



Date: _____
Series: The Best Gift of All – Jesus
Winter Year 4, Lesson 30

The True Promise of Christmas

Primary Scripture: Hebrews 10:23

Key Verse: Hebrews 10:23, “We must continue to hold firmly to our declaration of faith. The one who made the promise is faithful.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Children need someone reliable to count on in their lives. They need to experience what it is like to have a regular relationship with someone who keeps promises. Even though earthly friends, parents, and children, can disappoint us, God promises that he will always be faithful. His promises cannot be broken. Kids need to know that they are connected, by faith, to the promise that was made at the very beginning of the world. At that time, God said that he would send a Messiah known as The Promised One. This promise was long awaited by those in the Old Testament, but now fulfilled in the coming of Jesus. We, on this end of history, look back to how God has fulfilled this gift. Those throughout the Old Testament looked forward to the fulfillment of this promise. We on this side of Jesus' coming look back on this Promised One. We are all linked together in a promise that will not disappoint us—the coming of the Messiah.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Through Jesus' incarnation, his death, and his resurrection, he fulfills God's promise to send a rescuer to save us from our sins.

Jesus in us: Jesus was not only promised for us, but wants to dwell within us through faith.

Jesus through us: As we experience our hope fulfilled in Christ, we shine that hope outward to the world. This gives the world a promise it can hang on to.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols, such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies: Christmas tree and decorations, one pre-made Promise Chain made with only green and red paper strips (see the appendix for the Promise Chain sticker template)

Put the Promise Chain on a Christmas tree.

All the Christmas decorations in the room indicate it is the Christmas season. These decorations help to tell us the story of God sending his gift of Jesus to us.

How many symbols can you find in this room that remind us that Jesus is God's gift?

Take comments from the audience.

How about this Christmas chain?

Point out the Promise Chain.

This is called a Promise Chain and each one of its loops reminds us of promises God has made to us. Each promise came true when he sent the gift of his Son Jesus. As a matter of fact, this chain can get so big with all the promises God fulfills, that it could go all the way around the world! That is because God made a promise to every

single person who trusts Jesus as his/her Savior—he will forgive you and invite you into his heavenly house. Jesus is the promise that God keeps. The Bible says that the one who made this promise is faithful.

God made a promise to you that he won't break, and we are all part of that promise. Let's make a promise to him right now, too. Let's promise God that we will worship him and tell him how we love him. Let's thank him for what he has done for us with our prayers and songs.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Supplies: Promise Chain and small gold paper chain of three links (see below)

Start out by holding up the long Promise Chain made with red and green paper links.

What is a chain? Many people might first think of strong steel rings, fused together and connected for strength. Yet even with that strength, chains are able to move freely.

Now, I want you to imagine that each link on this chain is a promise that was made to you, or a promise that you made to someone else. One of the promises that we might make to God is: "I love you and I want to serve you."

But when we disobey him, we break one of those promises. When we are hurtful to others, we break promises. When we become greedy or selfish, and don't share with others, we break one of those promises.

This chain is made of paper and tears so easily. The same thing can happen with us. We sometimes break our promises to others and sometimes other people break their promises to us.

Break a red and green link somewhere close to the middle of the chain to demonstrate broken promises.

Next, hold up the small gold paper chain made with only three links. One link is labeled "Jesus coming into the world as a baby," the second link is labeled, "Jesus dying on the cross for us," and the third link is labeled, "Jesus rising from the dead."

Here I have another paper chain and there is something written on each link.

As you read what each link says, take the tape (that makes the paper strip into a loop) off of each one, straighten the strips out, and hold each one up lengthwise to show the kids. Then turn the first strip perpendicular to the floor and tape it to the wall. After reading the second loop, straighten it out, turn that one the same way and tape it to the bottom part of the first loop. Finally, after reading the third loop, straighten it out and tape it horizontally through the upper part of the first two strips so it forms a cross.

Let's read what each one says. This first one says; "Jesus coming into the world as a baby." The second link is labeled, "Jesus dying on the cross for us." This third link is labeled, "Jesus rising from the dead."

What do you think I should do with this set of promises? Maybe I can use them to patch the broken chain.

Demonstrate how to mend the broken chain by taping the gold strips back into loops, and attaching both ends of the gold chain to the torn parts of the long red and green chain. Find an adult assistant to help do this as you discuss the meaning.

Because of these three gold links and what they represent, we can know that there is one sure and reliable source of acceptance and forgiveness in our lives. That source of dependability comes from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Imagine the strength of a chain and attach yourself with this chain to Jesus.

Maybe you can think of promises that you have broken this past week or promises others made to you that were broken. Imagine taking a gold chain like this one and mending the brokenness. Let's take time to tell God about that now.

Dear God, we can think of some ways that we have not obeyed you or done what you asked us to. Maybe we were mean to others or selfish. Maybe we were not respectful of you or your name. Maybe we were disobedient to our parents. You know each one of us and you know how we have broken our promises to you.

But you have never broken your promises. You promised that you would send a savior to us. Thank you for giving us Jesus who not only came as a baby, but grew up to become a man and gave his life for us. He not only gave his life for us, but Jesus rose again to prove that he is alive and with us forever. Thank you for keeping your promises in Jesus. In his name, help us to keep our promises to you. Amen.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Supplies: Promise Chain

Place the Promise Chain around the offering plate.

Read Hebrews 10:23:

“We must continue to hold firmly to our declaration of faith. The one who made the promise is faithful.”

So how should we respond to God’s great faithfulness to us?

Read Hebrews 10:22b:

“ ...we must continue to come to him with a sincere heart...”

Let’s do that now as we bring up our offerings. This is a way to tell God “I love you” and “thank you” for your promises given to us.



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

Elbow Tag:

Today we will play elbow tag. To play this game I need you to find a partner. Link arms at your elbows. This is the partner you will remain attached to for the whole game.

Choose one set of partners to be “it” and hold them back while you tell the other groups to link up with other sets so that they are in groups of four.

This set of partners is “it.” When I start the game, they will run and tag one of the other groups. When they do, they link themselves to that group of four but the pair on the other end of the chain will release and then become “it.” Then the new set will try to catch the next group.

Gather kids together at end of game to discuss the following learning point:

Elbow tag allows us to be connected together by something physical such as our elbows. Did you know that we are also connected to other generations of people throughout history by a link that is even stronger? That link is the promise of God that connects people throughout the Bible. It is just like they are connected elbow to elbow until they reach Jesus. Then Jesus’ connection reaches all the way to us.

Bible Presentation: Audience Participation Craft

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Supplies: Strips of red, green, and yellow construction paper, and labels (see Appendix with no title)

Use the labels to secure each link of the chain printed on Avery 5960 label sheets (tape or staplers are optional if you do not want to use the labels), a "Name" column and "Believes his promise" column for each child

Print and post the poem "God Passed the Promise" on overhead or PowerPoint or with large lettering in the front. Make additional copies for each student to take home with their chain.

Making a Promise Chain

Give each child a column of name labels, a column of "Believes his promises" labels, and a supply of red and green strips to make the chain, with an additional three strips of yellow paper. Use Appendix B to read the promise given to each biblical character as each link of the chain is completed.

Begin by saying:

Pick up a green strip of paper and use the "Adam and Eve" label to make this strip into a loop. Let me tell you about the promises given to Adam and Eve about the Savior Jesus many years ago.

Read about the promises given to Adam and Eve from Appendix B. When complete, continue.

Fill in the name of someone who believes God's promise to Adam and Eve on one of your "Believes his promises" labels. Place it on your first loop.

Now, take a red strip of paper, thread it through the first loop and close the circle with the second label, "Abraham and Isaac." Let me tell you what God promised Abraham and Isaac about the coming Messiah.

Refer to Appendix B. Read and continue.

Abraham and Isaac believed God's promises. Fill in another name of someone who believes like Abraham and Isaac on a "Believes his promises" label and place it on this red loop.

Continue in the same way through the poem while kids make interlocking loops of alternating colors.

NOTE: Tell kids to not make red or green loops for the last three: *Jesus is born, Jesus dies on the cross, and Jesus rises from the dead.* Place those labels on yellow loops.

After each loop is completed, share the promises of God from Appendix B. Complete each loop with the children filling in someone's name that believes. Have them place that "Believes his promise" sticker on the appropriate loop.

When the chain is complete, read the poem (*Appendix A*) through slowly. Have the children identify each of the Bible characters as the poem is read.

I will reread the poem and you can follow along on the screen. The poem teaches you about the many years God promised to send us our Savior Jesus. This is so important to understand.

Read the poem. (See Appendix A.) Answer questions if time is available. They may take their chains and a copy of the poem home.



Witness

Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Have kids from the audience tell about a time when a promise was broken. Take two or three examples. Then have kids talk about a way God has helped them by keeping his promises.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees and take turns praying.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Safety and Security: Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- Christmas decorations set up or hung in room
- one pre-made Promise Chain made with red and green links (see *Bible Presentation* craft)

The Power of the Cross:

- long Promise Chain made with nothing but red and green links
- small gold pre-made paper chain made with only three links
 - one link is labeled “Jesus coming into the world as a baby”
 - the second link is labeled “Jesus dying on the cross for us”
 - third link is labeled “Jesus rising from the dead”

Bible Presentation:

- strips of red, green, and yellow construction paper
- tape
- staplers
- stickers (See Appendix.)
- print and post the poem (overhead or PowerPoint) “God Passed the Promise” with large lettering

Appendix A *(To print on overhead or PowerPoint)—three pages*

GOD PASSED THE PROMISE

Adam and Eve, God's crowning creation,
Sinned against God, and reaped separation.
But God in his mercy, kindness, and love
Gave them a promise that a Savior would come.

**Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a man called Abram, who longed for a son.
Under stars, God promised to make a great nation
Through which all people would find salvation.

**Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To Isaac, Abraham and Sarah's beloved son.
To Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Esau were born,
And through them, two mighty nations were formed.

**Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To Jacob, not Esau, as Isaac would have done.
Though a deceiver for most of his life
He received God's blessing after wrestling one night.

**Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To the man called Judah, one of Jacob's 12 sons.
And this is the blessing that his father gave:
God's kingdom would be established, never to fade.

**Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a simple shepherd boy and the king he would later become.
David's reign was a shadow of the Savior waiting in the wings,
The one who would be called Lord of lords, King of kings.

**Many years passed and the people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a people in darkness, whose lives lay undone.
Through a prophet named Isaiah, God's plan became clear
That the Savior God had promised soon would be here.

**Many years passed and the people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, He did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a prophet named Micah, who told of the town,
The birthplace to be for the One setting us free,
Look in Bethlehem and he will be found.

**Many years passed and the people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, He did not.**

God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a girl named Mary, a descendant of the line of Judah.
It was an angel who announced that it was she
Who would bear the Savior that would set mankind free.

**And many years have passed, and people have forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he has not.**

God passed the promise that the Savior DID come
Through an angel with news for each and every one.
Glory to God! Your Savior arrived today
You'll find him in a stable, lying wrapped in the hay.

**But many years have passed, and people have forgot,
But God, ever faithful, he has not.**

God kept his promise to deliver on earth
That babe in the manger, a true virgin birth.
Miracles, ministry and prophecies brought light
And the Gentiles rejoiced all through the night.

**But many years have passed, and people have forgot,
But God, ever faithful, he has not.**

They watch God's promises come true through his Son
Each link fits together one by one.
Betrayed, forsaken and beaten without cause
Carrying his own cross, no break for a pause.

**But many years have passed and people have forgot
But God, ever faithful, he has not.**

The time had come for Jesus - crucified,
To his father in heaven, "My God!" he loudly cried.
Pierced from his side came blood and his heart
His spirit to God in his hand he did part.

Then darkness, death and laid in a tomb,
This promised Savior of the virgin's womb.
But rolled back the tomb, no flesh did decay
Alleluia, he his risen, our Savior today!

God has fulfilled his promise and the Savior has come--
Not just for Abraham or Jacob, but for everyone.
And God's free gift of life is extended to you,

**Simply trusting in Jesus is all you
need to do.**

Appendix B

Poem With Teaching Points *(To be read while kids are making a Promise Chain)*

GOD PASSED THE PROMISE

*Adam and Eve, God's crowning creation,
Sinned against God, and reaped separation.
But God in his mercy, kindness, and love
Gave them a promise that a Savior would come.*

Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.

Adam and Eve Teaching Point:

Adam and Eve were promised that a Savior would be born so that Satan would be conquered in the future. Genesis 3:15

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a man called Abram, who longed for a son.
Under stars, God promised to make a great nation
Through which all people would find salvation.*

Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.

Abraham and Isaac - Teaching Point:

God promised Abraham children, as many as the stars. People are given a promise that God would give his only Son. Genesis 22:12

This promise is repeated in Genesis 22:16

This promise is for Abraham. The seed that provides salvation comes through Isaac. Genesis 22:18

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To Isaac, Abraham and Sarah's beloved son.
To Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Esau were born,
And through them, two mighty nations were formed.*

Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To Jacob, not Esau, as Isaac would have done.
Though a deceiver for most of his life;
He received God's blessing after wrestling one night.*

Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.

Jacob - Teaching Point:

The promise is that, “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star (Jesus) shall come forth from Jacob; a scepter shall rise out of Israel.” (Numbers 24:17—NIV)

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To the man called Judah, one of Jacob's 12 sons.
And this is the blessing that his father gave:
God's kingdom would be established, never to fade.*

Many years passed and people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.

Judah – Teaching Point:

Another promise God made was that the Savior would come through the tribe of Judah. Judah was one of Jacob's sons. Jesus' bloodline comes through the tribe of Judah. Genesis 49:10

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a simple shepherd boy and the king he would later become.
David's reign was a shadow of the Savior waiting in the wings,
The one who would be called Lord of lords, King of kings.*

Many years passed and the people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he did not.

David – Teaching Point:

God promised beforehand, through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.... Romans 1:2-4

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a people in darkness, whose lives lay undone.
Through a prophet named Isaiah, God's plan became clear
That the Savior God had promised soon would be here.*

Many years passed and the people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, He did not.

Isaiah – Teaching Point:

In one chapter of Isaiah, there are at least 19 prophecies of Jesus and his death.
Isaiah 53

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a prophet named Micah, who told of the town,
The birthplace to be for the One setting us free,
Look in Bethlehem and he will be found.*

Many years passed and the people forgot;
But God, ever faithful, He did not.

Micah – Teaching Point:

Micah 5:2 records the prophecy of where Jesus would be born.

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
To a girl named Mary, a descendant of the line of Judah.
It was an angel who announced that it was she
Who would bear the Savior that would set mankind free.*

And many years have passed, and people have forgot;
But God, ever faithful, he has not.

Mary – Teaching Point:

The Lord gives a sign that a virgin will be pregnant with a child, a son, and she will call his name Immanuel. *Isaiah 7:14*

*God passed the promise that a Savior would come
Through an angel with news for each and everyone.
Glory to God! Your savior arrived today
You'll find him in a stable, lying wrapped in the hay.*

But many years have passed, and people have forgot,
But God, ever faithful, he has not.

*God kept his promise to deliver on earth
That babe in the manger, a true virgin birth.
Miracles, ministry and prophecies brought light
And the Gentiles rejoiced all through the night.*

Make loop with "Jesus is born" sticker:

But many years have passed, and people have forgot,
But God, ever faithful, he has not.

*They watch God's promises come true through his Son
Each fits together one by one.
Betrayed, forsaken and beaten without cause
Carrying his own cross, no time to pause.*

But many years have passed and people have forgot
But God, ever faithful, he has not.

*The time had come for Jesus - crucified,
To his father in heaven, "My God!" he loudly cried.
Pierced from his side came blood and his heart
His spirit to God in his hand he did part.*

Make loop with sticker "Jesus dies"

*Then darkness, death—laid in a tomb,
This promised Savior of the virgin's womb.
But rolled back the tomb, no flesh did decay
Alleluia, he has risen, our Savior today.*

Make loop with sticker, "Jesus rises"

*God has fulfilled his promise and the Savior has come--
Not just for Abraham or Jacob, but for everyone.
And God's free gift of life is extended to you,*

***Simply trusting in Jesus is all
you need to do.***

Adam & Eve	Believes his promise:	Adam & Eve	Believes his promise:	Adam & Eve	Believes his promise:
Abraham & Isaac	Believes his promise:	Abraham & Isaac	Believes his promise:	Abraham & Isaac	Believes his promise:
Jacob	Believes his promise:	Jacob	Believes his promise:	Jacob	Believes his promise:
Judah	Believes his promise:	Judah	Believes his promise:	Judah	Believes his promise:
David	Believes his promise:	David	Believes his promise:	David	Believes his promise:
Isaiah	Believes his promise:	Isaiah	Believes his promise:	Isaiah	Believes his promise:
Micah	Believes his promise:	Micah	Believes his promise:	Micah	Believes his promise:
Mary	Believes his promise:	Mary	Believes his promise:	Mary	Believes his promise:
Jesus is born.	Believes his promise:	Jesus is born.	Believes his promise:	Jesus is born.	Believes his promise:
Jesus dies on the cross.	Jesus rises from the dead.	Jesus dies on the cross.	Jesus rises from the dead.	Jesus dies on the cross.	Jesus rises from the dead.