Beyond BASICS

Children's Church

DIRECTOR'S GUIDE

Winter 2026

Beyond BASICS

Director's Guide

Winter 2026-2027

The children will learn to appreciate God's gift of His Son.

We Learn About God's Greatest Gift

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Volume 7, No. 2, Winter Quarter, 2026-2027.
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www.bogardpress.org; 1-800-264-2482

We Learn About God's Greatest Gift



Welcome to *Beyond Basics.* The theme of this quarter is "We Learn About God's Greatest Gift." We will focus on Jesus' life from Gabriel's announcement to Mary to the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry. We will relive the familiar Scriptures that we all know and love. We will examine these Scriptures for deeper insights and principles. Our motive might be to teach these children the stories, but in the process, we will see what we might not have seen before. Although we have heard and read these stories before, ask God to give you new understanding of His Word and to help you pay attention to every detail.

We begin with Gabriel's visit to Mary. This young lady's faith, obedience and courage are unequaled. Her response to God's plan for her life should inspire us to such trusting obedience. We follow as God reveals His plan that writes the names of ordinary, everyday people in His pages of history. Zacharias and Elisabeth were an older couple who were righteous before God. Joseph was a carpenter preparing to begin his new life with his young bride. The shepherds were spending yet another night keeping watch over their flocks. Some wise men happened to be studying the stars at the right time. God's plan changed all of their lives forever.

Joseph and the angel of the Lord became familiar with each other. When the angel spoke to Joseph, Joseph obeyed. He took Mary to be his wife but did not touch her until God said he could. He took the responsibility of protecting and raising God's only Son, the Savior of all mankind. That meant moving when the angel said to move and not asking questions.

God revealed enough of Jesus' childhood to be an example for children. Jesus obeyed Mary and Joseph by submitting to their authority. Although Jesus is from everlasting to everlasting, still He grew in wisdom and stature.

We see John the Baptist preaching repentance and baptism, preparing the way of the Lord. This bold man looked at the Pharisees and Sadducees and called them vipers. Yet, when Jesus, his cousin, his Lord, came to him for baptism, John so humbly expressed his own unworthiness. In baptizing Jesus, John experienced the Trinity—Jesus in the flesh, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove and God as He spoke.

When Jesus faced Satan, He defeated Satan with Scripture, teaching us that we can do the same through Him.

The stories are all familiar. We know them from beginning to end. Or do we?

Teaching and Shepherding?



If you think of a teacher, you may see someone who stands before you telling you things you ought to know. If you think of a shepherd, you may see someone who is more of a guide, a leader or a caretaker.

As a teacher to young children, you should be able to play both roles. As a teacher, you instruct them about the truths of God's Word. You must be prepared yourself through study and prayer to teach the truth to your class.

What comes next after instruction and teaching? The role of a shepherd, the role you play as a shepherd, is to have a willingness to guide and lead the class back to the instruction of God's Word as it is taught.

With young children, you will probably do more shepherding than teaching. In class time alone they are easily distracted. When distractions take place, step into the role of a shepherd and patiently lead them back to the portion of God's Word that is being presented. During class time look for opportunities to reinforce the principles of God's Word.

Is someone having a hard time paying attention? Is someone having a hard time sharing? Has someone said something to upset someone? Teacher, be on alert for those moments that God's Word can be reinforced. Shepherd, guide your wayward ones back to the principles in God's Word.

Make copies of the Certificate of Foundation Bible Learning, one for each child.

MEMORY VERSE CHART

Names	1 John 4:9	Luke 1:63	Matthew 2:1	Luke 2:11	Matthew 2:10	Psalm 46:1	Exodus 20:12	1 John 4:15	Luke 2:52	Matthew 4:17	Luke 3:22	James 4:7	Matthew 4:19

Certificate of Foundational Bible Learning

This is to certify that _____ of

_____ has completed a quarter of *Beyond Basics*
Church Name

Foundational Bible Teaching.

_____ _____
Teacher Date

Individual Journal for

Child's Name

_____

Parents' names: _____

Siblings' names and ages: _____

_____

Grandparents' names: _____

Church history information: _____

_____

_____

Personal details: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How can I best pray for and minister to this child and family? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Praise and answered prayer: _____

_____

_____

_____

(Copy one page for each child.)

Drama Presentations



Drama is one of the most effective ways to communicate Bible truths to children. It immediately commands the children's attention. Drama makes the lesson come to life. The children replay the drama over and over in their minds. The lesson becomes more deeply imprinted in their minds with each replay. The Holy Spirit can then bring that truth to mind anytime.

Drama can be anything from a simple one-person presentation to a theatrical multicharacter cast presentation. The effect depends on the quality of the presentation. The most important point to consider in any drama presentation is just that—the main point. Identify the truth that you want the children to visualize, understand and remember. Be sure that the dialogue, costumes and props point to that truth, not distract from that truth. Whether presenting the drama alone or with a cast, rehearse until there are no distracting rough spots. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the absolute best way to present the drama so that it honors God.

To dramatize a lesson alone, a few simple techniques make big impressions. One person can change characters by changing something as simple as a hat, shirt or robe or by draping himself in different fabrics. The children quickly realize that each change means the character changes. They seem to forget that you are their teacher. They think of you as the different characters. Here are a couple of hints to help you manage your props. Invest in a coat tree. Hang the different props on the tree in the order that you will need them. Keep the props simple and easy to manipulate. You want to concentrate on delivering the message to the children, not on dealing with complicated props. Engage the children's imaginations.

We are more familiar with multicharacter cast drama presentations. In this case, a narrator can tell the lesson or story, or the characters can speak for themselves. The dramas in this book are written to be told by a narrator, but they can easily be modified so that the characters speak. Practice the drama so that the presentation goes smoothly. All of the characters should always keep the main point in mind. If possible, form drama teams that work together all of the time.

Staging is important. Picture the stage area from the children's point of view. Determine the main areas in the lesson. For example, the wise men traveled from the East to Herod's palace then to Jesus' house. The main areas should flow in that order. Herod's palace can be imaginary. The wise men knock on an imaginary door which Herod pretends to open. The same is true with Jesus' house. Use your imagination. Remember that the children will use theirs.

Check Christian bookstores for resources to develop drama presentations. Some good books are available to explain different presentations. Many books of skits and dramas are available. God has blessed teachers by making many resources available to enhance Christian education.

Every Day with Jesus



(Devotional Guide)

Included is a devotional guide, *Every Day with Jesus.* These devotional guides help parents lead their families in daily devotionals related to the *Beyond Basics* lessons. It is your responsibility to copy these guides each week to give to the families. The instructions for copying and folding are in the *Beyond Basics Devotional Guide.*

Lesson 1

Lesson 2

Lesson 3

Lesson 4

JESUS IS BORN

Unit 1

Unit Objective: To think about God's love in giving His Son and to lead children to worship in gratitude for God's greatest gift.

The Message

The Christmas season is one of the best times to be a children's teacher, especially a children's Christian educational teacher. It is all about Jesus and God's plan for the redemption of man. It is about God's faithfulness. It is about the truth of God's Word from the beginning to the end.

For many years the prophets had told different details of the promised Messiah. The details might have seemed otherwise insignificant. When everything happened just as God had revealed to the prophets years earlier, they were obviously significant.

In Lesson 1 we see Mary's unconditional obedience to God's plan for her. In Lesson 2 we follow Zacharias and Elisabeth's experience of becoming the parents of Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist. In Lesson 3 we see the hopes of all generations fulfilled in the birth of Jesus in the stable. In Lesson 4 we celebrate Jesus' birth with the angels and shepherds.

Christmas! Even though celebrated once a year for all the world to remember Christ, let us as His children celebrate His birth each day in our hearts and give thanks to God for sending Jesus, His Son, the Savior of the world.

Preview

After receiving the material for this quarter's lessons, take the time to look over everything carefully. Go through the supply list of each unit and collect the items that you will need. Read over each part of the lesson for a better understanding of what needs to be taught. Each lesson starts with a game that will help the children understand the main theme of the lesson being taught. Familiarize yourself with each song. Know the words so that you may better direct the children. Read the passage of Scripture used for the lesson through several times. Take time to meditate on it and ask the Lord for understanding and knowledge of His Word that you may teach it with wisdom. Memorize the Memory Verses given. Have the Word hidden in your own heart that you may teach it with understanding. Pray daily for your class. Pray for the love and wisdom needed to teach the children the truths of God's Word. Pray for the families that they may read the devotionals given to them.

Celebration Praise
(Music)

Music time is truly a time of *Celebration Praise*. Take the time to practice singing the songs.
Suggested songs for Unit 1:
"Tell Me the Stories of Jesus"
"Go Tell It on the Mountain"

Supplies for Unit 1

- Children's Bibles
- Poster board or paper plates
- Masking tape
- Construction paper—white
- Elastic
- Scotch tape or stickers
- Art supplies
- Pushpins
- Copy paper—white and colored
- Cardboard or Styrofoam for each child
- Binder clips or clothespins
- 5" x 3" blocks of wood or Styrofoam, three per child
- Glue—white and sticks
- Wrapped candy cane for each child
- Hole punch
- Ribbon or raffia
- Christmas stickers or seals

Props and Characters for Unit 1

- Flashlight or spotlight
- Realistic doll wrapped in white cloth
- White sheet
- Robe or fabric
- Manger
- Angel
- Mary
- Zacharias
- Elisabeth
- Joseph
- Innkeeper
- Shepherds
- Group of angels



1 God Chooses Mary

December 6, 2026

The children will say that God chose Mary to be the mother of His Son, the Savior whom He had promised to send.



God chose Mary to be the mother of His Son, the promised Savior.

Text: Luke 1:26-38

To the Teacher

Have you ever really considered the impact of Gabriel's message from God to Mary? She was engaged to Joseph. She would have been making preparations for her wedding and for her new life. But that was all about to change.

Listen to Gabriel's greeting. "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28). This was no ordinary greeting. The message to follow was no ordinary message.

"Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS" (verses 30, 31). Her only question was, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (verse 34). After hearing Gabriel's answer, her response was one of willingness to carry out God's will. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (verse 38).

Being a Jewish young lady, Mary had probably heard the prophecies of the promised Messiah her entire life. She might have speculated how the Messiah would appear or if she would even get to see Him. Little did she know that God would choose her to be the mother of His Son, that promised Messiah.

"God sent his only . . . Son."

1 John 4:9

Let's go back to the wedding—Mary's plans for her new home and her life with her groom. Now, the focus had changed. God changed her plans—big time! What an awesome change! As far as we know, Mary never had one negative response to God's change. She trusted God.

Mary's life was not easy. Joseph contemplated privately breaking the engagement. The trip to Bethlehem at the end of her pregnancy must have been difficult. The delivery room for the birth of her first baby was a stable. When her son was just a toddler, they had to leave their home for His safety. She went through all of this to see her son crucified by the ones whom He had come to save. Yet, through all this Mary obeyed God's plan.

How do we respond when God changes our plans? Too often we cling to our plans with every bit of strength and every resource we have. We make ourselves miserable with the struggle. God is longing for us to say, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

Will you embrace God's changes in your life the same as Mary did? His changes and His plans are not always easy and comfortable. Faith in God tells us that His ways are absolutely the best. We can trust God. May we remember to be humbled as Mary was and accept whatever the task might be that He has for us.

Getting Started

As the children come into class today, have them come in and sit down with their Bibles. **Who can tell me what special day is coming? Christmas is about Jesus.** Read Luke 2:7. **Jesus was born a baby just as you and I were. Jesus loved us enough to come to earth to be the sacrifice for our sins. Let's pray thanking God for the gift of His Son.**

Wiggle Buster

(Game)

The objective of *Wiggle Buster* is to give the children a sense of being chosen while exercising their large muscles by playing "Duck, Duck, Goose."

For this activity you will need:



- Area large enough that the children can sit in a circle and run around the outside of the circle
- Circle marked on the floor with masking tape
- Goose visor WB1-1 (for each child and one for yourself) *(Beyond Basics Resource Book)*
- white construction paper
- poster board or paper plates
- 6" piece of elastic for each visor

Ahead of time, prepare the playing area. Clear all tables, chairs and any other obstacles to make the area safe. Copy the goose pattern onto white construction paper. Attach the goose to the top of a visor cut from poster board or paper plate. Staple elastic to the *X* on each end, adjusting to fit.

Have the children sit on the floor in a circle. Demonstrate the game by walking around the outside of the circle. Say "duck" as you gently tap each child on the top of his head. Choose a child who you know will enjoy participating to be the goose. When you tap that child's head, say, "Goose." The goal is to run around the circle and back to that child's spot without that child tagging you. You sit down in that child's spot. That child repeats the process to choose the next goose. Continue until each child has been the goose. Place a goose visor on each child's head as he sits down to indicate he has been chosen.

With the children still seated around the circle, encourage all the children to participate in the discussion.

Was it fun to be chosen to be the goose? What are some other things you like to be chosen to do? God chose someone special to be the mother of Jesus. Who can tell me her name? Do you think she was happy God chose her? What are some things God might choose you to do? God wants us to say yes when He chooses us.

Celebration Praise

(Music)

Music is an enjoyable gift from the Lord that, when used properly, can help us lift our voices in praise to the Lord. We can tell about the stories of Jesus through song.

Sing "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" several times. **This month we celebrate the birth of Jesus. In this lesson, we will learn about Mary, the mother of Jesus.**

Real Life

(Lesson)

The objective of *Real Life* is that the children say that God sent Gabriel to tell Mary that He had chosen her to be the mother of His Son.

You will need:

- Bible opened to Luke 1:26-38
- White sheet or large piece of white fabric for Gabriel
- Flashlight or some kind of spotlight
- Robe or piece of fabric for Mary
- Piece of fabric for Mary's headdress

Cast of Characters:

- Mary
- Gabriel

Choose one of the methods for drama presentations explained on page 9 of this book. Prepare the props and stage areas far enough in advance to allow for necessary adjustments. Take the time to study and rehearse ahead of time. Make the narration your own. The more naturally and enthusiastically you narrate the lesson, the deeper the impression will be in the children's memories.

Mary acts out each activity.

Mary was a teenage girl. She was planning to marry Joseph. Mary was probably getting some things ready to take to her new home. What would she take to her new home? She might have sewn some special clothes and quilts. She surely needed dishes and cooking things. Mary wanted everything to be just right for her new life with her husband, Joseph.

Gabriel pretends to talk to Mary as you narrate. Mary listens intently and interacts at the appropriate times. Encourage the children to respond to the discussion questions.

An angel named Gabriel came to Mary. He came with a message from God. He said, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured." Mary was frightened. Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid. He said that she had found favor with God. What did that mean? God was pleased with her.