

Lesson Two • THE GIFT OF WISDOM

Items Needed for LARGE Group Bible Lesson

- ✓ Three remaining wrapped gifts, each with one of the following words inside: **Love, Wisdom,** and **Joy**. This week you will open up the gift with the word "Wisdom" inside.
- ✓ *The Gift of Advent* CD playing *We Three Kings* as children enter for the Opening Activity
- ✓ Paper for the Opening Activity
- ✓ Pencils or markers for the Opening Activity
- ✓ Barrier on the door so children have to bow when entering the room
- ✓ Picture of the *Church of the Nativity* door with four foot high entrance (Optional)
- ✓ *The Gift of Advent* DVD for music and teaching videos
- ✓ Advent wreath with candles and matches to light the second candle
- ✓ Manger
- ✓ Large star by manger
- ✓ Bible

Items Needed for SMALL Group Bible Lesson

- ✓ Two large pieces of roll paper
- ✓ Markers or pencils
- ✓ Several 3x5 cards for each Bible study small group
- ✓ Bible

**Additional items may be needed for optional activities.*

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Lesson Two

THE GIFT OF WISDOM

Music



- Joy To The World
- The Christmas Dance
- Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
- Christmas With A Capital "C"
- It's About The Cross

Music videos to sing along with can be found on the DVD & on the DVD-Rom

Videos



Teaching Videos can be found on the DVD and the DVD-Rom

Opening Activity

Have the song *We Three Kings* playing as children walk in and one candle already lit on Advent wreath. (Song included on *The Gift of Advent* audio CD)

Create a barrier on the top half of the door(s) so children and leaders need to bow to enter the room today. This should be the only entrance that anyone can enter the room by. If possible, also have a large star in the room by the manger.

Have paper, along with markers or pencils available to children as they come in. Ask them to write down any items they are wanting for Christmas this year on one side of the paper. On the other side, ask them to write down things that God has already given to them. Younger children could draw pictures of the items or leaders could be available to help them write out their items.

Large Group Introduction

Boys and girls, I want you to take a quick look at what you wrote down on your paper. Which list is longer? Which list is more important to you?

The last time we were together, we talked about how God gave Adam and Eve everything they needed. Were they thankful for what they were given or did they still want more? Unfortunately, we tend to think about what we want more than what we have already been given. In fact, how many of you remember what you got last year for Christmas? Or how about two years ago? Even though you were probably so excited to get your gifts and couldn't imagine NOT getting them, they are easily forgotten.

In our time together, we are going to talk about some of the best gifts we can receive. (Point to the wrapped gifts and the word "Hope" in the front of the room.)

We don't deserve any of them, but God graciously gives them to His children. God is the only One who can give them to us and they are more precious and valuable than any other gift! Now let's sing and praise the One who gives us more than we deserve.

Make sure to have leaders collect the papers so they are not a distraction during singing and worship time.

Begin music videos now.



Large Group Opening

Leader(s) should read **Matthew 2:1-12 ESV**. Even though it is printed here, make sure to read it directly from the Bible.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Play Lesson 2 Teaching Video

Teaching Videos can be found on the DVD & the DVD-Rom

Video Overview: The Go Fish Guys will talk about who the Magi were, why they followed the star, and what they went through in order to worship the newborn King.

Back To Leader For Wrap Up Of Large Group Time.

Today when you walked in, you may have noticed that the door was shorter than usual and I know many of you have asked why that was the case.

If you were to go to Bethlehem today and visit the Church of the Nativity, where some people believe is the actual birthplace of Jesus, you would see that the only entrance is about four feet high. Nobody knows for sure why the door is so small, but a person cannot enter the Church of the Nativity without bowing. (You can look online to find an actual picture of this door to use as a visual)

We made our door small today to remind us that we can't come into the presence of God unless we humble ourselves and bow before Him.

Do you know what it means to be humble? It means that you aren't arrogant or proud, that you put others before yourself. Jesus, leaving his throne to come to earth and live among sinners, is the ultimate example of humility.

****Optional visual demonstration to describe humility:**

Have several volunteers pretend they are waiting in line to receive something. Once the line is formed, ask two leaders to also join the line. (Designate these leaders beforehand) One leader should humbly walk to the back of the line while the other leader budges their way to the very front. Ask the children:

Which leader showed humility?

Yes, (insert leader's name) also showed respect to everyone in line before him/her.

Which leader showed selfish pride?

(Insert leader's name) was not showing respect to those already in line and thought he/she was more important than the others.

You may want to recite the verse from the video again here:

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom. Proverbs 11:2 ESV

Jesus came down from heaven and, even though He was King and should have been treated with the utmost respect and dignity, He willingly was treated like the worst of criminals. He thought of everyone else, including you, before He thought of Himself. This is what it means to be humble.**

The gift we opened last week was the gift of hope. The gift we're about to open now can only be received by those who are humble. Pick a child to open the second gift and have them read: WISDOM. One of the candles should already be lit on the advent wreath at this time.

Our second candle (light it now) represents the wisdom that God gives when we humble ourselves and follow Him!

End in prayer and transition into small groups.

Small Group Bible Lesson

Have two large sheets of roll paper on the ground or table with “**earthly wisdom**” written on one and “**heavenly wisdom**” on the other. Make sure to have cards ready with the following words on them: **bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, boasting, pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, and sincere.**

Even though the Scriptures are printed here, make sure you and the children are reading directly from the Bible. For leaders of younger children who will not be able to read on their own, have them follow along in their Bibles while you read. We recommend finding pictures for the children to look at as visuals while you are talking to them. For example: the Magi, star, etc.

We heard about the Magi earlier. The Magi are often referred to as the wise men. What do you think of when you think of a wise person? (Some answers might be someone who studies a lot, has gone to college and gotten several degrees, or has a really important job.) That’s probably how our world defines wise, but do you think God defines wisdom the same way?

Let’s open our Bibles to James 3:13 (ESV) to find out. (While children are opening to the passage, hand out the cards.)

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.

? Does anyone know what the word “meekness” means? To be humble (you might need to remind them of the line exercise earlier or explain the definition if line exercise wasn’t used)

Continue reading verses 14-16 (ESV). Ask the children to listen closely for characteristics of earthly or worldly wisdom and add their card to the roll paper when it is read. You may want to give a simple definition after the verses are read, and write it next to the word as it is discussed.

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but it is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exists, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

? What characteristics or things did you hear in those verses?

- Jealousy
- Selfish Ambition
- Boasting

Now let’s read about heavenly wisdom. Have a volunteer read verse 17. Ask children to listen closely for characteristics of heavenly wisdom.

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

? What characteristics did you hear?

Pure • Peaceable • Open to reason • Gentle • Full of mercy and good fruits • impartial • Sincere

Is earthly wisdom similar to heavenly wisdom? It sounds like they are opposites! One kind of wisdom sounds like it is living for yourself and the other sounds like it is living for God. Now that we know the differences, how do we become wise according to God’s Word? (Some might say reading the Bible or praying) We need to ask Him!

We already have our Bibles open to James, so let’s all go back to chapter 1 and read James 1:5.

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

All heavenly wisdom comes from God. It is not something we can achieve on our own but is given to us from God.

Do you remember who King Herod called on to ask where Jesus was going to be born? He called all the chief priests and teachers of the law. They had studied and memorized what the prophets had said about the Savior being born. They were the smartest people King Herod knew. But what did they do with that information? Does it say that they joined the Magi and went to meet Jesus? Were they excited to share the news with others? No, instead of going to bow before the King, they chose to ignore Him.

John 5:39-40 says, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.”

Although it pleases God when we go to church and study His Word, we still need to genuinely seek Him. You may be familiar with the stories from the Bible and God’s promises, but do you believe them? If you do, does it change the way you live? Are you sharing them with others?

Many people, smart people, knew a Savior was coming but did nothing about it. Those with true wisdom put God’s ideas into action! The Magi were the only ones to continue on and search for Jesus. Maybe that’s why they are called the wise men!

Personal Application

If a white board is available, you can have the following passage listed with the words "rejoiced", "great", and "joy" left blank.

Look up Matthew 2:10 ESV and let's fill in the blanks together.

*"When they saw the star, they **rejoiced** exceedingly with **great joy**."*

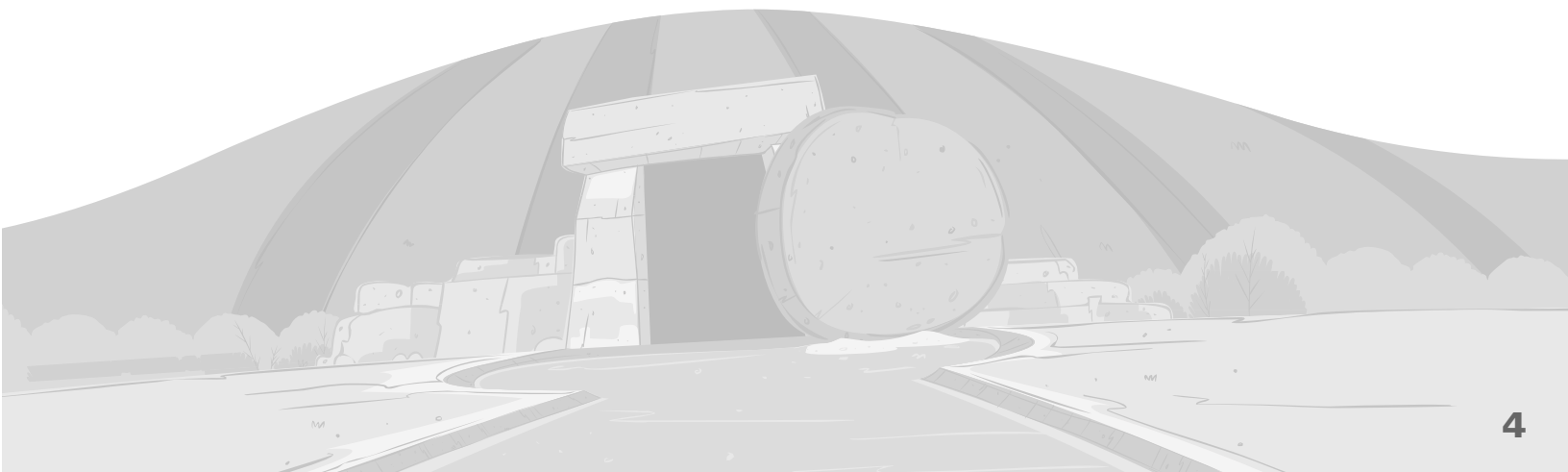
The Magi were filled with joy at the chance to worship Jesus. They traveled hundreds and hundreds of miles just to spend a few moments with Him. It probably took them three to six months just to get there!

? What was your attitude like in coming to church today?

? Do others see your joy in following Jesus?

? Are you excited when you have an opportunity to worship your King?

End together in prayer.





WORD FIND ACTIVITY

K B J I R A T S X V H J W
 S Z Y S M O D S I W S F N
 U K A S W G P H T A Y D M
 J J P O T T I H M A M S U
 O M R R B X G T E A D E X
 S O N C Q V S T N R M M J
 E S K C I I P G E K B B N
 P Z A J R H E H J E S U S
 H F V H F R P Z Y P N N B
 N Y C G H E I T N E V D A
 H O P E H P V P M M A G I
 E J S S M U H X M X U V I
 P R L O V E W I D M A R Y

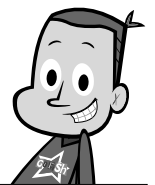
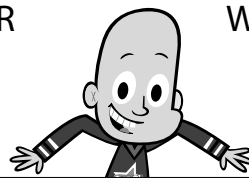
ADVENT
JOSEPH
MARY

CHRISTMAS
JOY
SHEPHERDS

CROSS
LOVE
STAR

HOPE
MAGI
WISDOM

JESUS
MANGER



Focus Verse

Proverbs 11:2 ESV
When pride comes, then comes disgrace,
but with the humble is wisdom.

The Magi were considered wise men because they humbled themselves and bowed down before Jesus, recognizing Him as a true King. We need to be humble as well, in order to recognize Jesus as the only King able to save us from our sins! Godly wisdom requires putting our faith into action!



Optional Activities

HOW FAR IS 1500 MILES?

Have your small group look at a local map. Use something to represent and measure the distance of 1500 miles. Allow children to see which cities or landmarks are 1500 miles from where you are and talk about walking that distance like the Magi did!

QUIET TIME

The Magi brought gifts, or treasures, that were expensive and special. What are you going to give Jesus for His birthday this year? He doesn't need anything from us, but what He wants most from us is our love and devotion.

If you already trust Jesus as your Savior, think about what else you can give Him. He doesn't want your DS or iPod touch, but He may want you to spend more of your time with Him. He may want you to treat your brother or sister more kindly. He may want you to show love to someone who doesn't have any friends at school, or He may want you to tell someone else about Him!

Spend some time right now thinking and praying about what it is that Jesus wants from you.

Remind the children how important their quiet time is and encourage them to use their Bibles to help them stay in God's Word throughout the week.

SWORD DRILL

Object of the game: To be the first player to find a Scripture reference and to become familiar with the layout of the Bible.

How to play: This is a tried and true game that has been around forever, but the children absolutely love it! After the children all sit down, have the leader call out a Scripture reference (i.e. Job 29:3). They will quickly try to find the verse in their Bibles and when the first person finds it they should leap to their feet. After giving the rest of the children some time to also find the verse, have the person who won read the verse aloud.

Additional verses to look up for the sword drill:

Proverbs 2:6 ESV

For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 8:11 ESV

"For wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her."

Ephesians 1:17 ESV

"...That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,..."

1 Corinthians 1:30 ESV

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,...

Matthew 11:25 ESV

At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children..."



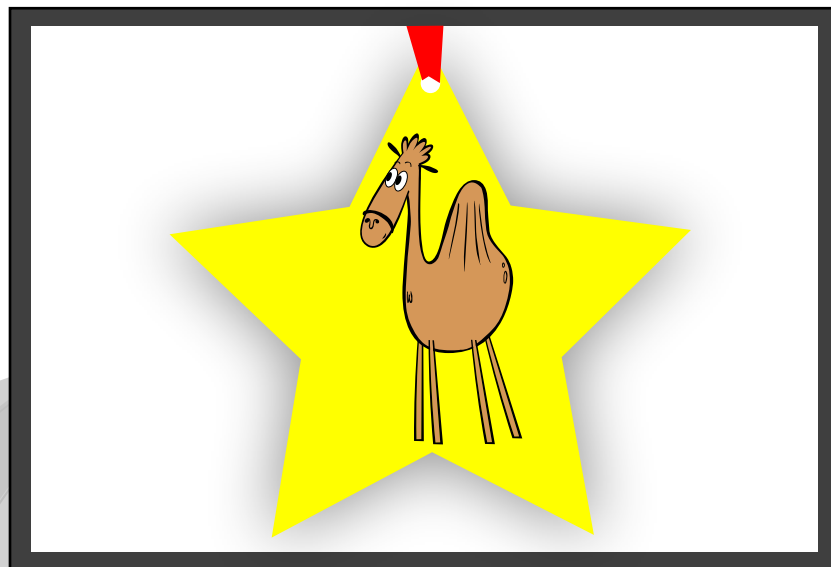
THE GIFT OF WISDOM – ORNAMENT

Supplies Needed for Each Child:

- ✓ One “The Gift of Wisdom” Ornament Template printed on paper or card stock. This template is located on The Gift of Advent CD-Rom.
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- ✓ Scissors
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- ✓ Markers and/or Color Crayons
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- ✓ Ribbon (ornament hanger)
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- ✓ Single Hole Punch
.....
- ✓ One “Gift of Wisdom” Gift Tag
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Instructions:

1. Color the camel and star on the ornament template.
2. Cut out the star.
3. Punch a hole in the top of the star and the corner of the “Gift of Wisdom” tag.
4. Insert ribbon into gift tag and star hole and tie to complete ornament hanger.





THE GIFT OF WISDOM - ORNAMENT TEMPLATE

