LESSON 3: SIMEON AND ANNA SEE JESUS

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Luke 2:21-40
- In This Passage: Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to dedicate him when he was eight days old. While there, they encountered two people, Simeon and Anna, who’d been waiting for God’s promised Messiah. Immediately they recognized Jesus as this gift, the Messiah they’d been waiting for. They praised God for the wonderful gift of Jesus.
- Bible Point: Jesus is God’s gift.
- Summary Verse: “He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!” (Luke 2:32)

Dig Deeper

- You’ll Be Teaching: Jesus is God’s gift. Kids know better than anyone the eager anticipation of waiting for a gift. The days before Christmas or a birthday seem to crawl by as they hope for all the things they’ve asked for. This story captures that anticipation, as Simeon and Anna have waited their whole lives for the promised gift of the Messiah. Help kids capture their excitement when God’s gift finally arrived!
- Think About: What’s the best gift you’ve ever received? What made it so great? What makes Jesus an even greater gift?

Dig In to Prayer

- Make a list of the kids in your class. Write a gift you’d like God to give each child next to his or her name. Pray that your kids will experience the gifts Jesus brings.

Quick Tip

- Asking kids questions to listen for before they read or hear Scripture will help them focus on understanding what they hear. They’ll feel more prepared to give answers to that question afterward.
## This Lesson at a Glance

### OPENING
- **Kids** share about a topic related to the lesson.

**Supplies**
- Bible

### HIGH-ENERGY GAME
- **Kids** try to move a long distance without touching the floor.

**Supplies**
- masking tape
- snacks
- table

**Easy Prep**
- On the floor, use masking tape to make two X's about 12 feet apart.
- Create one set of X's for every four children.
- Set snacks on a table next to one X.

### CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY
- **Kids** discuss good gifts.

**Supplies**
- Bible
- handful of candies that are the same color, such as red jelly beans
- plastic bowl
- “Gift Cards” handout (download [here](#))

**Easy Prep**
- Place the same-colored candies in a plastic bowl.
- Cut apart the cards on the “Gift Cards” handout.

### TALK-ABOUT VIDEO
- **Kids** watch a video and discuss what it's like to wait for something good.

**Supplies**
- “Waiting for Cookies” teaching video (watch or download [here](#))

### LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP
- **Kids** rub their fingers on sandpaper as they talk about waiting on a good gift.

**Supplies**
• 2-inch sandpaper squares (1 per child)
• Woodsies shapes or squares (found at most craft and hobby stores) (1 per child)

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CRAFT

Kids decorate a fold-and-tie gift box.

Supplies

• “God’s Gift” handout (1 per child) (download here)
• markers or crayons
• curling ribbon
• scissors
• hole punch (1 for every 5 kids)
• stickers (optional)

Easy Prep

• Make a sample craft using the instructions below.

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*Marked supplies are also used in Core Bible Discovery

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.
Supplies
- Bible

Welcome
Thank kids for coming.
Just for fun, have kids link arms with a partner and swing each other in a circle.
Make announcements.
Introduce new kids.
Celebrate birthdays by shouting “Happy birthday!”
Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson
Say: Today we’ll learn about a man named Simeon and a woman named Anna. They waited a long, long, long time for God’s gift—Jesus. Jesus is God’s gift! When Simeon and Anna saw Jesus, they praised God.

Share
Say: Simeon and Anna knew that God had promised the gift of his Son, and they were ready to receive that gift. Let’s think for a minute about gifts we’ve received.
Tell about a memorable gift you received.
Have kids form pairs and share with their partners about gifts they received.

Summarize
Open a Bible, and say: Today we’ll explore how Jesus is God’s gift and what that means to us. We’ll dig in to the Bible to find out. The Bible isn’t an ordinary book; it’s God’s special book. The Bible is one way God talks to us. God is here right now, ready to talk to you.
Pray, thanking God for the gift of his Son, Jesus.
HIGH-ENERGY GAME
Bridging the Gap

Supplies
- masking tape
- snacks
- table

Easy Prep
- On the floor, use masking tape to make two X’s about 12 feet apart. Create one set of X’s for every four children.
- Set snacks on a table next to one X.

Get to the Other Side
Have children form groups of four and stand by the X that’s farthest from the snack table.
Point to the snacks.
Say: There’s a snack for you over there. To get it, you have to step from one X to the other without touching the floor in between.
Have children try to step (or jump) from one X to the other without touching the floor in between. Let each child try several times.
Occasionally remind children that they have to step from one X to the other in order to get to their snack.
After each child has tried a few times, make a masking-tape line between the two X’s for children to walk on. Have older children help younger children walk on the line.

Talk About It
Let each child enjoy a snack, and discuss the following questions.
Ask: • Explain whether you think you received a gift in this game.
• What’s the difference between a gift and a reward?
• Why can we say that Jesus is God’s gift?
Say: You weren’t able to make it to the other side and get a snack until I helped you. In the same way, Jesus helps us. There’s a gap between us and God because of sin—the wrong things we do that separate us from God. God gave the gift of Jesus to help us cross that gap because we can never be good enough on our own. That’s why we say Jesus is our Savior—he saves us from being separated from God. Jesus really is God’s gift!
Supplies
- Bible
- handful of candies that are the same color, such as red jelly beans
- plastic bowl
- “Gift Cards” handout (download here)

Easy Prep
- Place the same-colored candies in a plastic bowl.
- Cut apart the cards on the “Gift Cards” handout.

Discuss Good Gifts
Say: I’m glad we’re here together discovering that Jesus is God’s gift. I love to think about gifts, don’t you?
Ask: • When is your favorite time of year to receive a gift? Call out your answer.
  • How do people know what gifts you’d like? Talk to a few people nearby.
    Give kids time to talk, and then ask a few kids to share their answers.
Say: To give someone a great gift takes some planning. I’ll show you what I mean. Have kids form mixed-age groups of about four or five kids. Give each group a “Gift Card.” Have the oldest person in each group read the card aloud. Then have each group decide on the perfect gift to give the person described on the card. Allow a few minutes for groups to talk.
    Have each group read its card aloud and then announce the perfect gift it decided on. After each presentation, lead everyone in a quick round of applause.
    After all groups have presented, ask: • How did you decide on the perfect gift for the person on your card? Raise your hand to answer. Take a few responses.
    Say: To give a perfect gift, you have to know something about the person receiving the gift. You have to know what they’re like and just what they need. God made each one of us, and he knows exactly what we need. God knew we needed the gift of Jesus!

Explain the Meaning of Messiah
Say: In today’s Bible story, we’ll meet two people who had been waiting for the gift of Jesus all their lives. They knew that God had promised to send a Messiah. Messiah means the chosen one of God, sent to rescue his people.
God’s people had been waiting for a really long time for the Messiah to come. The people lived under a ruler who oppressed them and didn’t believe in God. So they really were ready for the Messiah to come!

Introduce Simeon and Anna

Say: There was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. Something very cool happened to him—the Holy Spirit told him that he wouldn’t die until he saw the Messiah. Wow! What a promise! People had been waiting and waiting for so long for the Messiah to come. And Simeon was going to get to see him! It was time! Here’s how it happened.

One day the Holy Spirit led Simeon to the Temple. And guess who just happened to be there? Mary and Joseph—and baby Jesus! But it wasn’t a coincidence. It was God’s timing!

Well, when Simeon saw baby Jesus, he took him in his arms and praised God! He knew Jesus was the Messiah. And that’s not all! There was an old woman named Anna who lived at the Temple. She came along just as Simeon was talking to Mary and Joseph. And when she saw Jesus, she started praising God, too! She knew Jesus was the Messiah!

Holy Spirit Help

Say: Let me give you some background. It was the Jewish religious law at the time that parents had to present their babies at the Temple. So there may have been lots of parents and babies at the Temple that day. Who knows how many babies might have been there?

Think about this. Show kids the bowl of same-colored candies, and pass the bowl around for each person to see. Tell kids not to touch the candies—they can only look.

Let’s say that most of these candies are cherry. But one of them is strawberry. Talk in your group about these questions. Ask willing kids to share their answers.

Ask: • How would you know which was the special strawberry candy?  
       • How did Simeon and Anna know Jesus was the Messiah, and not one of the other babies?

Say: The Holy Spirit let both Simeon and Anna know that Jesus was the Messiah. And the Holy Spirit can help us know Jesus, too. Plus, we have the benefit of the Bible and other Christians who know Jesus. Jesus is God’s gift—exactly the gift God knew we needed, because Jesus is the only one who can make a way for us to live in heaven. Let’s thank God.

Close your time with a prayer, thanking God for giving us the gift of Jesus.
Supplies

- “Waiting for Cookies” teaching video (watch or download here)

Discuss and Watch "Waiting for Cookies"

Say: In today’s Bible account, we learned that Simeon and Anna had waited a long, long, long time for Jesus. They knew that Jesus would be God’s gift to the world, and they kept waiting for Jesus. Waiting can be hard.

Think about a time you had to wait patiently for something you really wanted. I’ll go first. Share your own story of a time you had to wait a long time for something. Keep your example to about a minute to model the type of sharing you want kids to do.

Then say: Now it’s your turn. Find a partner, and talk about a time you had to wait a long time for something you really wanted.

Ask: • Was it worth the wait once you got that thing? Why or why not?

Allow two minutes for kids to share with their partners, and then invite a few kids to share their answers with the whole group.

Say: Let’s watch a video about someone who has to wait a long time.

Watch “Waiting for Cookies.”

Ask: • Why did the girl think it was worth the wait for those cookies?

Say: When we pray, we often ask Jesus to do something that is important to us, like heal someone, or help us with a friendship, or help us with a test.

Ask: • What is something you have prayed about and are waiting for God to do in your own life? Share your thoughts with your partner.

Allow about two minutes for sharing. Then invite children to silently pray for their partners for a minute, asking Jesus to help their friends as they wait for Jesus.

Then say: When a friend prays for us, that is a gift to us. When Jesus helps us, it is a gift to us. Even greater than both of these is knowing that Jesus himself is a gift to us. It must have been hard for Simeon and Anna to wait for Jesus to come. The good news for us is that we don’t have to wait for Jesus—he’s already here with us and we can talk to him anytime we want. What a wonderful gift!


Supplies

- 2-inch sandpaper squares (1 per child)
- Woodsies shapes or squares (found at most craft and hobby stores) (1 per child)

Rub the Sandpaper

Give each child a sandpaper square to hold in one hand. Have them each rub one finger on it for about 30 seconds and talk about how it feels.

Ask:
• What would happen if you rubbed one finger on this sandpaper for an hour?
• What are some ways that waiting for something for a long, long time feels bad or hurts?

Say: Today we learned about Simeon and Anna, who had to wait a long, long time for God’s gift, Jesus. Maybe they felt [say some of the words kids shared about what it’s like to wait for a long time], but when they saw Jesus, it was worth it! They knew that Jesus is God’s gift.

Smooth Rough Surfaces

Say: Simeon and Anna were thankful when they saw Jesus. They knew that Jesus was there to save them—so they could be forgiven for all the wrong things they’d ever do. Jesus is God’s gift for us, too. Let’s see why that’s important.

Give each child a Woodsie shape.

Ask:
• Why do people use sandpaper?

Say: Sandpaper is good for smoothing out rough surfaces—it gets rid of the stuff you don’t want there. Like that, Jesus wants to smooth out our rough spots. Let’s smooth out these shapes as we silently pray.

Pair up any preschoolers with older children, and then lead kids in rubbing the sandpaper over the edges of the wood shapes as they silently thank Jesus for forgiving their wrongs or for helping them through “rough spots” in life. After a minute of silent prayer, close the prayer.

Pray: God, thank you for Jesus! We’re thankful he came to save us and to be our friend. He’s the best gift ever. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Thank the children for coming, and let them take home the wood shapes as a reminder that Jesus is God’s gift.
Supplies
- “God’s Gift” handout (1 per child) (download here)
- markers or crayons
- curling ribbon
- scissors
- hole punch (1 for every 5 kids)
- stickers (optional)

Easy Prep
- Make a sample craft using the instructions below.

Talk About Gifts
Say: Jesus is God’s gift. In the Bible, God’s people were waiting for a Savior who would lead them. But Jesus wasn’t just a gift to them way back then. Jesus is God’s gift to us today!

Ask: • What do you do when someone gives you a gift?
• How can you thank God for giving his Son, Jesus?
Say: We can thank God through worship, through prayer, or even by showing his awesome love to others.

Hold up your sample craft. Say: Let’s make a cool craft that will give you a chance to thank God for Jesus—the best gift of all.

Cut and Decorate
Give each person a “God’s Gift” handout, and direct kids to cut out the shape on the solid lines. Help younger kids with cutting. Kids can use a hole punch to make holes on the circles. Explain that the side with the dotted lines will be the inside of the box.

Have kids each write a note on the inside, thanking God for Jesus. Ask kids to be as specific as possible, thanking God for ways Jesus has encouraged them, forgiven them, or made them feel God’s love.

Have kids turn the shape over and use markers or crayons to decorate the other side of the shape. Optionally, kids can also use stickers.

Fold and Tie
Show kids how to fold on the dotted lines so the thank-you note is on the inside of the box. Then let kids slip curling ribbon through the holes and tie it to pull the points of the box together. Kids can use scissors to curl the curling ribbon. Older kids will need to help younger kids.
Tell kids that they can keep their gift boxes where they’ll see them every day as a reminder of the amazing gift God gave through Jesus.