

In chapter two of Luke we see the amazing events surrounding the birth of Jesus. The humble conditions of his family and their low status in Israelite society foreshadow the upside-down nature of Jesus' kingdom, and we see that when the King's birth is announced to shepherds, the unlikeliest of people to be told of such great news. This reveals the heart of God. God's heart is that he invites those who are on the outskirts in, and leverages them for His glory and His fame.

## READ

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.<sup>r</sup> 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)<sup>s</sup> 3 And everyone went to their own town to register.  
4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.  
8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid.<sup>w</sup> I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior<sup>x</sup> has been born to you; he is the Messiah,<sup>y</sup> the Lord.<sup>z</sup> 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."  
13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,  
14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace<sup>b</sup> to those on whom his favor rests."  
15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."  
16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.<sup>c</sup> 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds

said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.<sup>d</sup> 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. 21 On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child,<sup>f</sup> he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Luke 2:1-21 NIV

## REFLECT

1. What is something that you celebrate? Why?
2. What is glory?
3. To whom do we give glory?
4. What did God bring to earth in these verses from Luke?
5. How does the truth of this passage impact the way we live every day?

## ACTIVITIES: GINGERBREAD HOUSE

It is an amazing act of grace that God would invite all of us into his kingdom. Although we may feel like we are on the outskirts of grace, Jesus has invited us into His family through His birth.

Grab a ginger bread house kit and team up to put it together. Don't forget to go heavy on the icing. As you put this house together, remember that you are not locked out of the family of God, but you have been invited into the home of the king. Put this house in a place where you can see it every day to be reminded that even though you were on the outskirts and the least likely to receive grace, you have been invited in. After you finish, say a prayer of thanks to the King who has invited you in.



## PRESCHOOL: FILL THE MANGER

You will need a nativity and a preschool friendly book that takes readers through the different animals and people in the nativity scene like Christmas in the Manger. Either make your own nativity or buy one that is preschool friendly (the Little People Nativity is almost indestructible and children love playing with it). Place the empty manger on the floor. Read the book. After reading the book hand out the animals and people from the nativity scene. Re-read the book, this time stopping after each page to invite the child/children who have that animal or person to place them in the manger. Continue until the manger is full!

## KIDS: GRAHAM CRACKER NATIVITY (LIFEWAY)

### Items Needed:

- Graham crackers
- Icing
- Animal crackers
- Bear-shaped crackers
- Shredded coconut
- Paper plates
- Plastic knives

1. Use icing and graham crackers to create a Nativity scene.
2. Add animal crackers to represent animals that were present and shredded coconut for the manger.
3. Use bear-shaped crackers to represent Mary, Joseph, Jesus, and the shepherds.
4. Remind your family that Jesus came to the earth to share His love with people.

