

## STORIES WITHIN THE TRUE STORY



### Week Thirty Nine - Joy to the World

#### **A Note to the Parents/Teachers**

*This final week of Advent we focus on joy. Joy is not fleeting happiness, but a constant source of satisfaction. It is based and found in our eternal hope of all things being made right by the love of God, not in our temporary circumstances. There are a lot of things offering happiness during this time of year. Let's pray we find our joy in Christ alone.*

- **Big Idea:** True joy that lasts is only found in Jesus

#### **Starter**

- **Evidences of Grace**

*Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything, big or small, which is good is from God. When a kid shares, encourage everyone to thank God together.*

- **Discussion**

*What are some of your favorite things about Christmas? What are you most excited about? Why do we celebrate Christmas? When things around Christmas time make us happy, what should it ultimately remind us of?*

#### **Sing Together**

### Story - from Revelation 19:1-8

Jesus had sent an angelic messenger to one of his followers, John, to give him a message. He gave him a vision of what was to come in the future and he wanted John to write it down so that all the church, for years to come, would have a hope for what God would one day do. He is going to defeat all evil and restore all who follow Jesus into a close face-to-face relationship with God. God will one day live with those who trust Jesus and we will experience beautiful life with Jesus forever — free from sin, death, sickness, hurt, or anything bad — and full of life, goodness, satisfaction, and being with God.

John wrote this down and saw that it would bring great joy. He wrote:

*After seeing God defeat the evil in the world, I heard something like the loud voice of an army in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God, because His judgments are true and righteous, because He has judged the evil who corrupted the earth with sin; and He has avenged the death of His people."*

*A second time they said, "Hallelujah! What God has done is forever and ever!"*

*Then all of God's people and creatures in heaven and on earth fell down and worshiped Him, who is seated on the throne, saying, "Amen! Hallelujah!"*

*A voice came from the throne of heaven, saying, "Praise our God, all His servants, and the ones who fear Him, both small and great!"*

*Then I heard something like many voices of an army, like the sound of rushing waters, and like the rumbling of loud thunder, all at once saying, "Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty, reigns! Let us be glad, rejoice, and give Him glory..."*

Long ago, when an angelic messenger visited Mary to tell her she would give birth to Jesus, he said "I bring you good news of great joy for all the earth". Then an army of angels showed up and chanted "Glory to God in the highest!" They knew that this Jesus being born was God's promise and would one day fulfill this vision John saw later — that God would rescue the world through Jesus. This is why John saw that everyone in heaven and on earth will be rejoicing and saying 'Hallelujah', which means, 'Praise God!'

You see, we have hope that because of God's love He will one day restore the world to peace, which will bring us true joy — the only way we will be fully satisfied is by being with God.

*[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]*

- What are some things that make you happy? Do those things last forever? What will last forever?
- How do you think joy is different from happiness? Where can we find joy?
- Why were the people and creatures in heaven and on earth rejoicing? What had God done through Jesus? What has God done for you through Jesus?

### **Breakout Time**

- **Prayer:**

God, thank you that you are working to restore all things and that we can one day be with you forever if we trust and follow Jesus. Help us to have joy because of that promise. Amen!

- **Craft:**

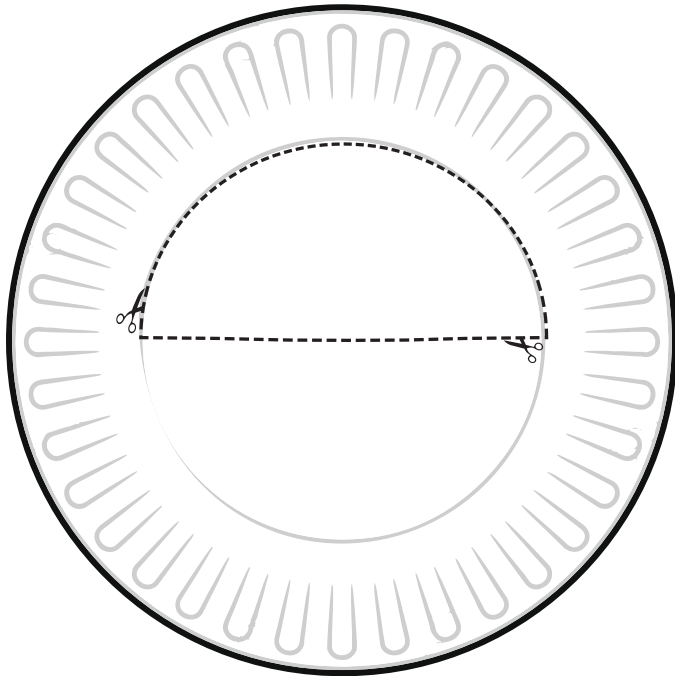
- Follow the instructions on the next page to create a manger scene out of a paper plate, scissors, and popsicle sticks
- OR use the final page of this document to color and cut out a Joy Christmas ornament

- **BLESS Activity:** *\*For kids to do during the week\**

*Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask Spirit to help us Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak, and Sabbath (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.*

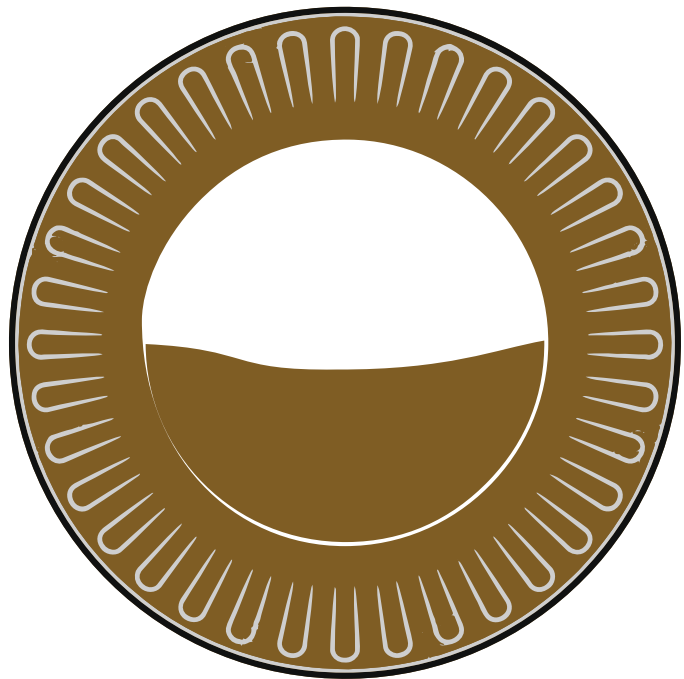
This week, focus on the **Bless** rhythm.

Christmas is coming this week. We normally think about how getting presents makes us feel happy, but how can you find joy in blessing someone else this week, in order to show them the love of Jesus?



**Step 1)** Take a paper plate and cut out half of the inner circle.

**Step 2)** Color plate brown.



**Step 3)** Glue star on top and manger. (You can use popsicle sticks or make out of the scrap paper you cut out.)



