



A Christmas Story Bible Study

This Bible study lesson based on a portion of the Christmas story may be used with any age. We have included a basic Bible lesson script with a variety of interactive options for different ages including children, youth and adults.

This is also a great tool for family worship and can easily be divided into two lessons.

Title: From Full to Open

Scripture: Luke 2:7

Introduction Activity: Stuffed

To introduce this Christmas Story lesson, give each person a small container and a handful of cotton balls. When you say start, tell them to stuff as many as they can into the cup while keeping count. For a larger group, you can make teams or use blown up balloons and a garbage bag for stuffing. Make a chart to see how many each could fit.

Ask - Why didn't you stuff more in? Their answer should be something like, no more would fit!

Too Full...No Room - Read Luke 2:7

Have everyone turn to the Gospel of Luke chapter 2:4-7 and challenge them to find the innkeeper.

Wonder: Have we ever realized the innkeeper is never really mentioned? He is "assumed." All we really know is - "there was no room for them in the inn."

Bethlehem was not a huge city, but it was the ancestral home of David's descendants. ALL of them came to this small town to be counted in a census ordered by Casar Augustus. It may have been the innkeeper was doing all he could to "stuff" people into his inn. His heart may have wanted to make room, but couldn't just like you couldn't make anymore cotton balls fit into the cup.

"Now Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register along with Mary, who was betrothed to him, and was pregnant. 6

While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."

Luke 2:4-7

It's easy to allow our lives to become "overbooked" just like the innkeeper's inn. His inn being full was not a bad thing; in fact he probably saw it as a really great problem to have.

We can learn a lot from this Christmas story "unmentioned" innkeeper/owner. Sometimes our own lives quickly fill up with possessions, activities, responsibilities, etc. until we feel we have "no room" left for God.

No More Room - A Christmas Story Activity

Give each person a small post-it note and pen. Give them 1-3 minutes to fill the sheet with "things" in their life - job, family, school, tv, gaming, Facebook, cleaning, cooking, etc. Tell them to write each where the size of the word depicts the amount of time spent on it.

Now have them write "Jesus" somewhere on the sheet. Did they have a hard time finding space for Him? Yep, that happens quite often in our lives too. Our life becomes so full...there is no room for Jesus. Hmm...now do we have a better understanding of what the innkeeper may have been feeling?

Ask someone to share how they felt. Sad? Disappointed? Like a failure?

Life happens, and if we are not careful, our "inn" fills up so fast that before we know it there is no room left for Jesus.

Busyness can be deceiving. It makes us feel like our life is too full, when actually our life may have become empty. Busyness or "doing" cannot fulfill our need for true purpose. It cannot give our life that deeper meaning. It cannot lead to an abundant life. It cannot fill the emptiness.

Only Jesus and His presence can do that, and to experience His presence we must slow down, sit down and be with Him...abide with Him.

The Christmas story can help us move from DOING to BEING!

"He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

Psalm 46:10 NIV

"She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. 40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" 41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one.[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Luke 10:39-41 NIV

"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me."

John 15:4 NKJV

God knows our struggle with busyness. That's why He continually invites us to seek Him...to seek His face...to seek His presence. This Christmas season and on into this new year, may we slow down and become more aware of His presence. May we make room for Jesus first before other things fill our life too full.

Remember, He is Emmanuel - "God with us!" Enjoy the fullness of His presence!

"When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "I shall seek Your face, Lord." Psalm 27:8

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." Jeremiah 19:13

"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you." Matthew 6:33

"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrews 11:6

Offering what we have -

Another Christmas Story Lesson from the Innkeeper

Some believe we may be misunderstanding what Luke was saying about the Inn altogether here. The Greek word, *kataluma*, translated as inn here, may not have been what we consider an inn or a hotel. It also can mean something like a furnished upper room.

It possibly could have been the home of one of Joseph's relatives and the upper room of their home was where family and guests lodged. The lower floor may have been like a stable where the animals were kept.

We normally think of and depict the innkeeper as a "bad guy." How could he turn away a young couple about to have a baby?!

But what if this owner wanted to make room, but he couldn't? He did, however, offer what he could.

Wonder: What if this was a home where the upper floor was so packed with visitors, there was no room? What if the inn keeper offered what he had - a shelter below where the animals were kept? It wasn't what we would see as ideal, but it met this young couples need for shelter.

How many times have we seen a need, but felt like what we had to offer was too little...not enough...so we offer nothing?

We don't really know if the manger was located in a stable owned by the inn keeper, but what if?

Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father above. (James 1:17) What He has given us, no matter how much or how little, He expects us to use for His good purpose and His glory.

A Parable Told by Jesus

In [Matthew 25:14-30](#) Jesus told a parable that relates to us being faithful with what He has given us. Read and discuss what some of the talents or investments may be that God has entrusted to us.

This Christmas take time to sit down and inventory things or time you have to offer to God and others for His glory. What may seem too small or worthless to us, may be exactly what God wants to use for something **BIG!**

Jesus having to be born in a manger did not take God by surprise! God had a big purpose behind what seemed like a mistake or failure on the inn keeper's part.

Wonder: Have you ever wondered if Jesus had been born in a palace or an actual inn? Where would that have left [the shepherds](#) in the Christmas story? They certainly would not have been invited inside. God wanted to make sure all knew they could come and find Jesus. God made Him available to all even as a baby born in a stable.

Take some time and find the wonder in that!

Christmas Story - Interactive Options

Children

A few additional Christmas Story fun activities for children include:

- **Freeze Tag** - Have a designated play area. One person is the tagger and when others are tagged, they must freeze ... be still. To become unfrozen, they must tell another runner something God has given them and how they can use it to point others to Jesus. This will encourage them to think during their still time and focus on God.
- **Design Your Inn** - Have each design and draw how they would design their inn. Let them be creative and encourage them to include things that "fill" their lives. Example: If they love sports, draw a room with sports equipment. If they spend a lot of time watching TV, draw that in a room. Then have them spend some time thinking and praying about which things may be taking too much time and leaving no room for Jesus. Have them draw a new design and incorporate a special room (representing time) just for Jesus. Encourage them to take time each day to spend with Jesus praying and reading God's Word.

Youth

- **Seek & Find** - Print this [Christmas Story scavenger hunt](#) with Bible verses. Give teams a time limit in which they must locate verses and find a Christmas word.

Adults

- Make a list and check it twice! List all that God has given you. Be creative and fill up a whole page! First though, take a marker and write God or Emmanuel in large letters in the center. Then as you make your list consider how each can be used to glorify God and helping others seek and find Jesus.
- Be still. Find a place to be alone for even 10 minutes and be still. Look around and see all God has created. Listen for sounds you don't hear when you are rushing around. Recognize His presence with you and worship!