

Christmas is celebrating Jesus, God's greatest gift.

DAY 1

Read Luke 2:1-4

A Skittle Census

Grab a bag of Skittles or any toy that has different colored options and separate them into piles by color. Grab a sheet of paper and split it into five pieces. Write down the names of four cities you know, one on each section. On the fifth one, write "Bethlehem." Assign a color of Skittle to each city, then count the Skittles for each city and write that number on its paper.

Caesar Augustus, the leader of the Roman empire, ordered a census to count the people in his country. This census meant that Joseph would have to travel back to his hometown of Bethlehem, along with Mary, in order to be counted.

The census sent Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem—where Micah had said that Jesus would be born hundreds of years *before* His arrival. It was all part of God's plan to bring hope, peace, and JOY to the whole world. As you enjoy your Skittles, thank God for sending Jesus to bring JOY to your world.

DAY 2

Read Luke 2:5-6

Do you have a younger sibling or cousin? Did you go to the hospital to meet them? Were there balloons or a sign on the door announcing the baby's arrival? Everyone was SO excited to meet that cuddly baby because a new baby is a miracle!

When Jesus entered the world, there were no balloons or signs on the door. There was no parade announcing His arrival. But this birth was exactly what God had planned. God sent Jesus so that we could know God, and that's the best reason to have JOY.

Four-Panel Christmas

Grab your four-panel picture. In the third box, write the word "JOY" in large block letters. With an adult's help, look up the words to "Joy to the World." Write a line or two from the song in smaller print along with a few music notes around the edge of the panel. Then pray and thank God for the JOY that comes from knowing that God sent Jesus to be our Savior.

DAY 3

Read Luke 2:7

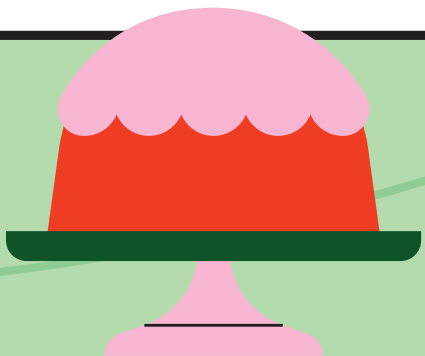
What kind of things do people do to prepare for a baby? They might receive gifts for the baby from friends and family. They might decorate the baby's room and put together a crib. Future parents usually do everything they can to prepare for their bundle of joy!

Speaking of joy, imagine the JOY Mary must have felt as she rocked and kissed her precious baby. Though their travel to Bethlehem meant there was no special room prepared for His arrival, Jesus' birth prepared the way for everyone to have a relationship with God! We can have JOY because Jesus came.

Talk About It

At your next family meal, ask your parent the following questions:

1. What did you do to prepare for my arrival?
2. How did it feel the first time you held/ met me?
3. How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they held baby Jesus in their arms?



DAY 4

Read 1 John 5:11

Imagine making a list of every wrong thing you've ever done. Now imagine everyone all over the world making the same list. Now imagine every single person that has ever lived before you and every single person that isn't born yet one day making a list like that. Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection took care of every single thing on ALL of those lists. Forever.

That's why Christmas is such a big deal. It's the day God sent Jesus to forgive our sins and make a way for us to be a part of God's family forever.

Ask your family to think of one NEW way to celebrate Jesus' birthday this week. You could bake a cake and sing "Happy Birthday." Or blow a party horn and yell "Happy Birthday, Jesus!"

After you celebrate, tell God, "I love You! Thank You for sending Jesus!"

You can have joy
because God sent Jesus.