**November 29th, 2020: Pre-K thru 2nd Sunday School lesson
THE CHARACTERS OF CHRISTMAS Lesson 1: wise men worship**

***In this lesson, the children will learn about the importance of seeking Jesus and praising Him for coming to earth to save us!***

**AS KIDS ARRIVE: THE WISE MEN AND THE STAR (Materials: coloring page, crayons or markers)**

***The wise men did everything they could to find Jesus. It took them a long time because they were only following a star. When they found Him, they gave Him special gifts and praised Him!***

**WORSHIP TIME AND BIBLE VERSE**

**"You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:13 NIV**This verse tells us that if we look for Jesus like the wise men we will find Him because He wants us to find Him and grow close to Him!

**Act out the verse for the children using the following motions:**
You (*point out)*
will seek (*form hands like binoculars in searching motion)*
Me (*sign language for “Jesus” pointing to nail marks in hands)*
and find Me (*sign language for “Jesus” pointing to nail marks in hands)*
When you*(point out)*
Search (*form hands like binoculars in searching motion)*
for Me*(sign language for “Jesus” pointing to nail marks in hands)*
With all your heart*(cross your heart with arms; sign for “Love”)*

**BIBLE STORY**

Gather the children around you in preparation for story time. After the introduction, read the story about the birth of Jesus directly from the Bible. If possible, use a children's Bible so it will be easier for the kids to understand.

**Introduction:** It’s time for our Bible story for today. Anytime we read the Bible we can remember that it’s God’s Holy Word. The Christmas story is my favorite story because it helps us learn more and celebrate Jesus’ Birthday! This week our story is about the wise men and how they looked for Jesus. They did not give up until they found Him. They celebrated His birth with special gifts because He is special and deserves our praise and treasures.

**Read Matthew 2:1—12.  (The Wise Men Seek Jesus)**
As you read the passage, ask the children to listen to what the wise men did to find Jesus and what they did when they found Him.

**Discussion Questions:**
1. What do the wise men follow to help them find Jesus? *(A Star)*
2. What is the name of Jesus’ mother? *(Mary.)*
3. What do the wise men do when they saw Jesus? *(They worshipped Jesus.)*
4. What do the wise men give to Jesus?*(Presents; Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh)*

**Conclusion:** The wise men do everything they can to find Jesus, and it takes them a while to find Him. However, they do not give up. When they find Him, they praise Him and give him special treasures that are worth a lot of money—fit for a king! Jesus deserves our praise, worship, and our treasures. We can learn from the wise men that we need to remember to look for Jesus at Christmas. We can also try hard to remember to praise Him because that’s what Christmas is all about!

**FUN TIME: FIND THE BABY GAME (Materials: activity page printed, tape, scissors)**

***In this activity, children will play a fun game of “Hide & Seek” to find the Baby Jesus using stars as clues just as the wise men did.***

**PREPARATION:** Print and cut out the activity page(s). Each child will need one star and one Baby Jesus.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Before class, tape pictures of Baby Jesus around the room where they will be easy for children to find. Cover each picture of Baby Jesus with a picture of a star. You will then call children by name to find a star. Have each child look underneath the star to find Baby Jesus. The child will then return to his or her seat with both the star and Baby Jesus.

**WHAT YOU WILL SAY:** Long ago, the wise men sought to find the place where Jesus was born so that they could bring Him gifts and worship Him. Today, we are going to play a special game called, “Find the Baby.” In just a minute we are going to take turns looking for Baby Jesus. The Bible tells us that the wise men only had one way of finding out where Jesus was—they followed a big star up in the sky. Today, we will take turns looking around the room to see if we can find stars in the room. Do you see them? In just a second I’m going to have you go one at a time to follow the star. When you find a star, look underneath it and see what you find. When someone in our class finds the Baby Jesus we all need to cheer “Yay, Jesus!” to praise Him, just like the wise men did. Let’s practice that and pretend someone found a picture of Jesus under a star…Ready? 1…2…3… ”YAY, JESUS!” Okay, now that we are all excited, let's take turns until all the pictures are found! There is one for each of you, so lets seek Jesus!

**ALTERNATE FUN TIME: SEEKING BINOCULARS CRAFT (Materials: printed instructions, toilet paper tube, construction paper, tape, star stickers, marker, crayons)**

***In this activity, children will create a pair of binoculars to remind them to look for Jesus and seek Him daily.***

**PREPARATION:** Before class, cut construction paper in half vertically. In the center of each slip, write “Wise men still seek Jesus today!” Each child will need one sheet.

**WHAT YOU WILL DO:** Allow the children to decorate their paper with crayons and stickers. Then individually help the children roll their construction paper—design side out—around the toilet paper roll.  Once the construction paper is wrapped around the tube one time, slide the tube up and use a piece of tape to hold the paper in place at the bottom. Slide the tube out and tape the top as well. Repeat this process with the remaining side.  Use a piece of tape to connect both sides of the rolled-up paper together for additional sturdiness. Allow kids to go exploring around the room holding their binoculars up to their eyes. Remind them to always seek after Jesus just like the wise men did!

**Timesaving Option:** Make a pair of binoculars for each child before class and then allow students to decorate their binoculars gently with star stickers.

**PRAYER/SNACK**
For today's snack, provide Hershey's Kisses ® . While eating, discuss what kind of gifts the children would bring to Jesus on His birthday. The Kisses, wrapped in shiny foil can represent the kinds of presents that the wise men brought to Jesus so long ago.

**What We Learned:** Today, we learned about the wise men and their quest to seek Jesus so that they could honor Him with gifts and worship. Our story from Matthew chapter 2 challenged our students to look for Jesus and use every opportunity to remember Him and His birth this Christmas! He is worthy of our praise, gifts, and time! Of all the characters of Christmas, the wise men set the best example of pursing Jesus with our whole hearts and giving generously to Him because He is worth it! (Scriptures used: Matthew 2:1-12)

**Words to Remember:** (Bible versions used are selected to help young children learn and understand the meaning of scripture.) "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13 NIV Practice this verse several times with your child during the week. This will not only help your child to remember the verse, but also it will help to reinforce what he or she learned during class.

**Suggested Parent/Child Activity:** Have your child set aside a little bit of money from their allowance or piggy bank this week. Take the money and place it in a paper bag labeled “For Jesus.” Talk about how money is what is used to buy things—fun things like candy and toys but also important things like coats and clothes. Encourage your child to take the money they collect and give it to Jesus in the offering at church the next Sunday. Explain that when we give money to church or to help someone in need, Jesus is honored! In this way, they are worshipping Jesus with something that costs them and that is what generosity is all about!

**Daily Prayer:** Dear God, Thank You for sending Your Son Jesus down to us. Help us to look for Jesus and celebrate Him during this fun Christmas season. Help us to remember we only have one reason to celebrate; the birth of Jesus! Help us to be like the wise men and remember to look for Jesus and honor Him with our time, talent, and gifts. We love You so much! Amen!