



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

The Kid / Week 2

SERIES OVERVIEW

SERIES SUMMARY

So much of the transformative power of the Christmas narrative lies in the reality that Jesus was born and raised in a place so small and inconsequential that it appears on no maps prior to the 1st century. This series encourages middle schoolers to consider how a Kid from nowhere (Jesus) changes everything: how you see your situation, how you see yourself and everyone else, and how you see your fear.

SERIES BOTTOM LINE

The Kid from nowhere changes everything.

WEEKLY BOTTOM LINES

WEEK 1: Christmas is about the Kid who changed everything

WEEK 2: The Kid shows us that Christmas is for everyone

WEEK 3: The Kid changes how you see your fear

WEEK 4: The Kid changes everything, especially you

SCRIPTURE

That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep (Luke 2:8 NLT).

Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them.

"Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased" (Luke 2:9-14 NLT).

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger (Luke 2:15-16 NLT).

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:1-2 NLT).

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the

star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him (Matthew 2:9-11a NLT).

Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance (Matthew 2:16 NLT).

NOTES FOR THIS WEEK

THINK ABOUT THIS

There are all kinds of reasons that a middle schooler might feel like Christmas, Jesus, or even faith overall isn't for them. You may have students in your circle during this series who have never been to church and have no interest in faith outside of the holiday season. Or you may have students who come from families where faith traditions are mixed, so Christmas may not be the only thing they're celebrating. You may have some students who are struggling with difficult circumstances that have changed the way they see Jesus. Or you may have students whose faith is changing and developing as we speak. Whatever the reason, be sensitive to the viewpoints expressed by your middle schoolers when it comes to the parts of faith and Christmas that they just aren't sure about. Your job isn't to change their minds; it's to give them a safe space to honestly explore their faith this season and encourage them with the truth that Jesus really is for *all* of them, even if they don't know it or believe it yet!

INTERACTIVE 1: THE GIFT GIVER

OVERVIEW

For this Interactive, you'll use two gifts—a random, undesirable gift and a gift a middle schooler would love—to explain that gifts can either make us feel like people really know us or like we're completely disconnected from the gift giver.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A gift that would be totally undesirable or random to your middle schoolers (Things like a tie, a book about retirement or taxes, pots and pans, a vacuum, or a gift card to Home Depot could work great.)
- A gift that your middle schoolers would love (Things like a smartphone, video game console, or anything else that's popular with your specific students would work great.)

PREP

1. Place both gifts on stage where you can easily access them during your Talk.
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TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- I'm glad to be here as we look into the backstory of Christmas during our new series called *The Kid*.
- *[Tell a story from your own life about the all-time best Christmas present you've ever received.]*
- *[INTERACTIVE: The Gift Giver: This is where you'll use two gifts—a random, undesirable gift and a gift a middle schooler would love—to explain that gifts can either make us feel like people really know us or like we're completely disconnected from the gift giver.]*
- Sometimes, we get gifts that tell us the person who got it for us really knows us and really cares.

- But other times, we get the kinds of gifts that feel so disconnected from who we are, it's almost like they were meant to be for someone else.

TENSION

- Sometimes there's something about the entire Christmas season that can make us wonder if it's really for us.
- If you grew up going to church, you've probably heard some version of what Christmas is supposed to be about a million times before.
 - The baby born and placed in a manger.
 - God who came in human form.
 - The Savior finally arriving to rescue us for all eternity.
- It sounds good, but does the birth of the Kid thousands of years ago really mean anything for us today?
- Is Christmas really for you? *[Give relevant examples.]*
- I think we've all wondered if the gift of Jesus that everyone talks about at Christmas really means anything for us today.
- No matter what your circumstances are, no matter how you're feeling this season, no matter where you are in your faith journey, the gift of Christmas has the potential to change everything for us!

TRUTH

- To show you what I mean, let's do a deep dive into some of the accounts of events surrounding the very first Christmas.
- To start, let's see how Luke, a man who interviewed some of Jesus' closest followers, recorded something that happened the night Jesus was born:
 - *That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep (Luke 2:8 NLT).*
- A shepherd is someone who takes care of sheep, and in Jesus' time, shepherds were not the most important or valued people in society.
- That's what makes what happened next so interesting:
 - *Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger." Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased" (Luke 2:9-14 NLT).*
- Of all the people the angels could have delivered their message to—kings, leaders, special religious people—the angels announced the birth of the Kid, Jesus, to the shepherds.
- I like to think it's because God wanted the world to know that this gift of a Savior wasn't just for some people; it was for *all* people.
- Jesus is for everyone, and that's what this encounter shows us.
- The Kid shows us that Christmas is for everyone.
- Let's go back to the shepherds for their response:
 - *When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger (Luke 2:15-16 NLT).*
- Before this, the shepherds knew that it was likely that others didn't think of them as valued and important, but after their encounter with the angels, it was clear that God saw them as valued and important.
- God made a point to make sure *everyone* knew that Jesus' birth meant something for them.

- Look at how Matthew, one of Jesus' followers, recorded another incident sometime after Jesus' birth:
 - *Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:1-2 NLT).*
- Because Jesus is for everyone, His birth was announced to *everyone*, including both the wise men following the sign of His arrival and the most powerful person alive in the region at the time, King Herod.
- While the wise men were thrilled at the news of the Kid's arrival, King Herod was not.
- As the wise men made their way to see the Kid, King Herod planned to get rid of Him.
 - *After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him (Matthew 2:9-11a NLT).*
- The wise men bowed down to worship the Kid because they knew His arrival was for them, and we later find out they fled from Herod to avoid letting him find Jesus.
- How did King Herod respond?
 - *Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance (Matthew 2:16 NLT).*
- Remember, Jesus came to be the Savior of the wise men who bowed down to worship Him and the Savior of the King who wanted Him gone.
- Because the Kid shows us that Christmas is for everyone.

APPLICATION

- This year, as you think about Christmas, I want you to remember that Jesus is for you.
- With that in mind, here are three things I want you to remember this holiday season:
 - Jesus is for you.
 - Jesus is for others.
 - Jesus invites you to be for others, too.

LANDING

- What would change for you if you believed Jesus is for everyone?

TEACHING SLIDES

All bolded words and phrases in the Teaching Script are also provided as teaching slides for Premium Tier subscribers.



TEACHING SCRIPT

The Kid / Week 2

BOTTOM LINE

THE KID SHOWS US THAT CHRISTMAS IS FOR EVERYONE

INTRODUCTION

2 ½ MINUTES

Hi, everyone! I'm _____, and I'm glad to be here as we look into the backstory of Christmas during our new series called *The Kid*.

As we get started today, I want to tell you a quick story.

TELL A PERSONAL STORY

Tell a story from your own life that illustrates the following thoughts or ideas . . .

- Talk about the all-time best Christmas present you've ever received. (Bonus points if it's a gift you got in middle school or high school!)
- If you have a picture or the actual gift itself, bring it in to show your group.
- Share how much you wanted the gift and be sure to note who gave it to you. Focus on the way it made you feel to know that person knew you well enough to get you a gift you'd love that much.
- A sample story is included below.

When I was in middle school, way back in the day, all I wanted one year for Christmas was a Walkman. A Walkman is device that played music from tapes, and those tapes had music on them from your favorite bands or artists. It seemed liked everyone at school had one, and that is all I had on my list that year.

Now you can imagine my sadness and disappointment when Christmas morning came and went, and there was no Walkman. The next day my big sister came home from college, and the very first thing she did was hand me a present. Of course, I was a grumpy little middle schooler so I pretended like it wasn't a big deal, but inside that box was not only a Walkman, but THE Walkman. It was the right color, had all the right buttons, and was the perfect gift.

The part that felt so special to me was the fact that the gift giver, my sister, knew me. She knew me so well that she knew exactly what I wanted.

INTERACTIVE: The Gift Giver

This is where you'll use two gifts—a random, undesirable gift and a gift a middle schooler would love—to explain that gifts can either make us feel like people really know us or like we're completely disconnected from the gift giver.

Now let's think about all of us for a minute. Imagine someone gave you this present for Christmas. [*Hold up the random, undesirable gift you preselected.*] How would you feel if you got this gift? [*Pause for response.*] Yep. We might feel misunderstood or unimportant to the gift giver. What do you think it would say about our relationship if I gave you this? [*Pause for response.*] I totally agree! Getting this gift doesn't

feel very personal. If I gave you this, you'd probably think I'm pretty disconnected from who you are as a person.

But what about this? *[Hold up the "good gift" you preselected.]* How would you feel if you got this gift? *[Pause for response.]* Right! You'd feel important, thought about, and understood. You'd feel like the gift giver truly knew you and considered your interests and what you'd actually like to get for Christmas.

Sometimes, we get gifts we love. The kinds of gifts that tell us the person who got it for us really knows us and really cares. *[Hold up the "good gift."]* But other times, we get the kinds of gifts that feel so disconnected from who we are, it's almost like they were meant to be for someone else. *[Hold up the random gift.]*

TENSION

1 ½ MINUTES

If we're honest, we might even say that it's not just the gifts we get or don't get at Christmas that makes us feel this way. In fact, sometimes there's something about the entire Christmas season that can make us wonder if it's really for us.

Think about it! If you grew up going to church, you've probably heard some version of what Christmas is supposed to be about a million times before. The baby born and placed in a manger, God who came in human form, the Savior finally arriving to rescue us for all eternity. Sure, it sounds good, but does it really do anything to change our lives? **Does the birth of the Kid thousands of years ago really mean anything for us today?**

Is Christmas really for you if . . .

You're tired of hearing the same old Christmas story every year?

Your family is going through some changes, and the holidays feel really different this year?

You recently moved and you're not sure how any of your Christmas traditions will work in your new home?

Someone you love is sick or has recently passed, and you can't imagine feeling happy this holiday?

Your family is struggling financially, so you'll get fewer gifts than you're used to?

You're questioning your faith, and you're not sure this Jesus thing is real?

If you've asked yourself questions like these before, trust me, you're not alone. I think we've all wondered if the gift of Jesus that everyone talks about at Christmas really means anything for us today. The good news is we don't have to wonder anymore. Because as we'll see, no matter what your circumstances are, no matter how you're feeling this season, no matter where you are in your faith journey, the gift of Christmas has the potential to change everything for us!

TRUTH

5 MINUTES

To show you what I mean, let's do a deep dive into some of the accounts of events surrounding the very first Christmas. You know, the ones that detail the events around the arrival of the Kid! One story we'll look at took place the same night Jesus was born, and the other story took place sometime later.

To start, let's see how Luke, a man who interviewed some of Jesus' closest followers, recorded something that happened the night Jesus was born:

That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep (Luke 2:8 NLT).

That may seem like a strange place to start, but trust me, it's an important detail. A shepherd is someone who takes care of sheep. That probably doesn't mean much to us today, but in Jesus' time, shepherds were not the most important or valued people in society. They weren't kings, or leaders, or anyone important. They took care of livestock all day, and that's not the cleanest job. That's what makes what happened next so interesting:

Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them.

"Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased" (Luke 2:9-14 NLT).

Of all the people the angels could have delivered their message to—kings, leaders, special religious people—the angels announced the birth of the Kid, Jesus, to the shepherds. The not-so-important shepherds became the first to hear the most important news in history. Why? Well, I like to think it's because God wanted the world to know that this gift of a Savior wasn't just for some people; it was for *all* people. Because Jesus is for everyone, and that's what this encounter shows us.

The Kid shows us that Christmas is for everyone.

You don't have to take my word for it. Let's go back to the shepherds for their response:

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger (Luke 2:15-16 NLT).

Did you catch that? Before this, the shepherds knew that it was likely that others didn't think of them as valued and important. But after their encounter with the angels, it was clear that God saw them as valued and important. They knew they were worthy of the gift God gave the world. No matter what anyone else thought of them, they knew they were deserving of knowing the Kid. And because of that, they're part of the story we read every holiday season.

And this isn't just true for the shepherds. God made a point to make sure *everyone* knew that Jesus' birth meant something for them. Look at how Matthew, one of Jesus' followers, recorded another incident sometime after Jesus' birth:

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:1-2 NLT).

Because Jesus is for everyone, His birth was announced to *everyone*. In this account, that included both the wise men following the sign of His arrival and the most powerful person alive in the region at the time, King Herod. What was interesting is that they responded in two totally different ways. While the wise men were thrilled at the news of the Kid's arrival, King Herod was not. He was threatened by the potential power

this supposed Savior might have. As the wise men made their way to see the Kid, King Herod made a plan to get rid of Him. Let's keep reading:

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him (Matthew 2:9-11a NLT).

So, the wise men bowed down to worship the Kid because they knew His arrival was for them. Not just that, we later read they fled from Herod to avoid letting him find Jesus. How did King Herod respond? Like this:

Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance (Matthew 2:16 NLT).

Two totally different responses to the same big event, right? Well, remember, Jesus came for both! He came to be the Savior of the wise men who bowed down to worship Him and the Savior of the King who wanted Him gone. Because **the Kid shows us that Christmas is for everyone.**

If you're someone who believes in Jesus and wants to follow Him with your life, Christmas is for you.
If you're someone who doesn't believe in Jesus or isn't sure about faith at all, Christmas is for you.
If you're someone who thinks everybody sees you as unimportant, Christmas is for you.
If you're someone who is anyone, Christmas is for you.

That's what these accounts of the events around Jesus' arrival do. They remind us that **the Kid shows us that Christmas is for everyone.**

APPLICATION

2 MINUTES

This year, as you think about Christmas, I want you to remember that no matter who you are, or where you are in your faith, or what you're experiencing this holiday season, **Jesus is for you.** Christmas is for you because Jesus is what Christmas is all about.

With that in mind, here are three things I want you to remember this holiday season.

- 1) Jesus is for you.** If you're already following Jesus with your life, this is a great time to reflect on how making that decision has changed your life. It's a chance to remind yourself of the gift of Jesus that God gave specifically to you. And if you're not a follower of Jesus, that's okay. Believe me when I tell you that Christmas is for you, too! Maybe this season you could take just one step toward considering what it might mean for your life if you chose to believe that was true for you.
- 2) Jesus is for others.** Jesus isn't just for you, or me, or any one person. Jesus is for everyone! Yes, I'm talking about your best friend, your parent, your Small Group Leader, your favorite coach, and your grandparents. But I'm also talking about the girl who leaves you out of the group chat, the sibling who annoys you, the teacher who gave you the failing grade, the stepparent you aren't so sure about, and the person who took your spot on the team. Jesus is for everyone.
- 3) Jesus invites you to be for others too.** Since Jesus is for everyone, then as followers of Jesus, we should be too. So this Christmas, I want you to think about what it would look like to be for the people in your life. How can you show them that Jesus and Christmas are for everyone? Maybe it's by helping your parent or guardian out around the house or encouraging your Small Group. Maybe it's inviting a new friend to church, or being kind to your sibling, or praying for someone

you care about. Whatever it is, take a step to remind yourself and others that Jesus is for everyone.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

Now, as we head to Small Group, I want you to think about this question: **What would change for you if you believed Jesus is for everyone?**



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
