

# Gospel Light



## Preschool

### Sunday School Curriculum



*Owen experiences the story of Jesus choosing His helpers in Lesson 8.*

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**Distribute copies of *Preschool Music #2 CD* to students.**

For additional teaching resources and to see a sample preschool lesson in action, visit [www.gospellightpreschool.com/experience](http://www.gospellightpreschool.com/experience).

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## Gospel Light Sunday School Curriculum

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# John Is Born

Winter • Lesson 1

## Who?

Zechariah, Elizabeth, the angel Gabriel, John

## What?

When John was born, Zechariah said that John would tell people about God's love (Luke 1:5-25,57-80)

## When & Where?

Shortly before Jesus was born, in the city of Jerusalem

## Why?

To help children anticipate the coming celebration of Jesus' birth



## Teacher Challenge

Read Luke 1:5-25,57-80.

Think about the difference this story makes in your own life. How will this impact the children you teach?

God loved us so much that He sent His Son into a world that was prepared and anticipating Him! Prophets told of the Messiah many years before, and the people of Israel were eagerly looking for signs that the prophecies were about to be fulfilled. So when, six months before Jesus' birth, Elizabeth (too old to have a baby) and Zechariah (a priest publicly struck mute) welcomed a son, people were ready to listen to Zechariah's message. Zechariah's restored speech and powerful prophecy announced

the news—God was up to something! John was preparing the way, even by his birth!

- What events in the past did God use to prepare you to know and love Him today?
- How might God use a current situation in your life to do something good in the future?

As the Christmas season accelerates, help your little ones see how God was then—and is now—working through circumstances in an astonishing way. Invite Him to increase your own anticipation. Whenever we focus on Jesus, we can anticipate the miraculous!

## Goals for each child

- 1** Tell that Zechariah said that John would tell about God's love
- 2** Name ways God shows love to him or her
- 3** Sing or pray to show gladness about God's love

## Bible Verse

"God so loved the world."

John 3:16

# Prepare

Winter • Lesson 1

## 1 Play to Learn

20 to 30 minutes

Teachers guide small groups of children in one or more activities

### Dramatic Play Center

Act out being moms or dads and talk about Zechariah and Elizabeth  
**Materials:** Bible, dolls, doll blankets, baby bottles, toy dishes, toy food

### Snack Center

Make a face snack and talk about what an angel told Zechariah about his baby boy  
**Materials:** Bible, paper plates, graham crackers, plastic knives, frosting, chocolate chips

### Art Center

Make a Bible verse card and talk about God's love  
**Materials:** Bible, 9x12-inch (23x30.5-cm) sheets of construction paper, markers, scissors, ruler, glue sticks

### Game Center

Play a game like Hopscotch and talk about the people God loves  
**Materials:** Bible, index cards, marker, masking tape

## 2 Listen to Learn

10 to 15 minutes

One teacher leads this large-group time to guide children in hearing and understanding the Bible story and Bible verse

### Come Together

**Materials:** None

### Bible Verse

**Materials:** Bible, Bible Verse Poster 1 from *Visual Resources*

### Prayer

**Materials:** None

### Song

**Materials:** *Preschool Music #2* DVD or CD and player

### Puppet Time

**Materials:** Callie puppet

### Bible Story

**Materials:** Bible, Figures 1-4 from *Visual Resources*, paper, marker, flannel board

## 3 Talk to Learn

15 minutes

Teachers guide small groups of children to complete *TalkTime* activity page and other activities as time allows

### TalkTime Activity Page

**Materials:** Bible, Lesson 1 *TalkTime* activity page and sticker page for yourself and each child, crayons or markers

### Bible Verse Game

**Materials:** Bible, two sheets of paper for each child, tape



- On *Preschool Music #2* CD, play "Welcome, Hello!" (track 1) as children arrive and "Cleanup Party!" (track 16) during cleanup time

Check off one  
or more options for  
each step of the lesson

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## Dramatic Play Center

### Collect

Bible, dolls, doll blankets, baby bottles, toy dishes, toy food.

### Do

Children act out being moms and dads, taking care of babies and preparing meals. As children play, talk with them about the names of people in their families. **In our Bible story today, we are going to learn about a mom and a dad. Their names were Zechariah and Elizabeth. Their baby was named John.**



### Teaching Tip

In addition to dolls and toy dishes and food, you

may also provide simple dress-up items (shawls, purses, wallets, glasses, shoes, etc.).

## Snack Center

### Collect

Bible, paper plates, graham crackers, plastic knives, frosting, chocolate chips.

### Do

Children wash hands. Give each child a paper plate, a graham cracker and a plastic knife. Children spread frosting on graham cracker and then arrange chocolate chips to make surprised faces on frosting. **In our story today, a man was very surprised when an angel talked to him. The angel told the man that he would have a son.** Children eat their face snacks together.



### Teaching Tip

Post a note alerting parents to the use of food in this activity. Also check registration forms for possible food allergies or restrictions.

### Talk About

- **The Bible story today tells about a baby boy born to Zechariah and Elizabeth. They named the baby John. Zechariah said that when John grew up, John would tell about God's love.**
- Refer to open Bible. **The Bible says, "God so loved the world." God sent Jesus to show His love for us.**
- **God shows us love by helping us have friends to play with. Connor, who do you like to play with?**
- Pray, **God, we're glad You love us. Thank You for sending Jesus. We love You. Amen.**

### Kindergarten Challenge

Help children print on a self-adhesive name tag the first name of someone in their family. Children wear name tags as they pretend to be family members.

### Kindergarten Challenge

Children use chocolate chips to make different faces on frosting on graham crackers (happy, sad, scared, etc.).

## Art Center

### Collect

Bible, 9x12-inch (23x30.5-cm) sheets of construction paper, markers, scissors, ruler, glue sticks.

### Prepare

For each child, fold a sheet of construction paper in half to create a card. On the front of the card, print “\_\_\_\_\_ knows . . .” On the inside of the card, print “‘God so loved the world.’ John 3:16.” Also cut 3-inch (7.5-cm) circles from construction paper, making several circles for each child.

### Do

Help children print their names on line on front of their cards. Children draw faces on circles and glue them to fronts and insides of their cards. Talk with children about the people God loves.



### Teaching Tip

To simplify preparation, photocopy words on paper. Children cut out words and glue them to their cards.

### Kindergarten Challenge

Under circles, children write names of people they know.

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## Game Center

### Collect

Bible, index cards, marker, masking tape.

### Prepare

Print each child's name on a separate index card. Use masking tape to outline a Hopscotch grid on the floor (remove tape after use).

### Do

Place each card with name faceup at the end of the grid. Each child takes a turn to hop or jump through the grid to collect his or her name card, bringing the card to the start of the grid. Repeat as time permits, reversing directions each time.



### Teaching Tip

Each time the game is repeated, vary the way in which children move through the grid (tiptoeing, walking backwards, etc.).

### Talk About

- **The Bible says, “God so loved the world.” God loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to show us His love. God loves each one of us.**
- **Dylan, God helps you have strong legs. God loves you! What can you do with your strong legs?**
- **Samantha, God gives you friends to show His love for you. What is the name of one of your friends?**
- **Pray, Dear God, we’re glad You love each one of us. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

### Kindergarten Challenges

1. Children write their own names on the cards.
2. Lead children in saying the words of the Bible verse before each round of the game.

# Listen to Learn

Large-Group Time

Winter • Lesson 1

## Collect

Bible, Bible Verse Poster 1 and Figures 1-4 from *Visual Resources*, *Preschool Music #2* DVD or CD and player, Callie puppet, paper, marker, flannel board; optional—hand mirror, *God's Story for Me* Bible storybook.

## Come Together

Begin this activity as first children come to the area. Make a face demonstrating a feeling (surprised, sad, excited, worried, sleepy, scared, etc.) and ask children to imitate your face. (Optional: Each child looks in mirror to see face.) As each feeling is demonstrated, invite children to name the feeling.

**What might make you feel excited?**

**Worried?** At the conclusion of the activity, say, **Today we're talking about being glad because God loves each one of us.**

## Kindergarten Challenge

Children take turns being the leader and demonstrating the face for others to imitate.

## Bible Verse

Open Bible to John 3:16. The Bible says, **"God so loved the world." God loves all the people in the world so much that He sent Jesus.** Repeat verse with children as you show Bible Verse Poster 1. **This picture shows someone God loves. How many eyes are in this picture?** Point to each eye (girl's and doll's) in the picture and lead group in counting aloud. Then lead children to count the number of eyes of children in their group.



## Kindergarten Challenge

Before class, print each child's name on a separate sheet of paper. In class, choose several papers. Children identify their names and insert names in place of the words "the world" as verse is repeated. Continue until each child's name has been used.

## Prayer

Lead children in prayer. Invite volunteers to say "Thank You, God, for Your love." Then conclude the prayer by saying, **Dear God, we're glad You love us. We love You. In Jesus' name, amen.**

## Song

**This song tells about God's love for us.** Play "God So Loved" (on DVD or track 6 on CD) several times, inviting children to sing along with you.

## Puppet Time

Use Callie puppet to perform the puppet script on the last page of this lesson.

## Bible Story

Use paper and marker and Figures 1-4 to help tell the story on the back of this page.

## Introduction

Print your name on paper to show children. (Optional: Briefly tell children information about your name or who you were named after.) **Listen to find out how a baby in Bible times got his name.** (Hold Bible open to Luke 1 as you tell the story.)



## Zechariah Is Surprised

The Bible tells about a man named Zechariah. Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, loved God. They had no children. Now that both of them were old, they were sure they would never have a child!

One day, however, while Zechariah was working in the Temple, he saw an angel! (The Temple was like a big church.) Zechariah was surprised—and he was AFRAID, too!

The angel said, “Don’t be afraid, Zechariah. You and Elizabeth will have a baby! This baby will grow up to do a VERY important job. He will help people get ready for God’s Son to come!”

Zechariah didn’t believe the angel. He asked, “How can I be SURE this is true? I’m old. My wife is old, too!”

The angel said, “I am Gabriel. God sent me to tell you this! Because you didn’t believe me, you won’t be able to talk until your son is born!”

The angel left. Zechariah walked out into the sunlight. The people outside the Temple could see that he was excited! But he couldn’t talk—just as Gabriel had said. Zechariah had to make motions to help people know what he wanted to say.

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## The Baby Is Born

Soon after, Elizabeth found out that she was going to have a baby! Zechariah still couldn’t talk. Finally, the baby was born. Zechariah’s friends and relatives came to see the baby. They all thought he should be named after Zechariah. But Elizabeth said, “No! His name is to be John!”

The friends and relatives were surprised! They asked Zechariah what the baby’s name should be. He wrote, “His name is John.” And then, all of a sudden, Zechariah could TALK!

## Zechariah Speaks

Zechariah began to thank God! Zechariah told everyone a special message from God. He said that God had a VERY important job for John. When John grew up, he was going to tell people about God’s love and promises. John would tell people how to get ready for Jesus! Everyone who heard Zechariah’s words was surprised! They must have been glad to hear how God was going to show His love for them.

## Conclusion

**When John grew up, he was going to tell people about the best way God showed His love for us—God sent Jesus! The Bible says, “God so loved the world.”** (Optional: Review story by using pages 268-271 in *God’s Story for Me* Bible storybook.)

## Creative Bible Storytelling Idea

As you tell the story, use props to illustrate story actions. Drape fabric over head to represent Zechariah the priest, wrap a doll in a blanket to represent John’s birth and write “John” on a pad of paper to represent Zechariah’s naming of the baby.



## TalkTime Activity Page

### Collect

Bible, Lesson 1 *TalkTime* activity page and sticker page for yourself and each child, crayons or markers.

### Do

Hand out *TalkTime* activity pages and demonstrate how to complete the page. Distribute sticker pages and crayons or markers. As children complete their own page, talk about the items on the page.



## Bible Verse Game

### Collect

Bible, two sheets of paper for each child, tape.

### Prepare

Roll up and tape each sheet of paper to make a rhythm stick.

### Do

**The Bible says, "God so loved the world." I'm glad to know that God loves each one of us. The best way God showed His love for us was by sending Jesus. Let's say this verse to show we're glad.** Give two rhythm sticks to each child. Lead children in saying the verse, tapping sticks together for each word. Children echo your words and imitate your actions. Continue activity, using sticks in a different way each time the verse is said (tap on floor, tap a neighbor's sticks, tap to the side, tap overhead, etc.).



### Talk About

- **The Bible says, "God so loved the world." God shows His love for us in many ways. The best way He showed His love was by sending Jesus.**
- **When John was named, what did Zechariah say his son would do?** (Tell people about God's love. Tell people how to get ready for Jesus.)
- **We're glad God loves us. Katie, what is one way God shows love to you? What good food does God help you to have?**
- **Let's thank God for the ways He shows love to us.** Lead children in a brief prayer of thanks.

### Family FunTime Page

Show page 1 of *Family FunTime*, review the conversation suggestions, and give the papers to children to take home.

### Music Fun

During transition times, invite children to sing along as they listen to "God So Loved" (track 6), "Welcome, Hello!" (track 1) and/or "Good-Bye for Now" (track 15) on *Preschool Music #2 CD*.

# Puppet Script

Winter • Lesson 1

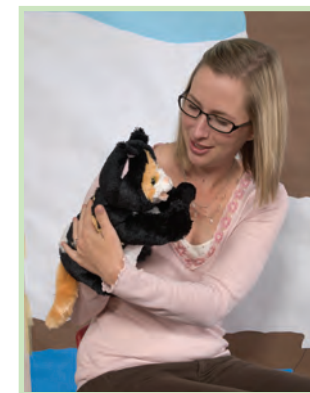
## Callie's Quiet Game

(Note: Play both parts, changing your voice for the puppet. Or you may have a helper play one of the parts.)

- Callie:** Meow! I want to play a game! Do you want to play, too?
- Leader:** (Speaks to children.) Playing a game sounds like fun, doesn't it? (Speaks to CALLIE.) Callie, we would love to play a game with you. What game do you want to play?
- Callie:** It's my very favorite! And I'm good at it!
- Leader:** Great! (Looks confused.) But what IS the game?
- Callie:** You don't know?
- Leader:** Well, no. But I'd love for you to tell us.
- Callie:** Okay. It's called (Whispers.) the Quiet Game. Have you heard of it?
- Leader:** Oh. Is that the game where everyone is really, really quiet, but you make silly faces to try to get someone else to laugh?
- Callie:** Yes! (Speaks to children.) When Teacher says "Go," you try to make me laugh. I'm going to be very, verrry quiet and serious!
- Leader:** Okay. (Speaks to children.) Is everybody ready? (Pauses for children to respond.) Remember, everyone has to be very still and quiet—but make the silliest faces you can to make Callie laugh. Go! (Pauses to make silly faces along with children.)
- Callie:** (Tries to be serious but starts to shake with giggles.) Meow-haha! Oh, you are sooo funny! You made me laugh, and I just couldn't hold it in! Hahaha!

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- Leader:** Callie, would you like to play again and see if you can make the boys and girls laugh or talk?
- Callie:** Sure!
- Leader:** Okay. (Speaks to children.) Remember, don't talk or laugh! Is everybody ready? Go!
- Callie:** (Looks at one child.) Hi! What's your name? Oh, don't talk! Meow-haha! Did I hear someone laughing? (Looks at another child, ignoring whoever might be talking or laughing.) Did you laugh? (Turns to another child.) Are you laughing?
- Leader:** (Laughs.) It is hard to be quiet and not talk sometimes, isn't it?
- Callie:** Yes, but it is fun to pretend that you can't talk for a little bit. But I wouldn't want to have to be quiet for very long. I like to talk and say "MEOW!"
- Leader:** (Laughs again.) Yes, talking is great. But in our Bible story today, there was someone who couldn't talk for a long time!
- Callie:** Oh, I bet that was hard. Will you tell me about it sometime?
- Leader:** Sure! But I think it's time for you to go home right now.
- Callie:** Oh yes. Good-bye, everyone! Thanks for playing (Whispers.) the Quiet Game with me!



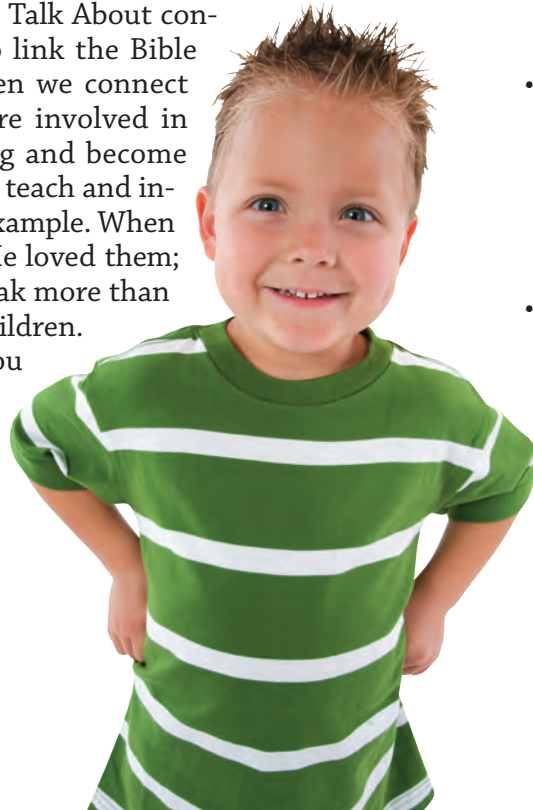
# Play, Listen and Talk Together

## What to Expect and Do

Young children do not think like adults do. In fact, preschool children's intuitive thinking differs from the more logical thought of school-age children.

This difference, not only in thinking, but in all areas of development, has profound implications for the way we teach young children. Their minds and bodies are still developing. Because they can walk and talk and do many things on their own, we may be tempted to think they are capable of more than is reasonable to expect, in both their thinking and in their behavior.

Young children learn by doing, not sitting. Play is their work. Have two or more Play activities ready and let children choose which activities to participate in. Use the Talk About conversation ideas in every lesson to link the Bible truths to the child's activity. When we connect Bible truths to things children are involved in doing, the words take on meaning and become connected with the actions. As you teach and interact with children, follow Jesus' example. When Jesus was around little children, He loved them; He didn't lecture them. Actions speak more than words ever could. Play with the children. Listen to them. Talk with them. You are the living example of God's love to each little child!



## Guiding a Child Toward Jesus

When we have presented Jesus by both our actions and our words, a foundation is laid for a child to receive Christ as Savior. Every lesson may create an opportunity to talk with a young child who wants to know more about Jesus.

- The young child is easily attracted to Jesus. Jesus is a warm, sympathetic person who obviously likes children, and children readily like Him. These early perceptions prepare the foundation for the child to receive Christ as Savior and to desire to follow His example in godly living. While some children at this age level (especially from Christian homes) may indeed pray to become a member of God's family, accepting Jesus as their Savior, expect wide variation in children's readiness for this important step. Allow the Holy Spirit room to work within His own timetable.
- Talk individually with children. Something as important as a child's personal relationship with Jesus Christ can be handled more effectively alone than in a group. Ask questions that will help you determine what the child understands. Open-ended what-do-you-think questions give you a chance to hear what's really going on in the child's mind and heart.
- Talk simply. Phrases such as "born again" or "Jesus in my heart" are symbolic and far beyond a young child's understanding. Focus on how God makes people a part of His family: **God loves us, but we have done wrong things (sinned). God says sin must be punished. God sent Jesus to take the punishment for the wrong things we have done. We can tell God that we have done wrong and tell Him we are sorry for our sin. We can ask Jesus to be our Savior. Then we become a part of God's family.**