

Lesson prepared by Montserrat Wadsworth



The Symbols of Christmas



Preparation: Print off each picture or gather real ornaments that represent each Christmas symbol. Have hymnbooks and Children's Songbooks for everyone to share. Make sugar cookie dough ahead of time for the activity.

Objective: To teach your family what the symbols of Christmas are and what they represent.

Lesson: *Read each section while holding the picture or ornament up for everyone to see. Sing the corresponding song.*

Bells – In the old days animals were very valuable to people as they provided transport and food for them. They put a bell round the neck of each sheep or cow, so they could hear where they were if they got lost. In the same way God values all people, wherever they are, and they are never lost to Him. In some places church bells are rung on Christmas Day to proclaim the good news of this special day.

Psalms 100, "1 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

2 Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

3 Know ye that the Lord he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.

5 For the Lord *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations."

~ Sing "Christmas Bells are Ringing" *Children's Songbook* pg 54 or "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" *Hymns* 214 ~

Wreath – Wreaths represent a love that knows no end. Much like the wedding bands that couples exchange when married, the wreath has no beginning and no ending. So too, the love which came down at Christmas is eternal love and the wreaths symbolize the love of God that never ends.

~ Sing "God Loved Us, So He Sent His Son" *Hymns* 187 ~

Candy Cane - The candy cane represents the shepherd's crook. This was a strong stick with a curved end that could be placed around the neck of a sheep that had slipped down the hillside, so the shepherd could pull it up to safety. The candy cane represents the helping hand we should show to others, and reminds us that we really are our brother's keeper. The original candy cane had three small red stripes which are the stripes of the scourging Jesus received by which we are healed and a large red stripe that represents the shedding of blood of Jesus so that we can have eternal life.

Psalms 23:1-5 "1 The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

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4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

~ Sing "The Shepherd's Carol" *Children's Songbook* pg. 40

Star - The Star of Bethlehem led the wise men to the Christ Child. It was heavenly sign of promise long years ago. God promised a Savior for the world, and the star was a sign of the fulfillment of that promise.

Matthew 2: 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

~Sing "O Little Town of Bethlehem" *Hymns* 208 or "Stars Were Gleaming" *Children's Songbook* pg.37

Candle – Before electricity candles would light the way so people could see where they were going. When it is dark we are afraid, but the light casts away our fears. Jesus came into the world and taught that He is the Light of the World.

John 8: 12 "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

~ Sing "I'm Trying to Be Like Jesus" *Children's Songbook* pg78

Angels - God used angels to proclaim the coming of the Messiah, and then again to announce the birth of Jesus. God sent the angel Gabriel, specifically, to announce to Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus. Angels appeared to shepherds in the field to announce to them the birth of Christ. We should be as the angels and use the holiday season to announce the glory of the birth of the Jesus Christ.

Luke 2:8 - 14

8 "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men."

~ Sing "Angels We Have Heard on High" *Hymns* 203

Activity: Make sugar cookies cutting the cookies out in shapes of the Christmas symbols.

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