

BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID

1. The top-left corner is Mary. You introduce her as a young Jewish girl, and something amazing happened. She was visited by an angel. An angel is a messenger of God. (Always good to ask questions rather than tell. For example, “Does anyone know who visited Mary with news from God?”) [The angel is painted in.] The angel told Mary something really hard to believe. The Holy Spirit was going to do a miracle so that she would give birth to the Son of God. Mary had a choice, to believe or not believe, and she chose to [“ladder-letter” in] **BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID**.

2. Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph, and now his fiancé was pregnant, which was really embarrassing to him. People might think he was the father, which would be a scandal. Or worse, people might think another man was the father! So he decided to call off the marriage. But something happened to him. (Good spot to ask, “Does anyone know who visited Joseph with a message from God?”) An angel comes to Joseph at night and tells him not to leave Mary, and that the child is the Son of God. Joseph has a choice. he can avoid the embarrassment by getting rid of Mary, or he can, “**BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID.**” And that’s what he did.

3. Next we have a group of shepherds, and the Bible tells us they were watching their flocks at nighttime. No doubt they were tired and wanted to rest, but a host of angels came to them and told them the Messiah, the King of kings was born. And they had a choice. They could attribute this to too much wine, or they could **BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID**. And that’s what they did, and they became some of the very first people to see God in human flesh. Amazing.

4. There were also wise men, who lived in the East, quite far from Jerusalem. They had learned that when the Messiah comes, they would know because God would send a special star to guide them. Imagine their excitement, joy, and maybe even fear when they saw the star. They could have stayed put, but instead, they decided to **BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID**, and they went on a long journey.

5. There was also King Herod, a man loyal to the Roman Emperor. He is decked out in royal purple, on his golden throne. He found out about the Messiah and asked the Jewish religious leaders about it. They told him about the prophecy of Micah 5:2 [connect the letters to spell Micah 5:2] that said that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Anyone know when that prophecy was written? 700 years before this took place! [connect the lines for 700]. And did you know there are over 300 [connect the lines for 300] predictions about Jesus that were written hundreds and hundreds of years before He was born? That’s one of the ways we know the Bible is true, and we can trust it! So with all this knowledge, do you think Herod decided to **BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID**? You see, Herod had a darkened heart [paint black heart on Herod] so even though he had enough head knowledge to believe in Jesus,

he just didn't want to believe what God said. As a result, Herod never had his sins forgiven, and he's in a place called Hell. An awful place.

6. And now we get to the heart of the story, the birth of the Savior. Jesus is the best Christmas present, and I'll tell you why.

7. Each one of us has a desire in our heart of hearts to be with God, but we can't be with him. Anyone know why? Because we sin. Anyone know what sin is? Sin is when you break God's law. Anyone here ever told a lie? If so, then you broke God's law. Anyone ever take anything that doesn't belong to him? If so, you're a criminal in God's sight. What about being greedy, or dishonoring parents, or using God's name in vain, or not putting God first in your life? When we do any of these we sin, and we make a giant separation between us and God. [paint a black horizontal line in the lower-right section.] What man tries to do to make it right is to be religious. [paint black vertical line from hill and stopping at horizontal line.] But all our good deeds mean nothing because we still have a separation between us and God! But there's great news! Christmas is about God doing for us what we could never do for ourselves! God came down to us. [draw a vertical line down to the horizontal line, forming a cross.] God was born, perfect, sinless, never broke any of the commandments, and what did we do to Him? Did we honor Him? Did we give him a parade? No, we nailed Him to a Roman cross. We pounded nails through his hands and feet. [use red paint to make drip marks where the nails go and even a crown of thorns if you'd like.] But even this was proof that the Bible is real, because 1,000 years before Jesus died on the cross, the Bible says that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin, and the Bible describes crucifixion in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 before crucifixion was even invented! And even better... three days after Jesus died on the cross, He raised Himself from the dead! [Paint blue arrow from tomb up into the sky!] Because Jesus raised Himself from the dead, that means that He is God! It means there is life after death! It means that we have hope! It means that He has authority, which means we do what He says, and He says to turn from your sins and believe in the gospel.

So, we have a choice. We can have hearts that are in darkness, like Herod, or we can **BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID**. And if we believe God, then we will turn from our sins and trust in Jesus Christ that he died for our sins and rose from the dead!

B E F O R E



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