

FIELD-TESTED SERMON RESOURCES

SERMON SERIES

TRUSTED | BIBLICAL | FIELD-TESTED

Thank you for downloading this sample PDF from our Sermon Series line of resources.

When you stand up in front of students proclaim the Word of God, you need trusted, creative, Biblically solid content. YM360's Sermon Series is exactly what you're looking for.

Field-tested, from-the-trenches of youth ministry, YM360 Sermon Series are complete sermon outlines and graphic packages designed to help you lead students closer to God through proclaiming His Word.

SERIES OVERVIEW FOR PICTURES OF JESUS

In today's world of technology and social media, it's not difficult to learn about people's lives without even meeting them face-to-face. But in Jesus' day, the stories of Jesus' miraculous healings and profound statements about Himself couldn't just be posted on Instagram for all to see. Instead, the biblical writers recorded for us a Gospel that gives us "pictures" of who Jesus was during His time on earth so that we might know all that the Son of God did and said – and believe in Him even today. Using the book of Luke, the Pictures of Jesus sermon series will look at 4 of these incredible pictures of Jesus, prompting students to a deeper love for and faith in their Savior Jesus.

As we look at these four narratives in Luke, students will see that Jesus is Lord of all and overall – progressing from His lordship over the physical world to his lordship over even death itself.

“PICTURES OF JESUS” COVERS THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES AND PASSAGES:

- **SESSION 1 - (LUKE 2:8-20) “THE ONE FROM GOD”:** You'll introduce the idea that we see exactly who Jesus is from the Bible – that he is God in the flesh, sent to reconcile the world to God.
- **SESSION 2 - (LUKE 5:1-11) “THE ONE WHO CALLS”:** You'll help students understand that although Jesus is the sent one from God, He desires to initiate a relationship with them by calling them to follow Him and believe.
- **SESSION 3 - (LUKE 5:17-26) “THE ONE WHO MEETS OUR NEEDS”:** You'll help students understand that Jesus came and desires a relationship with them to meet their deepest need – the sin and rebellion that separate them from God.
- **SESSION 4 - (LUKE 7:11-17) “THE ONE WHO IS GREATER THAN DEATH”:** You'll help students understand that Jesus' authority and power extend even over death – and as such, give us assurance of salvation and hope for eternal life with Him.

“PICTURES OF JESUS” IS PART OF YM360’S SERMON SERIES LINE OF RESOURCES AND IS IDEAL FOR:

- Any large group setting
- Mid-week youth service
- “Master teacher” format

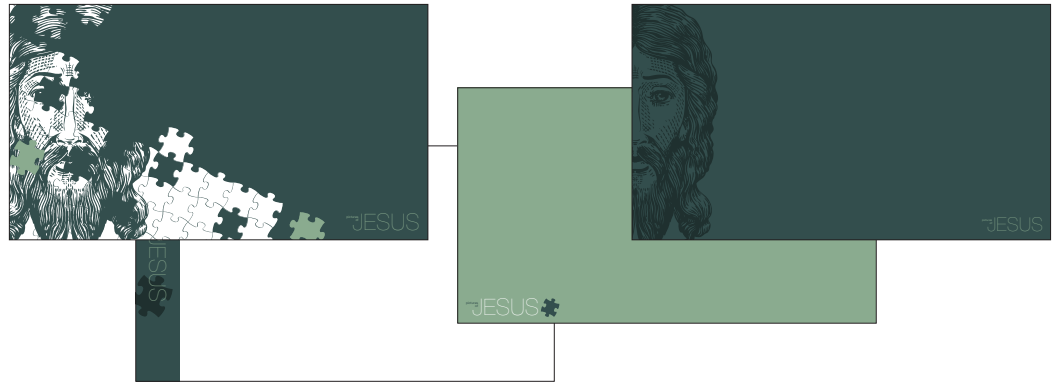
EVERY SERMON SERIES FROM YM360 COMES WITH:

- **SERMON MANUSCRIPTS** - Every Sermon Series comes with sermon manuscripts. Teach them “as is” or adapt them to suit your specific context.
- **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** - These are designed for follow-up small group interaction after your sermon.
- **PROMOTIONAL ART (INCLUDING INSTAGRAM IMAGES)** - Perfect for websites and Instagram, or print them off for posters or bulletin inserts.
- **TITLE AND BACKGROUND SLIDES** - These are designed to be dropped into your favorite presentation software to help you build a creative environment around your sermon. Use them as a backdrop for song lyrics, Scripture passages, and any illustrations you choose to display.
- **LOGO TREATMENT (WITH NATIVE FILES INCLUDED)** - We include a logo file and the native design files to allow you to use the logo in ways you see fit.
- **100% DOWNLOADABLE**

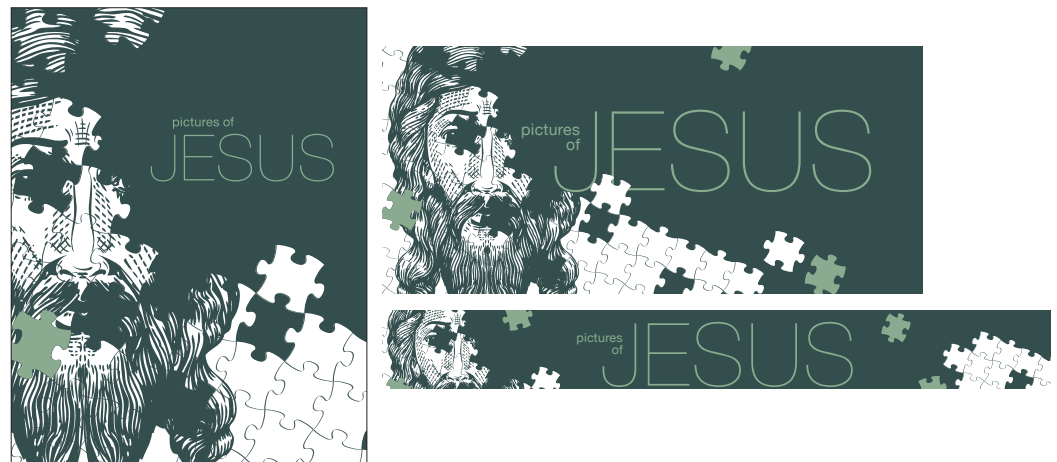
BACKGROUND SLIDES, PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK, AND MORE . . .

Each YM360 Sermon Series comes with title and background slides, promotional art (including Instagram images), and logo treatments. Here is what to expect.

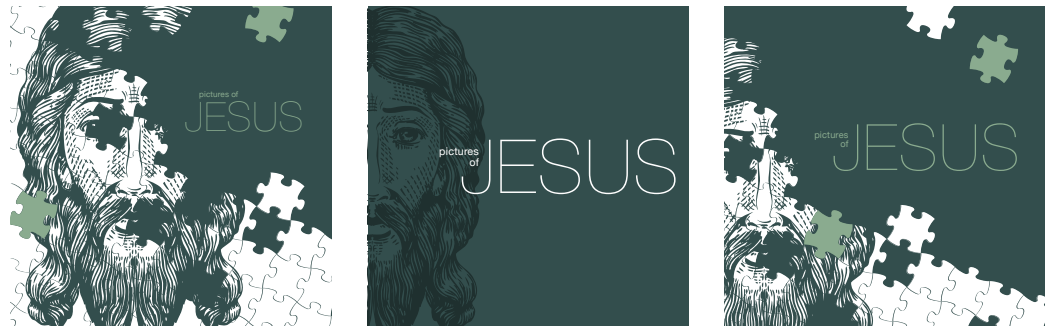
BACKGROUND AND TITLE SLIDES



PROMOTIONAL ARTWORK



INSTAGRAM IMAGES



LOGO TREATMENT



NOTE: Each YM360 Sermon Series also comes with the native files of the logo in case you want to replicate the design for other uses.

Pictures of Jesus Sermon Series Overview

The Sermon Series Overview is a one-page glimpse of the stuff you need to know to begin preparing to preach.

- **Session 1 Purpose:** You'll help students understand the idea that Jesus is more than just a man born in humble beginnings – but the one through whom God would reconcile the world to Himself – the Promised Savior.
- **Scripture Passage(s):** Luke 2:8-20
- **Session Snapshot:** Who do you believe Jesus is? How can you know for sure? The Bible makes no mistake about telling us exactly who Jesus was when He arrived on earth – the Savior of the world and the one who would bring peace to men. Jesus was the turning point of the human story – and He is the turning point of our story even today.
- **What You May Need:** N/A

Details on *Pictures of Jesus* Sermon Series Outlines

In today's world of technology and social media, it's not difficult to learn about people's lives without even meeting them face-to-face. But in Jesus' day, the stories of Jesus' miraculous healings and profound statements about Himself couldn't just be posted on Instagram for all to see. Instead, the biblical writers recorded for us a Gospel that gives us "pictures" of who Jesus was during His time on earth so that we might know all that the Son of God did and said – and believe in Him even today. Using the book of Luke, the *Pictures of Jesus* sermon series will look at 4 of these incredible pictures of Jesus, prompting students to a deeper love for and faith in their Savior Jesus.

- **Session 1 (Luke 2:8-20):** The One from God: You'll introduce the idea that we see exactly who Jesus is from the Bible – that he is God in the flesh, sent to reconcile the world to God.
- **Session 2 (Luke 5:1-11):** The One Who Calls: You'll help students understand that although Jesus is the sent one from God, He desires to initiate a relationship with them by calling them to follow Him and believe.
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- **Session 4 (Luke 7:11-17):** The One Who Is Greater than Death: You'll help students understand that Jesus' authority and power extend even over death – and as such, give us assurance of salvation and hope for eternal life with Him.

As we look at these four narratives in Luke, students will see that Jesus is Lord of all and overall – progressing from His lordship over the physical world to his lordship over even death itself.

How To Use the *Pictures of Jesus* Sermon Series

This sermon series outline is designed for use by a communicator in a large group setting. It provides various elements such as suggestions on illustrations or images, Scripture passages, background information, and application points that you will need to prepare your lesson. It also includes discussion questions that could be used in a small group following the message and artwork for promotion or message support.

These sermons are designed to be useful for all types of groups and churches, and you should feel free to make adjustments that benefit your particular circumstance.

I. Optional Intro: Personal Story of Significance

The following story is an example of a significant story that I used to introduce the subject of significant moments in life. Feel free to read it as an example to guide you in utilizing your own personal story of significance to relate to the shepherd's experience in Luke 2.

I can still remember the day when my wife and I got engaged. It was a beautiful Spring day in the middle of April. I had purchased the ring in February and gave it to my College Minister at the time for safekeeping. I didn't want to lose it, nor did I want to persuade myself to act too quickly. After all, we still had another year of college left.

I had planned the day perfectly. I would pick her up from her apartment around noon and take her to our favorite hike at Ruffner Mountain. We would hike up to the overlook, at which point I would tell her how much she means to me and would drop to one knee. I was SO nervous. Not because I was unsure about the answer – we had shopped for rings together... but because of the significance. I wanted it to go well – this was going to be a moment we remembered forever.

As we drove in the car, I didn't know what to say. I was obviously acting strange, and I am pretty sure she knew something was up. It got worse when I got lost and began to get irrationally upset about it. She continually asked me what was up. "Nothing," I said, "nothing at all!"

When we got to the parking lot, I did my best to slip the ring box into my pocket without her noticing. After dropping it on the ground and pretending to tie my shoe, I finally got the oversized box into my pocket. "Surely, nothing else would go poorly..." I thought to myself as we began to hike. When we reached the overlook, there seemed to be another couple at the edge of the cliff. They were not totally aware of what was going on around them... they were – well, they were focused on each other...

But I wasn't about to propose with... well with THAT going on right next to us...So, I got as close as I could before I felt completely uncomfortable. So much so, that the couple finally stopped kissing as I gradually entered their personal space. Finally, after about 5 minutes of intense awkwardness, they left us alone. The moment had come! At this point, she had figured it out... but it didn't change the significance of the moment. And still today, when you ask my wife to tell our engagement story, it's that moment, the moment I knelt on one knee (and not all my buffoonery beforehand) that she remembers. That's because of all the moments that occurred that day, the significance of that moment altered our lives in a way that we would never be the same.

All of us have moments like these in our life stories. Some may be good; others may be bad. But each of us has significant moments in life that have shaped us and that we remember because of their significance. We have "pictures" in our minds that help us to remember these significant moments – and what it felt like to live through them. They are moments that altered our life-stories permanently.

Transition:

What if I told you that there was one significant moment that took place 2,000 years ago that God desires to use to alter your future for all eternity? One "picture" of love that would cause moments of significance in your heart for the rest of your life, and beyond?

For the Shepherds in Luke 2, this very moment is recorded for all time to read in the pages of Scripture. It's the moment when amid the daily tasks of their job, God Himself interrupted their monotonous routine to proclaim the most significant moment human history has ever seen. It was a point in their story where everything changed because something significant was about to take place: the birth and arrival of the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Turn in your Bibles to Luke 2:8-20 with me tonight. (Read the Passage)

In Luke 2:8-20, I believe we can identify three moments of belief that come from the significance of the arrival of Jesus. These moments of belief not only shaped the trajectory of the shepherd's lives thereafter but are moments of belief that God desires for us to experience even today. Let's dig into this passage tonight to see what these are.

Moments of Belief In Following Jesus

1. Moment of Absolute Need (vs. 8-9)

The scene Luke gives us in verse 8 is a simple one. Shepherding itself was not considered a noble job by any stretch of the imagination in the early first century. These Shepherds were on the night shift – they were watching over their flocks by night just outside the city gates of Bethlehem. These men were not significant leaders in the temple, nor were they respected in the community for their wisdom or influence. They were likely poor, tired, and dirty. They were likely uneducated, and they probably hadn't had very many moments in their lives of great significance. They were simply doing their job in the dark.

It's in this darkness – this quiet aimlessness that Luke tells us an angel of the Lord appeared in glory before the Shepherds. But not only the angel – for Luke tells us that the glory of God Himself shown around them in all of its magnificence and beauty and power. Imagine the scene! Here they are, standing in the dark when suddenly that which later Luke describes as a flash of lightning amid the Transfiguration of Luke 9 – appears all around them!

What would their response be? What should their response be? Thrust suddenly amid this momentously significant moment, Luke tells us the Shepherd was "filled with fear." Why? What about this scene caused the Shepherds to respond initially with great fear? Here we see the natural result of man when God reveals Himself in some part to finite beings – absolute fear. As the Shepherds were surrounded with the absolute glory of God, they came face to face with their own reality – absolute brokenness.

This moment of significance suddenly and savagely threw the Shepherds into the realization of their shortcomings in the presence of a holy, almighty, powerful God. They realized their absolute need.

When we pause and consider this moment in Scripture – I wonder how many of us have seen God with such clarity that we too have experienced this feeling of absolute need? It's the same feeling we observe when, in his vision of God on the throne, Isaiah woefully confesses his sin as he witnesses the throne room of the Almighty God. It's a feeling that God intends for us to feel – a moment of significance that must take place before we can experience the saving faith that rescues us from our sinful inadequacies. We must first see and believe in our depravity before we can miraculously be resurrected from it.

And the true beauty in our confession of helplessness is what it prepares us for – the comfort, love, and invitation of the Father. It's like...

Optional Illustration: Like a child who seeks to be held by their father when they are sick – we too realize our sickness and helplessness, and it is in this moment that God draws us into the promises which stem from the incarnation of Jesus

Good News, really good news, can only really come to those who realize their need. Have you ever truly come face to face with your sinfulness before God? Have you ever truly had a moment when, face to face with God's glory, you realize how greatly you needed to be rescued and redeemed?

It's in this moment for the Shepherds, the moment of hopeless need, that the angel interjects the greatest news ever to be shared – the arrival of a Savior.

2. Moment of Saving Faith (vs. 10-16)

With the unbelievable weight of glory shown all around them, the words of the angel in verse 10 came as a sweet comfort to the Shepherds indeed. "Fear not," words that immediately reveal that in spite of the shepherd's hearts and their sin before God, God wished to reveal to them something incredible – something specifically meant to meet them in their need and pull them from hopelessness, to hope.

Good News of Great joy – that one who would save the people from their sins – Christ, the Lord, had been born among them and for them. All they needed to do was believe He had come for them.

The beauty here is that they were not only told not to fear, but they were to hear "good news" of "great joy," news that was for all people – even Shepherds. And what was this good news? Vs. 12 tells us:

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord. And this is a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

You see amid their realization of absolute need comes absolute provision – the provision of a Savior and Messiah in Christ, the LORD. There is no question about the picture that Luke intends to communicate here in his account of the incredible birth of Jesus from the shepherd's perspective. Luke wanted his readers to understand that whether they were shepherds or priests, men or women, that this Savior had come to bring peace and joy on earth to ANYONE who would believe. Imagine their relief!

Optional Illustration: Relief at the end of classes when the semester closes. Relate the feeling of the Shepherds at this moment with the turning in of their last paper or their last assignment before a summer break.

It's at the culmination of this incredible proclamation in verse 15 that the Shepherds then had a choice. At the intersection of their brokenness and sinfulness before the glory of God and this news – would they believe? Would they truly trust that one had come who could truly bridge this immeasurable gap between the holiness of God and the filthy rags of their sin?

They didn't hesitate. This picture of the most significant moment in human history altered their lives and their standing forever. They believed! And immediately, they ran to find and experience this moment that had been proclaimed to them amid their hopelessness.

This is the moment that, although it happened 2,000 years ago, still provides you the opportunity to believe. And it's not a one-time belief – but a moment of belief that we choose to persist in every day of our lives. That

we would believe that amid our depravity, a Savior became a man – Jesus, the Son of God – so that we might be redeemed for the purposes of God.

But for the Shepherds, believing was only the beginning. Because when they arrived to see this Savior who had come for simple Shepherds, they were moved to proclaim the news to everyone they could.

3. Moment of Joyful Proclamation (vs. 17-20)

How could they keep this joy bottled up? They had known the depth of their lostness and, in the same significant moment, believed the redemption offered from God. They couldn't help but shout in the streets the news of this relief – this incredible promise that was to be fulfilled in this small baby. They made it known to all – and it altered their lives forever.

For those of us who have come to the knowledge of this incredible salvation – are we like the Shepherds unable to keep our joy bottled up? Do we desire to walk through our schools, our teams, our clubs, our streets, proclaiming that in the midst of our fear – Good News of Great Joy has come to us in the One promised from God – Jesus Christ, the Savior.

Conclusion:

What's so incredible about this passage in Luke 2 is that the effect of this single significant moment in the lives of these Shepherds altered them forever. They no longer lived in fear but faith. They were no longer afraid, but freed to share the saving news to any who would believe.

These moments – the moments of belief that we see in this unbelievable night in the lives of simple Shepherds – are moments that even now God desires for you to experience. Because that one night, 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem – changed the story of human history forever.

So, what moment of belief are you in tonight? What step of faith is God calling you to?

Maybe He is calling you to see Him for who He is for the first time. To understand that your goodness is not gauged by the people around you and what they do, but is measured against the absolute holiness of God. If that is you tonight – there is Good News of Great Joy – for one has come who is the Savior, Christ the Lord.

Maybe you are here tonight, and you recognize that God is holy – so much so that you just don't see how He could ever rescue someone as dirty – as broken as you are. Oh Friend – if he calls even Shepherds to faith in this Savior, won't you too believe? Romans 8 tells us that neither height, nor depth, nor anything in all creation can separate us from the love in Christ Jesus our Lord! Believe in the moment of His coming - in his death and resurrection and run to Him as the Shepherds did in Luke 2.

Finally, maybe you are here tonight and you have experienced what the Shepherds felt in this passage. You have trusted in Jesus, recognized your need for him, and are grateful. But you are not joyful – instead, you are afraid to share this news. Let me encourage you – the God of the universe put on flesh to proclaim liberty for you – ask Him to renew your joy and cause you to remember the first moments of faith in Him. Ask Him to reignite your passion for others to know the relief and purpose of walking with the living God.

Where are you tonight? And what step is God calling you to take in response to the arrival of Jesus?

Small-Group Discussion Questions

You can use these discussion questions to facilitate small groups after your sermon, or even create handouts for students to work through the message as you go. These questions are designed to help students think critically about the sermon and what it means to them.

1. What do you think it was like to be the Shepherds in the field when the angel appeared the glory of God shown around? What would your response have been?
2. Our tendency as believers is to think about our belief in the Gospel as a one-time event. But the truth is that these steps of belief continue to expand as our life goes on. In light of this gradual sanctification, let's ask some questions about the passage we heard about tonight:
 - What are some ways that God is causing you to see more of your sin, and more of His holiness?
 - What are some ways God is challenging you to believe more in the finished work of Jesus Christ?
 - What are some ways that God is inviting you to proclaim this good news of great joy in your area of influence?
3. Why do you think God chose to reveal the good news of Jesus arrival to shepherds instead of a religious or governmental leader? What does God's choice reveal about who can come to Him?
4. Which of the three moments of belief do you find to be the most difficult for you to remind yourself of in your walk with God? Why?
5. What is one significant moment in life that God used to have a moment of belief similar to that of the Shepherds in Luke 2:8-20?