

Unit 3: Good News for Outsiders

Shepherds Hear About Jesus' Birth (Luke 2:8-20)

Bible Point: Jesus loves everyone

Purpose

Shepherds spend a lot of time with sheep. It was true in Bible times, and it's true in places around the world today. They *don't* usually spend a lot of time around angels. That's where the surprise comes in! Even though their nomadic way of life left them on the outside of more settled society, shepherds were the first to hear of Jesus' birth.

Even if it's not Christmas, the story of shepherds hearing about Jesus is a wonderful example of Jesus' love for everyone—any time of the year!

Bible Point

Guess what, friends? Jesus loves everyone. That's our Bible Point today. Every time you hear the words "Jesus loves everyone!" cross your hands over your heart like this and say, "Thank you, Jesus!"

Jesus loves me. (*point to yourself*)

Jesus loves you. (*point to a friend*)

Jesus loves everyone. (*cross hands over heart and say, "Thank you, Jesus!"*)

When we feel alone, (*hold out right hand*)

And when we're on our own, (*hold out left hand*)

Jesus loves everyone. (*cross hands over heart and say, "Thank you, Jesus!"*)

Bible Memory Buddy & Verse

Our Bible Memory Buddy for Unit 3 is Decker the crab!

The Bible is God's true story of love! Our Bible Memory Verse comes from the Bible. Let's say it together.

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: (*hold hands out like a tray*)

Love each other. (*give a friend's shoulder a squeeze*)

Just as I (*point up*)

have loved you, (*point forward*)

you should love each other." (*give another friend's shoulder a squeeze*)

(John 13:34)

Bible Discovery

Surprise! Today our Bible story tells about the day Jesus was born. We celebrate this story at Christmas, *and* we'll celebrate Jesus' birth here today!

We place an angel on Christmas trees to remember the angels who told people the good news that Jesus was born. Let's start reading the story in the Bible.

Read aloud Luke 2:8.

A shepherd's job is to take care of sheep.

Thanks for taking good care of your sheep, shepherds. Shepherds had to stay in the fields with their sheep. Maybe they felt lonely sometimes. Everyone else was at home with their families while the shepherds were alone with their sheep.

Read aloud Luke 2:9.

The shepherds saw a bright light and angels sent from God!

Read aloud Luke 2:10-12.

Jesus was born! And the shepherds—people who were usually alone and left out—were the first to hear about it. Jesus loves everyone. (*Thank you, Jesus!*) Even shepherds! The shepherds decided to go into the town and find baby Jesus. Let's go, too!

Babies are so cute. And this baby was extra special. He's our friend Jesus. Let's find out what the shepherds did when they met him.

Read aloud Luke 2:16-20.

The shepherds were happy to be invited to see baby Jesus. God picked them to see Jesus first even though some people thought shepherds weren't very important. But they were! Jesus loves everyone! (*Thank you, Jesus!*) The shepherds told people the good news—Jesus was here!

Good news makes me happy! After hearing about Jesus' birth, maybe the shepherds didn't feel so lonely anymore. We don't have to feel lonely either, because our friend Jesus is always with us. And he always loves us. Jesus loves everyone! (*Thank you, Jesus!*)

Whew! Shepherds had a tough job. They had to keep track of all the sheep. Later in the Bible, Jesus called himself the good shepherd. Jesus loves us and takes care of us. Jesus loves everyone. (*Thank you, Jesus!*) Even when we don't follow him, Jesus will always find us and bring us close to him again.

Prayer

God, thank you for sending Jesus to show us your love. Your love isn't exclusive or dependent on who I am or what I do. Please help me as I care for your kids today. In Jesus' name, amen.