And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief. -Matthew 13:55-58

Joseph was a simple carpenter. He was engaged to Mary, but he didn’t know about kings and Messiahs. Yet, like Mary, He trusted in God’s plan and was willing to listen to the angel’s announcements. And Joseph raised Jesus to grow in wisdom and stature. Now,

Joseph sort of fades out of the picture in the life of Jesus. But Mary remains prominent. We see her at the wedding in Cana, asking Jesus to help with the wine shortage situation. And more importantly we see her at the end of Christ's life, at the foot of the cross:

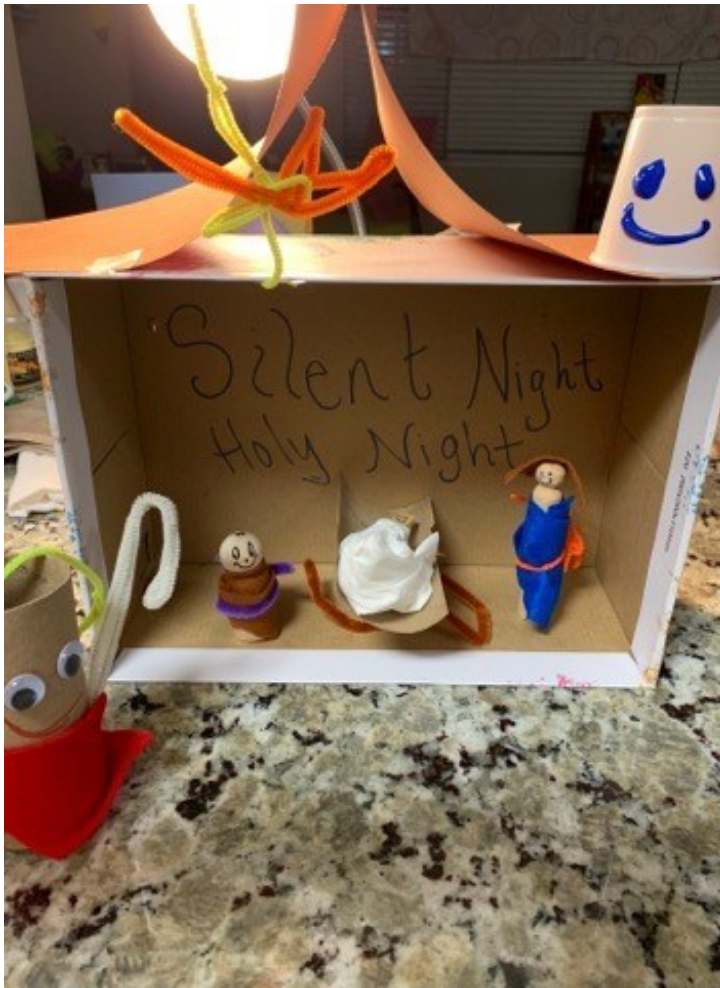
but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. -John 19:25-27

Jesus loved His mother, as we can see from His request that John take care of her. He wanted to make sure that she was loved and looked after. And Mary remains a powerhouse of faith, even after the ascension of Jesus. She worked with the disciples to continue establishing the church and spreading the Gospel to others:

All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. -Acts 1:14

Mary and Joseph were more than mere figures in the Nativity. They were people who loved and served God, and displayed willingness to do whatever He asked. Because of that, He used them in amazing ways to raise Jesus and to establish the kingdom of God. You know what is especially remarkable about that? We can do the same! We might think we are just simple kids (or adults), nothing too special. But when we give our lives to God and allow Him to do His will, spectacular things can happen! Would you like that? All it takes is faith. Pray, stay in the reading of the Bible, and love others. You never know what God has planned!

Close the lesson with prayer and thank God for loving us and coming to die for us. Ask for strength to trust and obey His will in our lives, whatever we may do.



Craft: “Stable Scene” and “Nativity Scene”

We’ve included the PDF of our [Nativity Scene craft ideas](#) in the lesson download above.

[Nativity-Scene-Crafts-for-ChristmasDownload](#)

Coloring Page: Mary and Joseph Escape to Egypt

This free [Christmas coloring page](#) is from [Christian Clip Arts](#) and used by permission. This printable activity sheet is also included in the combined Sunday School lesson above.

[Mary-and-Joseph-Coloring-PageDownload PDF](#)

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Matthew 2:13



The Escape to Egypt – Matthew 2:13-15

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

