

Christmas Myths Busted

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You've seen plenty of nativity scenes—Mary, Joseph, angels, baby Jesus in a manger full of hay, and lots of animals. But, according to the Bible, what really happened when Jesus was born?

For
Teen Family

Season
Winter

Needed

Bible, paper, Christmas Myths Quiz worksheet (see last page), pencils or pens

Prepare in Advance

Make a copy of the Christmas Myths Quiz worksheet for each person.
Mark your Bible at Luke 2:1-20.

Activity Plan

1. Gather family members. Say this prayer to begin.

Good and gracious God, thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus. Help us learn more about his birth as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. Amen.

2. Work together to retell the Christmas story from memory.
3. Give each person a copy of the Christmas Myths Quiz worksheet and a pencil. Ask each person to work alone to complete it.
4. After all have finished the quiz, comment that the only information we have about the day of Jesus' birth is found in Luke 2. Have someone read aloud Luke 2:1-20 from your Bible or using the text at the end of this activity.
5. Give family members a moment to make any desired changes to their quiz answers, based on the passage from Luke. Read through the quiz together, offering the following answers as is helpful:
 - A. Probably false, though the Bible doesn't say.
 - B. Probably true. The Bible doesn't mention a stable or farm animals, but it does say Mary laid the newborn Jesus "in a manger." A manger is a feeding trough for farm animals, which suggests they were in some kind of shelter for livestock.
 - C. Probably false. The Bible does not give the month or the day of Jesus' birth. During the first 300 years of the Christian church, there was no observance of Christmas. In the year 336, the Western Church first celebrated Christmas on December 25.
 - D. Probably true. Luke says the shepherds went "with haste" to see the baby. When they arrived, Jesus was lying in the manger, so it seems likely this happened on the day he was born.



- E. Probably false. Even though the Christmas carol “Away in a Manger” says: “the cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes,” the Bible doesn’t specify. However, Jesus was fully human and fully God, and human babies cry! Hebrews 4:15 speaks of Jesus being like us in every respect except for sin.
- F. Probably false. Luke doesn’t mention the wise men at all. In Matthew 2:1-12, we are told the wise men (no number specified) saw a star after Jesus was born and traveled a distance “from the east” to find him. They found “the child” in a “house” with his mother.

6. Pray together:

God, you are amazing. You sent us Jesus as a tiny baby to love us, teach us, and save us. Help us look past the presents this year and remember your gift of Jesus. Amen.

Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



Christmas Myths Quiz

Test your knowledge of the Christmas story! Circle your answer to each question below.

- A. Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem.
probably true
probably false

- B. Jesus was born in a stable, with farm animals nearby.
probably true
probably false

- C. Jesus was born on December 25.
probably true
probably false

- D. The shepherds visited baby Jesus on the night he was born.
probably true
probably false

- E. Baby Jesus didn't cry.
probably true
probably false

- F. Three wise men brought gifts to Jesus right after he was born.
probably true
probably false

