



God Reveals the Messiah

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38



LESSON GOAL

Students will worship Christ as Savior, Lord, and God.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- The angel Gabriel told Mary that she would be the mother of the Messiah.
- An angel told Joseph about the baby that Mary was going to have.
- Mary's baby was the Son of God and was going to be the Savior.
- God is with us.
- God fulfills His promises.

KEY VERSE

“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

APPLICATION

- Trust God. He is with us and always fulfills His promises.
- Tell others about the Savior this Christmas.
- Obey Christ as Lord and God.

NEXT WEEK

God Sends John the Baptist
Read Luke 1:5–25, 57–67, and 76–80.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

4

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

God often uses lowly and humble people to play important roles in His great plan. Joseph and Mary were no exception. This couple were betrothed—a legally binding engagement—and were preparing for a simple life together. Joseph was a humble carpenter. Mary was a humble maiden. From man’s perspective, they lived in a relatively small town in a relatively unimportant part of the world. Israel’s only claim to fame was its location in the middle of important trade routes between Africa, Europe, and Asia. Rome had ruled the land for about 60 years. To the rulers of Rome, it was an out-of-the-way country with a people who were difficult to rule. Joseph and Mary grew up under the oppression of the Romans. They held no special influence with the rulers of the Jews or the Romans.

But Israel was not small in God’s eyes. Thousands of years earlier, God had promised to bless the nations of the world through this little nation. He had promised to send a king who would one day rule them all. This rule would bring great blessing to Israel and the world. The greatest blessing this king would bring would be salvation from sin. The people of Israel, like the rest of the world, were sinners. Ever since Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, all mankind languished in sin and rebellion against God. All mankind needed a Savior.

Mary and Joseph may not have been important, but they did have special ancestors. They were both from the family of David and the line of Judah. The descendants of David had not had a king on the throne for more than 500 years. The people of Israel had been waiting for this special king all this time. Roman rule was heavy and harsh. God-fearing Jews waited eagerly for the king who would deliver them spiritually and politically. Joseph and Mary were no exception. Joseph was a God-fearing Jew who believed in the promises of God. Little did he know that God had great plans for him and his young bride-to-be.

Long ago God had promised King Ahaz a sign (Isa. 7:14). Ahaz was being threatened with an attack from Syria and Israel. He was very afraid. God told Ahaz that He would protect him and his kingdom. God asked Ahaz to choose a sign to confirm his faith in Yahweh. Ahaz refused to specify a sign and demonstrated his lack of faith. It was indicative of the lack of faith of the whole nation. As a result, God promised a sign that would come hundreds of years after Ahaz. This sign was much greater than Ahaz could ever have imagined. A virgin would have a child. That had never happened before. It would be impossible for anyone but God. God protected Ahaz and kept him safe, just as He said. But Ahaz never saw the sign. God had more in mind with this sign than comforting Ahaz. This was to be a sign for all Israel. God the Father would send His Son into the world as its Savior. When Ahaz was kept safe, the prophecy was all but forgotten. However, for more than 700 years, God did not forget.

One day, the angel Gabriel visited Mary (Luke 1:26–28). He gave her the startling news that she was “highly favored” among women. God looked on her with great grace. She was troubled by this statement, wondering what it meant. The angel

Additional Reference Materials

*The MacArthur Study
Bible* by John MacArthur

continued by telling her that she was going to have a baby. This baby was going to be the Savior of the world, and the Messiah. He would one day rule the entire world, and His kingdom would never end. Mary was thrilled. Probably many women in Israel hoped to be the Messiah's mother.

There was one problem, however. She was not married and had never been with a man (Luke 1:34). She asked, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" The angel told her that the Holy Spirit Himself would help her conceive. She would have a baby, and God would be the Father. That baby would be the Son of God. This would be the greatest miracle ever known to man. God Himself would become a man and dwell on the earth. This was great news. Mary was to have the privilege of bearing the Son of God. God did just what He said, and Mary conceived and became pregnant with Jesus.

Despite the greatness of the promise, there were many problems for Mary to face. First, she had to tell her fiancé, Joseph. An unmarried woman who became pregnant could be stoned. Certainly, she expected that Joseph was going to be shocked by the news. Indeed, he was. He had a very difficult time believing what Mary said. No one had ever heard of such a thing.

Joseph was a righteous man. He followed the Law of Moses. He had every right to divorce Mary. But he was also a merciful man. After a great deal of thinking, Joseph decided to divorce Mary secretly. Her reputation was already going to be ruined. He did not want to make her situation worse by announcing it to the whole city of Nazareth.

That night, an angel of the Lord came to Joseph in a dream. The angel told Joseph to take Mary as his wife. She was not lying, and indeed the child was the long-promised Messiah. The angel told him to name the baby "Jesus," which means "the Lord saves." He was sent into the world to "save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). This was also to fulfill the promise of 700 years before that a virgin should bear a son. Joseph knew well that this child would be God in human flesh. God the Son was coming to earth to dwell with men.

Joseph obeyed the Lord and took Mary as his wife. He risked ridicule from friends and family who would think that he and Mary had sinned before marriage. He agreed to raise the child even though it was not his own. He did this because he believed the promise from ages past, and he believed the words of the angel who was sent from God. The Messiah was about to come to earth as a human.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

*“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth”
(Psalm 78:1).*

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

What is a prophet?

A prophet is someone God uses to communicate His will to people.

What is prophecy?

Any message from God spoken or written by a prophet. This could be a message for that day or a message about the future.

What was the sign that Isaiah prophesied?

Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would bear a son named Immanuel.

Was this prophecy fulfilled?

Yes; it was fulfilled through the birth of Jesus Christ.

Does God always do what He says He will do?

Yes.



Ancestors and Descendants

It is difficult not to use the words “ancestors” and “descendants” when telling the Christmas story. Take time to teach these concepts through this activity.

Bring in pictures of your grandparents, parents, and students. Sit at a table with the students, and tell them who each person is. Tell them that you are your father’s son or daughter and that you are your grandparents’ grandson or granddaughter. Tell them to say the word “ancestor.” Practice with them several times. Tell them that ancestors are the grandmothers and grandfathers all the way back to Noah. Their grandpa’s grandpa is an ancestor. His grandpa’s grandpa is an ancestor. The same is true for their grandma’s grandma. These are our ancestors. Noah is one of our ancestors. Do the reverse for “descendant.” Tell the students that they are descendants of their grandparents. They are descendants of their grandma’s grandma and so on. In the end, point to pictures on the table, and test the students to see if they know who is an ancestor and who is a descendant. In today’s lesson, we are going to learn that Joseph and Jesus were descendants of King David.



Angel on the Wall

Draw an angel on a large piece of butcher paper, and tape it to a wall in the classroom. As the students come into the room, let them (or a teacher) draw around one of their hands with a dark pen. This handprint can be made directly onto the butcher-paper angel wing on the wall, or the handprint can be cut out and taped to the angel wing on the wall. Explain that an angel had a very special message for Joseph while he was sleeping. During the Bible lesson, we will find out what the message was.



How Do We Receive Messages?

Ask the students if any of them have ever received a letter or an e-mail. Talk about the different ways we receive messages today. Tell the students that in today's story, Jesus' parents received messages from some of God's special messengers—angels.



The Need for a Savior

Ask the students what life would be like without sin. Bring in newspaper articles, magazines, or books showing sadness, hurt, or things associated with sin. Remind the students that God created Adam and Eve in a perfect garden. After sin entered the world, man's punishment was death. God loved us and promised to send His only Son to die on the cross for our sins. God sent Jesus as a gift for us. That gift is our salvation.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

"It is never going to happen." I bet you have said that before. Have you waited for something so long that you thought it was never going to happen? Sometimes special days seem like they are never going to come. Days like Christmas or your birthday or grandma and grandpa visiting from out of town seem like they are never going to happen. Sometimes it seems like time goes very slowly.

If you have felt like that, you are not alone. We all feel like that. Just before Jesus was born, the Jews felt the same way. They were waiting and waiting for their Messiah. The Messiah was the promised King. The Messiah was supposed to come and save the people from the Romans. He was supposed to come and save the people from their sin. He was supposed to come and be the great Ruler of the earth. But the people had waited a long, long time. The last time they had heard from a prophet was 400 years earlier. That is a long time. The Romans had taken over the country many years before, and they were harsh and mean to the Jews. The Jews wished that the Messiah would come and get rid of the Romans. Many people did not believe God's promise anymore.

However, there were still people who had hope. Two of those people who loved God were waiting the same way many people in Israel were waiting. Those two people were Joseph and Mary. Joseph was from the family of King David. King David lived almost 1,000 years before Joseph. God gave David a promise that one of his descendants would be the Messiah.

Joseph and Mary were engaged. That means they were going to be married soon. But they were just common people. Joseph was a carpenter. He built houses. Joseph and Mary did not look like they would be the parents of the Great King—the Messiah.

One day, Mary got a very big surprise—an angel came to her. People almost never see angels. Angels carry very special news from God. This angel told Mary something amazing. He said that she was going to have a baby. God was going to put a baby in her womb. That was amazing.

Even more amazing is that the angel told her this baby was going to be the Son of the Highest—that means the Son of God. God was sending His Son to live on the earth, and one day He would rule the earth. He would sit on the throne of His father David (Luke 1:32). This was such good news. The Messiah was coming, and Mary was going to be the mother.

Mary was excited, but she was scared, too. When she told Joseph, he did not believe her. He wanted to break their engagement. He thought Mary had been with another man because she was pregnant. He was a good man, though, and did not want to embarrass Mary, so he thought he would divorce her quietly.

That night, Joseph had an amazing visitor. An angel came to him in a dream. The angel said, “Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. She has been given a child by the Holy Spirit. He is going to fulfill the promise Isaiah made many years ago. ‘The virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call his name Immanuel,’ which means ‘God with us.’”

Joseph got up and did just what the angel said. This was awesome and wonderful news. His bride, Mary, was going to give birth to God the Son. God was coming to live with men, and He was going to save people from their sin.

This was the news that many had waited years to hear. The long wait was almost over. God was going to send the promised King—the Messiah. He was not just going to be a ruler; He was going to be a Savior. And even more than that, the man was going to be God’s Son—Immanuel.

Jesus did indeed come like this. The Lord and Savior came to earth as a baby to rule and save His people from their sin. This is why we celebrate Christmas.

You and I need to do two things. We need to humble our hearts and call out to our Savior. We need to ask Him to save us from our sin. We also need to bow to Him as Lord in our hearts. He rules the heavens and earth, and we should obey and serve Him, not because He needs help, but because He is Lord. Christmas is not about us getting presents, but about us giving God our obedience and love.



Lesson Questions

Who came and talked to Mary?

An angel named Gabriel.

What did he tell her?

That she would have a baby. That baby was going to be the Son of God and would one day rule the earth.

What did Joseph do when he first heard the news?

He wanted to break the engagement.

Why did Joseph change his mind?

An angel of the Lord told him to marry Mary. Mary was going to give birth to the Savior, the Son of God.

How should we respond?

Call out for Christ to save us. Obey Him and serve Him as Lord.



Presentation Ideas

A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces to present with the lesson.

Praise and Worship

Away in a Manger

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Joy to the World!

Silent Night

Trust and Obey



Jesus' Parents

Jesus' parents on earth, Joseph and Mary,
(Point up; then hold up right index finger for Joseph and left index finger for Mary.)

Were young and simple and ordinary,
(Wiggle fingers and move together.)

But they found favor in the eyes of God.
(Nod head up and down while holding hand over eyes like a visor.)

An angel visited and said, "Fear not!
(Hold hands over head in a circle like a halo; then reach hands up high.)

Mary's having a baby; Jesus is His name.
(Pretend to rock baby with arms.)

He'll save the world from sin and shame."
(Make wide circle with arms.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



4
5

Promises Fulfilled Ornaments, Week Three

Cut out colored construction paper in the shape of a Christmas ornament. Give each student a pair of preprinted verses, one with a prophecy and one with its fulfillment. The following are suggested verses:

A Savior born—Matthew 1:21 with Luke 2:7

God's Son—Luke 1:32 with Luke 2:11

Instruct the students to glue a verse on each side of their ornaments. Then supply the class with glitter glue, stickers, and markers or crayons, and have the students decorate the ornaments. Finally, punch holes in the tops of the ornaments, and tie ribbons through the holes for hanging.



4
5

Angel Craft

Copy the angel template onto a piece of white cardstock, or draw it onto a paper plate. Cut along all the solid lines. Instruct the students to decorate the angel with crayons and glitter. Fold along dotted lines A and B. Fold A toward B and staple lines A and B together. Flip arms down in front of head and fold along dotted line in center. Gently fold sides of slit outward to create the angel's wings.



Get Your Heart Ready for Christ

Have the students cut out the "Get Your Heart Ready for Christ" puzzle. Then instruct them to glue the pieces together on the "Get Your Heart Ready for Christ" craft page. Read and discuss the page together. Both of these pages are at the back of the lesson.



5

Good News Megaphone

Each student will need one piece of gold or yellow construction paper, as well as scissors, glue, tape, markers, and glitter.

Have the students follow the instructions below to complete their crafts:

1. Write and print out the memory verse or key phrase from the morning on 1 x 4 inch strips of paper.
2. Form a cone with the piece of construction paper. Cut off any excess.
3. Cut a $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4 inch strip of paper for a handle.
4. Tape the handle onto the underside of the cone.
5. Glue the memory verse or key phrase onto the cone.
6. Decorate the phrase with markers and glitter as desired.

When the students are finished, practice saying the memory verse using the megaphones. Encourage them to share the good news with family and friends this Christmas season.

Coloring Sheet

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

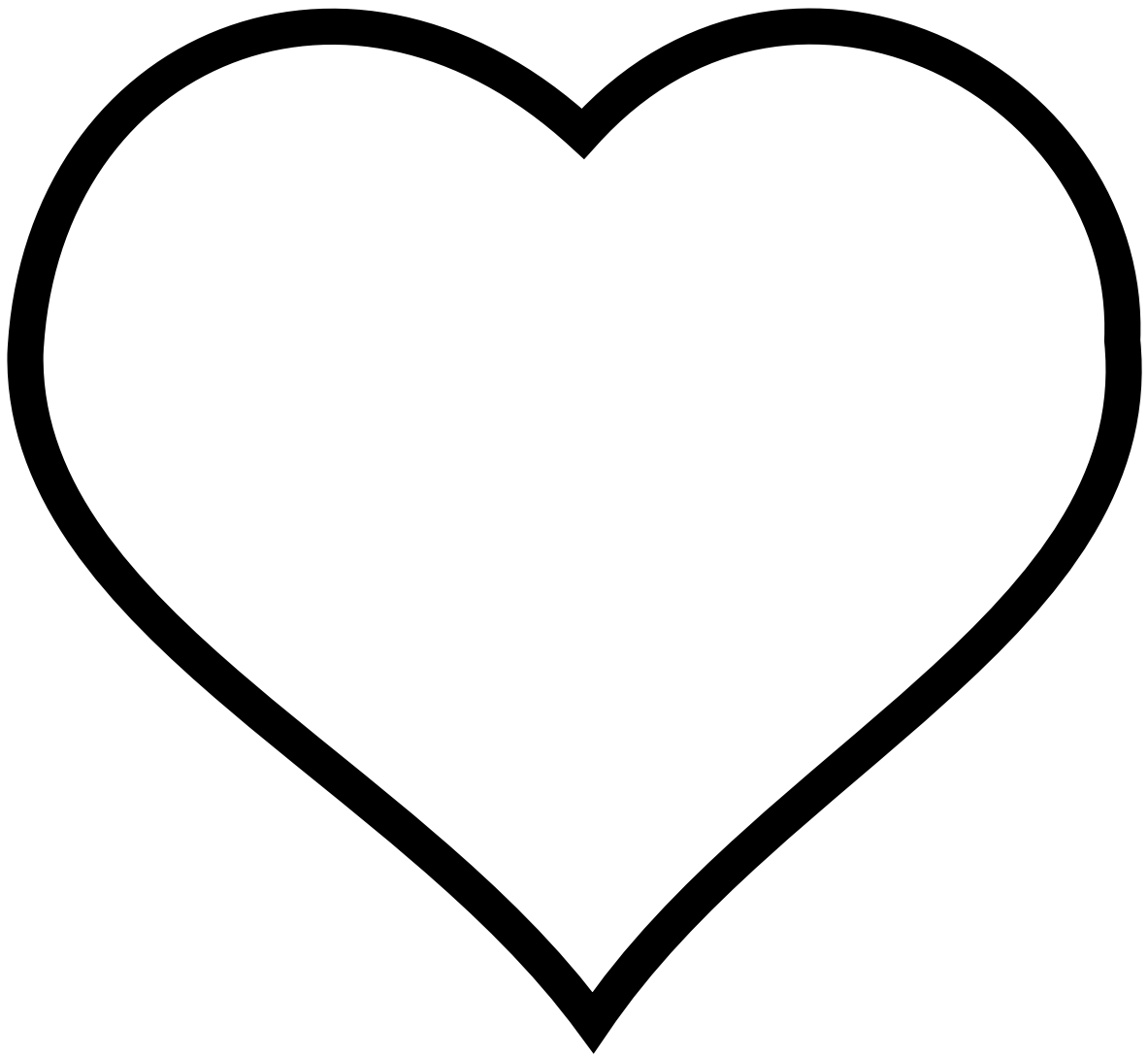
Use this verse for three weeks.

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, 'God with us'" (Matthew 1:23).

Get Your Heart Ready for Christ (Puzzle)

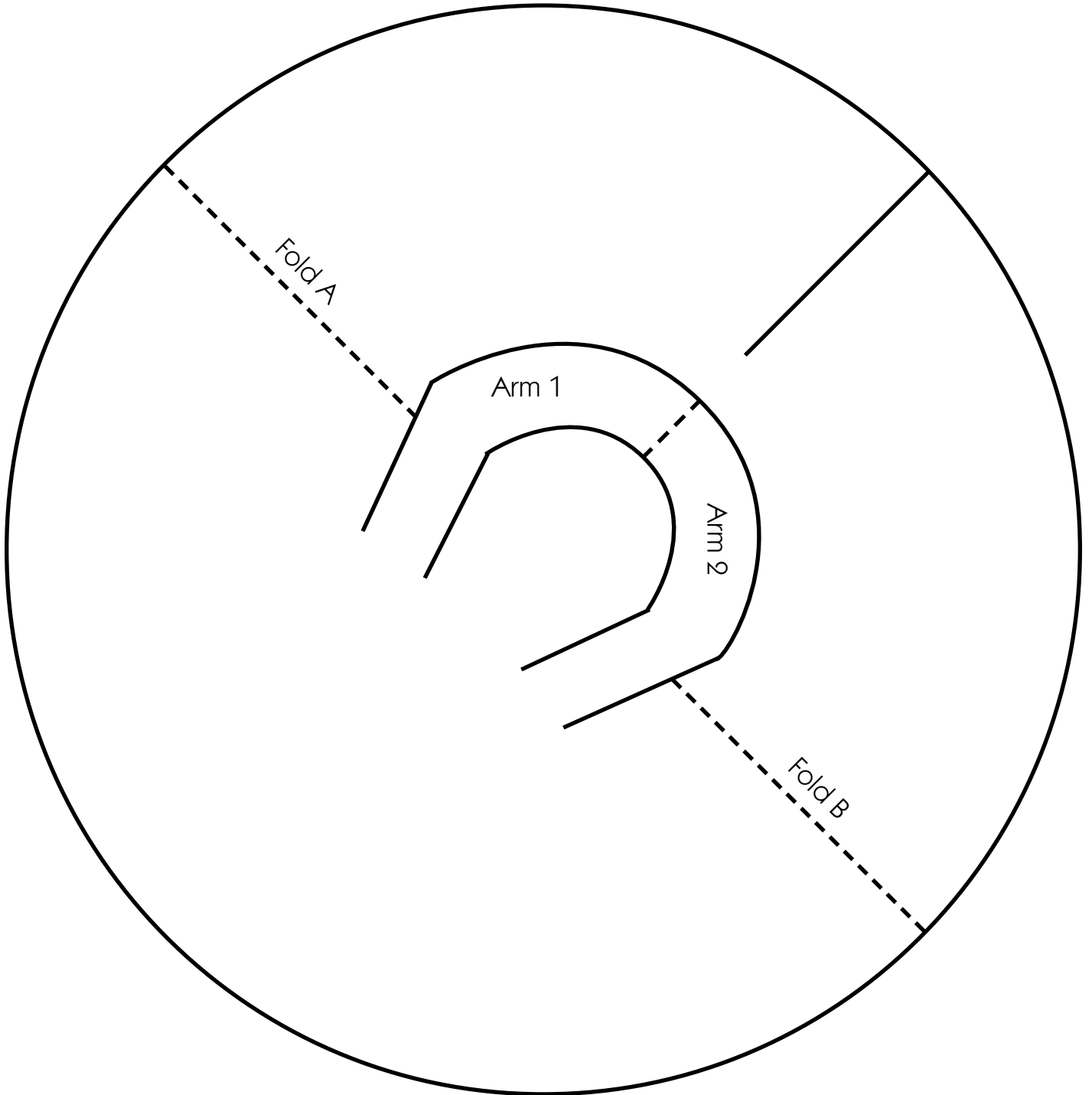


Get Your Heart Ready for Christ



**“That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”
(Romans 10:9–10).**

Angel Craft





The angel Gabriel said to Mary, "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the LORD God will give Him the throne of His father David" (Luke 1:32).



“Then Joseph...did as the angel of the LORD commanded him and took to him [Mary as] his wife” (Matthew 1:24).

