

Large Group



LESSON 3: LARGE GROUP

Joy

MAIN IDEA

Jesus is the King who offers hope and joy to all who believe in him. Jesus is the only way to come to God.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Acts 20:35
- Isaiah 7:14
- Matthew 22:37-39
- Philippians 2:3-4
- Matthew 2:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us').

Isaiah 7:14, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10-15 minutes)



Play large group games.
(25 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the student this week? Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any changes and additions needed for the Large Group Lesson?
- Is there anything specific you need to communicate to the small group leaders?

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Name tags for skit
- Printout 1, 8 copies—one for each character
- (Optional) Star (can be a cardboard cutout or a shiny star)
- (Optional) Gifts of gold, frankincense, myrrh (can be represented by boxes or jars)
- Throne (chair) for King Herod
- (Optional) Baby doll

Large Group



Introduce the story of the Gospel.
(10-15 minutes)

LEADER NOTE

INTRODUCTION

Ask,

- **If you had the chance to go see someone famous, would you go?**
- **What would you do when you saw them?**
- **Would you bring anything with you?**

Say, **It would be exciting to meet someone famous! If you had the chance to meet someone famous or special, most of us would make that happen. It can bring so much excitement and joy to experience something that special.**

As we look at the first Christmas, we get to hear how three men found out that there was going to be a new King. They decided to go meet this new King!

Ask for several volunteers to help with a skit to share the story of the new King being born.

If you have a story of meeting someone important or famous, consider sharing briefly about your experience.

SKIT (BASED ON MATTHEW 2:1-16)

Instruct students to only read the bold words for their character. Pick students to play the following characters. Provide name tags for each character.

Characters:

- Narrator (leader)
- Wiseman 1
- Wiseman 2
- Wiseman 3
- King Herod
- Angel
- Mary
- Joseph
- Baby Jesus (a baby doll)

Printout 1 contains the script.

WRAP IT UP

- **What did the wisemen first notice that let them know there was a new king?** (There was a bright new star in the sky.)
- **What did they decide to do when they saw the star signaling there was a new king?** (Follow the star to the new King.)
- **What did the wisemen bring with them?** (Gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.)

Say, **The wisemen saw a star in the sky that let them know there was a new king born. They decided to travel a long distance to go worship this new King. They brought with them some gifts to offer the new King.**

We have the opportunity at Christmas to give and receive gifts similar to the very first Christmas when Jesus was born as the new King. There is so much joy that comes from giving and receiving gifts.

The wisemen wanted to worship and offer gifts to Jesus, but King Herod didn't like the idea of a new king. We will get to talk more about this in our small groups.

Close in prayer, and dismiss into small groups.

Games



Play large group games.
(25 minutes)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Paper plates, one per child
- Pens, one per child

LARGE GROUP GAME: SHEPHERD TAG

Materials: None

Object of game: Avoid being tagged by the shepherd/herd

How to play: Choose one student to be the shepherd and stand in the middle of the playing area. The rest of the students should line up on opposite sides of the playing area behind a designated boundary (about half the students on each side). When the shepherd calls the sheep by shouting "Come sheep!" all the students on both sides must run to the opposite side. Any players who are tagged by the shepherd become part of the herd and will help the shepherd tag players in the next round. The last student or small group of students remaining are the winners.

LARGE GROUP GAME: DRAW-ON-YOUR-HEAD NATIVITY

Materials: Paper plates and pens

Object of game: Follow the guided drawing without looking

How to play: Give each student a pen and paper plate. Instruct them to put the paper plate on top of their head and use the pen to draw according to your instructions. Tell them that it is a competition to see who can follow the directions to make the most accurate drawing. No taking the paper plate down to look at the drawing until the leader instructs! The leader should read the instructions slowly and repeat them, allowing students time in between each one to draw.

Instructions:

1. Draw walls and a roof for a table.
2. Draw some hay on the ground.
3. Draw baby Jesus inside the stable.
4. Draw a star up in the sky.
5. Draw some farm animals.
6. Draw some shepherds keeping watch over their sheep in a field nearby.

Let students take the plates off their heads and look at their drawings! Now, have them listen to the following instructions for scoring points, and have them keep a tally mark on the plate to see what their score is. Leaders should help younger students figure out their scores.

1 point if the walls and roof of your stable are touching each other

1 point if the hay is below the roof of the stable

2 points if baby Jesus is inside the stable.

2 points if the star is above the roof of the stable (only 1 point if it is touching the roof, 0 if it is below the roof)

2 points if you drew more than one farm animal

1 point for every shepherd drawn that is not in or touching the stable

1 point for every sheep drawn

LARGE GROUP GAME: SANTA SAYS

Materials: None

Object of game: Only follow the commands that start with "Santa says."

How to play: A Christmas-themed version of "Simon Says". The leader gives commands starting with "Santa says..." (e.g., "Santa says touch your toes.").

Kids only follow the commands that start with "Santa says".

If you have enough kids, consider splitting them into small groups.



LESSON 3: PRIMARY SMALL GROUP

Joy

MAIN IDEA

Jesus is the King who offers hope and joy to all who believe in him. Jesus is the only way to come to God.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Acts 20:35
- Isaiah 7:14
- Matthew 22:37-39
- Philippians 2:3-4
- Matthew 2:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us').

Isaiah 7:14, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20-25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5-10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Name tags
- Snacks, 1 per child
- Printout 2 (Optional: Copies for each student)
- Printout 3, several copies per each small group
- Blank index cards or cardstock cut into small cards (approximately 3 inches by 4 inches)
- Markers
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue
- (Optional) Stickers
- (Optional) Rubber stamps and ink pads
- (Optional) Decorative paper punches
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or string

Connect



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICE BREAKER

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
- Option 2: Ask the children to take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the "How Are You Feeling?" chart (from the CKC Games Bag).

PRAY TOGETHER

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

INTRODUCTION: GIFTS CAN BRING JOY!

Ask,

- **What was the best gift you have ever received?**
- **Why was it the best gift you have ever received?**
- **Why do you like getting gifts?**
- **Do you enjoy giving gifts to others?**

Say, **Gifts can bring so much joy! Receiving gifts from others or giving a gift to someone else can bring a great deal of joy to our lives. Giving and receiving gifts can show we are thankful. Gifts can also be for celebrating a special occasion, and show love.**

Let's take some time creating gifts for someone close to us.

ACTIVITY: GIFTS FOR OTHERS

Choose from one of the following options:

Option 1: Homemade Cards

Use blank cardstock or heavy paper. Provide students with decorating supplies (markers, colored pencils, stickers and stamps, etc.). Discuss the importance of how a simple message can brighten someone's day.

Option 2: Inspirational Bookmarks

Use blank cardstock or heavy paper cut into bookmark-sized strips (approximately 2 inches by 6 inches). Provide students with decorating supplies (markers, colored pencils, stickers and stamps, etc.). Encourage students to create personalized bookmarks with inspirational messages to give to friends, family, or classmates.

Option 3: DIY Compliment Cards

Say, **This activity is to encourage others by creating and giving out personalized compliment cards. Sharing kind words to others can be an incredible gift. It can give encouragement, and it can be more meaningful than giving an item to bless others.**

Use blank index cards or cardstock cut into small cards (approximately 3 inches by 4 inches).

Provide students with decorating supplies (markers, colored pencils, stickers and stamps, etc.). Other materials to consider: decorative paper punches, hole punch, and ribbon or string.

Explain the concept of compliment cards: Small cards that contain positive messages or compliments for others. Discuss the importance of compliments and how they can make someone feel valued and appreciated.

Say, **By making and giving encouraging gifts to others, we can bring great joy to their lives. We can also experience joy by doing something special for someone else.**

When we care and love others enough to give them a heartfelt gift, it can bring so much joy. Today we will be talking about the first Christmas when Jesus was born. That first Christmas celebrating Jesus' birth, there were three men who brought gifts as they came to meet Jesus and worship him as the new King.

LEADER NOTE

Your students may not have time to complete this activity in session 1. You may choose to come back in session 2 and allow them to finish or choose a second activity to work on in session 2.

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20-25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

INTRODUCTION

Finish your “Gifts for Others” activity you chose for small group session 1, or allow students to choose another option to work on while you discuss the large group lesson and read some passages of scripture.

Say, **The wisemen were excited to meet the new King that was born. They wanted to worship Jesus and brought gifts to give to him.**

Gifts are a great way to show appreciation and can bring great joy to the person who receives them.

- **Have you ever been more excited and experienced more joy giving a gift to someone?**
- **Why do you think we can get so much joy from giving a gift?**

Let’s take a look at three bible passages that might help us understand why we can get so much joy when we give gifts.

Read aloud Acts 20:35.

- **How can we be more blessed by giving gifts than we can when we get gifts?**
- **Why does giving gifts and considering helping others bring us joy?**

Read Matthew 22:37-39.

- **What is the greatest commandment?**
- **What is the second greatest commandment?**
- **Who is your neighbor?** (Jesus said anyone you meet can be your neighbor.)
- **How can we love others like we love ourselves?** (By thinking about what they need.)

Read Philippians 2:3-4

- **Is it easier to think about ourselves or about others’ needs?**
- **How do we take care of our own interests?**

Say, **It might seem backwards at first, but taking care of the needs of others can bring so much more joy to our lives than when we try to make ourselves happy.**

This is because God has created us to love others as much as or even more than we love ourselves. Each person is created in the image of God. God loves us so much that he considered our needs, and since we are created in God’s image, when we love others and look at what they need, it allows us to experience joy.

Even though the three wisemen from our story brought gifts for Jesus, the greatest gift on the first Christmas was that God would send Jesus to be born as a baby. Jesus is the greatest gift God gave us!

Jesus brought peace, hope, and joy into the world when he was born.

ACTIVITY: GOSPEL HAND

Lead your students through the Gospel Hand (Printout 2), sharing with them that God loves us so much that he sent Jesus to give his life for us so that we could be saved!

ACTIVITY: JOYFUL JESUS ORNAMENTS

Using cardstock or construction paper, print and cut out various shapes for ornaments (Printout 3). Make sure they are large enough to decorate.

Have the students use markers, crayons, stickers, and other decorative items to decorate their ornaments. Encourage them to think about the joy Jesus brings to Christmas as they decorate.

On each ornament, have the students write or draw something that represents the joy Jesus brings to Christmas. This could be a word (like "love", "peace", "hope", or "joy"), a small picture (like a nativity scene, a cross, or an angel), or a short sentence (like "Jesus is the reason for the season.").

Encourage the kids to hang their ornaments on their Christmas tree at home or give them as gifts to family and friends.

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5-10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP

Ask,

- **What did you write or draw on your ornaments?**
- **Why does what you wrote or drew bring you joy?**

Say, **Jesus' birth brings joy to the world, and we can share that joy with others during the Christmas season. We can experience joy by sharing the greatest gift, and that is telling others about Jesus.**

RESPONSE & REFLECTION

Print out the memory verse.

Encourage students to think through the Gospel Hand this week. Challenge them to think through each part of the Gospel. See if they have any questions and to be prepared to bring any questions for next week. Consider making extra copies of the Gospel Hand for students to take home and write their questions on the back of the paper.

If time allows, go through the memory verse with students. Finish in prayer for the students to be brought into peace with God through faith in Jesus.



LESSON 3: INTERMEDIATE SMALL GROUP

Joy

MAIN IDEA

Jesus is the King who offers hope and joy to all who believe in him. Jesus is the only way to come to God.

BIBLE PASSAGES

- Acts 20:35
- Isaiah 7:14
- Matthew 22:37-39
- Philippians 2:3-4
- Matthew 2:1-16

MEMORY VERSE

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Isaiah 7:14, NLT



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for. (15 minutes)



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus. (20-25 minutes)



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel. (5-10 minutes)

Prepare



Prepare your heart to teach.
Plan for the lesson.

QUESTIONS

- How can you be praying for the students this week?
- Are there any specific students or requests you can pray for?
- Are there any adaptations that you can make to the lesson this week to better serve the kids in your small group or make your small group more effective?

MATERIALS NEEDED

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- Scissors
- Glue
- (Optional) Stickers
- (Optional) Rubber stamps and ink pads
- (Optional) Decorative paper punches
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or string

Connect



Connect with the kids and make them feel heard and cared for.
(15 minutes)

Small Group Session 1

ICE BREAKER

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while children eat their snack:

- Option 1: Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).
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PRAY TOGETHER

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

INTRODUCTION: GIFTS CAN BRING JOY!

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Explain the concept of compliment cards: Small cards that contain positive messages or compliments for others. Discuss the importance of compliments and how they can make someone feel valued and appreciated.

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LEADER NOTE

Your students may not have time to complete this activity in session 1. You may choose to come back in session 2 and allow them to finish or choose a second activity to work on in session 2.

Heart



Facilitate activity and study to help kids know and love Jesus.
(20-25 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

LEADER NOTE

INTRODUCTION

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Say, **The wisemen were excited to meet the new King that was born. They wanted to worship Jesus and brought gifts to give to him.**

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Read aloud Acts 20:35.

- **How can we be more blessed by giving gifts than we can when we get gifts?**
- **Why does giving gifts and considering helping others bring us joy?**

If your students are struggling to stay engaged, consider going around your small group asking specific students a question. You may also consider giving tickets to each student as they answer a question.

Read Matthew 22:37-39.

- **What is the greatest commandment?**
- **What is the second greatest commandment?**
- **Who is your neighbor?** (Jesus said anyone you meet can be your neighbor.)
- **How can we love others like we love ourselves?** (By thinking about what they need.)

Read Philippians 2:3-4

- **Is it easier to think about ourselves or about others’ needs?**
- **How do we take care of our own interests?**

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ACTIVITY: GOSPEL HAND

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ACTIVITY: JOYFUL JESUS ORNAMENTS

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Encourage the kids to hang their ornaments on their Christmas tree at home or give them as gifts to family and friends.

Hands



Lead kids to live out the mission of the Gospel.
(5-10 minutes)

Small Group Session 2

WRAP IT UP

Ask,

- **What did you write or draw on your ornaments?**
- **Why does what you wrote or drew bring you joy?**

Say, **Jesus' birth brings joy to the world, and we can share that joy with others during the Christmas season. We can experience joy by sharing the greatest gift, and that is telling others about Jesus.**

RESPONSE & REFLECTION

Print out the memory verse.

Encourage students to think through the Gospel Hand this week. Challenge them to think through each part of the Gospel. See if they have any questions and to be prepared to bring any questions for next week. Consider making extra copies of the Gospel Hand for students to take home and write their questions on the back of the paper.

If time allows, go through the memory verse with students. Finish in prayer for the students to be brought into peace with God through faith in Jesus.

Printout 1A

CHARACTERS

- Narrator (leader)
- Wiseman 1
- Wiseman 2
- Wiseman 3
- King Herod
- Angel
- Mary
- Joseph
- Baby Jesus (a baby doll)

SCENE 1: THE WISEMEN SEE THE STAR

(Narrator stands to the side of the stage.)

Narrator: Long ago, in a land far away, three wisemen saw a special star in the sky. This star signaled the birth of a new king, the King of the Jews.

(Wisemen enter, looking up at the sky.)

Wiseman 1: Look, a star! It is so bright and beautiful. It must mean something very special.

Wiseman 2: Yes, it is the star of the new King. We must follow it and find him.

Wiseman 3: Let's bring gifts to honor the new King. I will bring gold.

Wiseman 1: I will bring frankincense... *(Turns to crowd)* That is a good-smelling perfume.

Wiseman 2: And I will bring myrrh... *(Turns to crowd)* That's another good-smelling perfume.

Narrator: And so, the wisemen set out on their journey, following the star.

(Wisemen walk to the other side of the stage.)

Printout 1B

SCENE 2: THE WISEMEN MEET KING HEROD

(King Herod sits on his throne.)

Narrator: The wisemen traveled far and wide until they arrived in Jerusalem. There, they went to see King Herod.

(Wisemen approach King Herod.)

Wiseman 3: Greetings, King Herod. We have come to find the new King of the Jews. We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

King Herod: A new king? (Pretends to be kind) How interesting! Please, find this child, and let me know where he is so that I too may go and worship him.

(Wisemen nod and leave the stage.)

Narrator: But King Herod did not really want to worship the new King. He was afraid the new King would take his throne.

SCENE 3: THE WISEMEN FIND JESUS

(Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus are on the stage. The star is above them.)

Narrator: The wisemen followed the star until it stopped over the place where Jesus was.

(Wisemen enter and kneel before Baby Jesus, presenting their gifts.)

Wiseman 1: We bring gold, a gift fit for a king.

Wiseman 2: We bring frankincense, a symbol of prayer.

Wiseman 3: And we bring myrrh, a sign of sacrifice.

(Mary and Joseph smile and thank the wisemen.)

Printout 1C

SCENE 4: THE ANGEL WARNS THE WISEMEN

(Angel appears to the Wisemen as they sleep.)

Narrator: That night, an angel appeared to the wisemen in a dream.

Angel: Do not go back to King Herod. He means to harm the child. Return to your country by another way.

(Wisemen nod in their sleep.)

SCENE 5: THE WISEMEN DEPART AND HEROD'S REACTION

(Wisemen wake up and leave the stage quietly.)

Narrator: The wisemen obeyed the angel and returned home by taking a different way. When King Herod realized he had been tricked, he was very angry.

(King Herod stands up angrily.)

King Herod: Those wisemen have tricked me! But I will find this child and make sure he does not take my throne!

Narrator: But Joseph was also warned in a dream by an angel to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt, where they would be safe from Herod.

(Joseph leads Mary and Baby Jesus off the stage.)

Narrator: And so, the wisemen returned home, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus went to Egypt, and King Herod's plan was foiled. The new King, Jesus, would grow up to bring hope and peace to the world.

(Everyone returns to the stage for a final bow.)

Narrator: And that is the story of the wisemen and the birth of Jesus. Merry Christmas to all!

Ask students to have a seat.

Printout 2

THUMB: God created us to be with him.

Genesis 1:27

“So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

INDEX FINGER: Our sins separate us from God.

Romans 3:23

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”

MIDDLE FINGER: Sins cannot be removed by good works.

Ephesians 2:8-9

“God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.”

RING FINGER: Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again.

Romans 5:8

“But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”

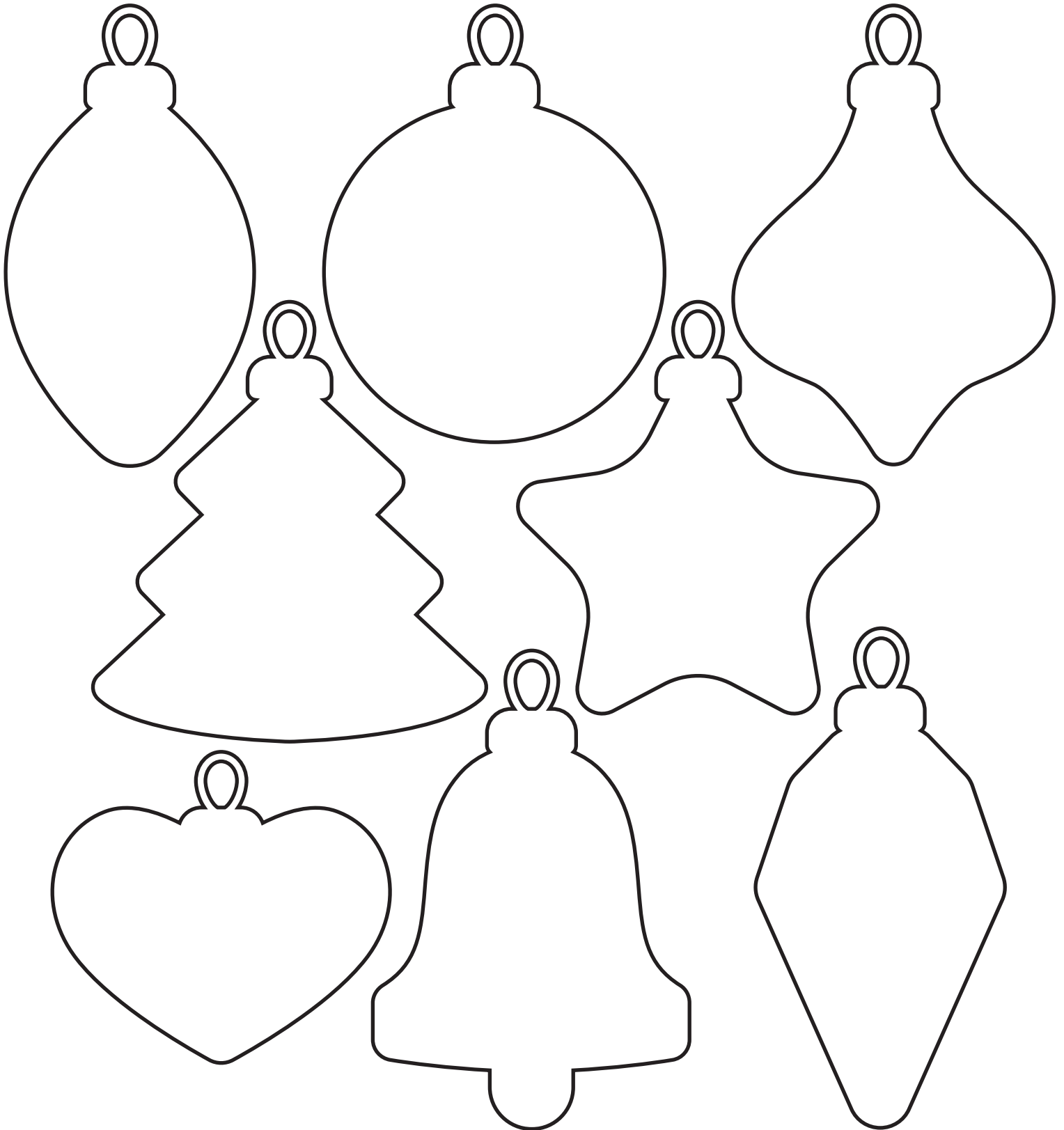
LITTLE FINGER: Everyone who trusts in Jesus alone has eternal life.

John 3:16

“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.”



Printout 3



Memory Verse Cards

MEMORY VERSE

All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us').

Isaiah 7:14, NLT

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