

Use this guide to help your family celebrate Christmas all month long.

First, watch  
this week's  
video!

Christmas:  
Celebrating  
Jesus, God's  
greatest gift

### Memory Verse

Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.  
Luke 2:11, NIV

### Bible Story

Gabriel Appears to Mary  
Luke 1:26-56

### Bottom Line

You can have joy because God has a plan for you.

## Activity

### Joy Search

#### WHAT YOU NEED:

Timer

#### WHAT YOU DO:

Ask your child, "Do you know what the word joy means? Joy is when you find a way to be happy, even if things around you aren't all that happy."

Set a timer for five minutes. Challenge your child to go around the house and find three things that bring them joy. Tell them you're going to do the same thing. When the timer goes off, meet back in the spot where you are now and share the things you chose. Talk about why those things bring you joy.

## Talk About the Bible Story

In our story today, who appeared to Mary? (*The angel Gabriel*)

What did the angel tell her? (*That she would give birth to the Savior of the world*)

How do you think Mary felt about the news that she would give birth to God's Son? (*Joyful, scared, probably overwhelmed*)

When we talk about joy in the Bible, we're often talking about people who were able to find joy even when their situations weren't so joyful. Mary probably felt joy about baby Jesus, but she was probably also scared and overwhelmed. How does it make you feel to know that God sent Jesus for you?

*Parent: Share a personal story about a time you had a plan, but God's plan was different. Talk about how you handled it. Were you able to find joy in the midst of your circumstances? Were you able to feel God's presence with you?*

## Prayer

Use this prayer as a guide, either after talking about the Bible story or sometime before bed tonight:

"Dear God, thank You so much for the joy we have in You—during the Christmas season, and always! Thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You for [name your child(ren)], and how You made each of them special and beautiful and smart and funny! We praise You for the plan You have for us, and the truth that we can trust You no matter what. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen!"

# Simply Christmas: No Assembly Required

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### Key Question

What are  
your plans for  
Christmas?

## Activity

### Planner

#### WHAT YOU NEED:

Two sheets of paper and two writing utensils

#### WHAT YOU DO:

Tell your child that the two of you will be writing a plan for each other to carry out. Your child will write a plan for you, and you'll write a plan for them. Then, you'll attempt to accomplish each other's plans, step by step.

You can write plans for any task that can be completed in your home. It can be something your child knows how to do, but you don't know how to do (and vice versa). It can be a plan for making a specific snack or doing a specific chore. Whatever the plan is, each of you should write down each step exactly as it should be carried out.

When you're finished writing, take turns following each other's plans. Have some fun with it by following your child's steps very literally. Monitor each other's progress and make sure no one skips a step in the plan!

## Talk About the Bible Story

Do you like having set plans, loose plans, or no plans? (Ask your child to elaborate on their responses.)

*(If your family has already made plans for Christmas celebrations, ask your child what parts of your plans they're most looking forward to. If your plans aren't set yet, ask your child what they're hoping IS part of your family's celebration.)*

How was Jesus a part of God's plan all along?

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How do you think Mary felt about the news that she would give birth to God's Son? (*Joyful, scared, probably overwhelmed*)

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