

Luke 2:1-12 & Philippians 2:5-8



LET GO LIKE JESUS

Last summer, students on YouthWorks trips considered what it means to “Let Go Like Jesus.” Whether it’s review or brand new for your group, this Christmas season use the following outline to help teenagers think about how Jesus let go of the power and privilege of being God to come to earth so that nothing would get in the way of his love for us! Encourage students to follow the example Jesus set and consider what Jesus is inviting them to let go of in order to more fully love God and others.

to begin...

Ask students about a time they had to let go of something to better serve God or love others. Potentially have students partner up, but have at least a few students share in the larger group. Then, share about a time when you gave something up in order to better love the people around you.

read: Luke 2:1-12

Ask students what they think of when they hear this story read.

It’s possible they think of Christmas trees and nativity scenes and children dressed up as shepherds. But at the heart of this story is the God who gave up everything to save his people.

say something like:

As God, Jesus has absolute power, authority and strength. In the Bible it talks about Jesus ruling on a heavenly throne. Although Jesus has all of God’s authority and power, he wanted people to know him personally. Jesus wanted to be among his people. And Jesus wanted to save his people from the sin and brokenness in their lives. And he couldn’t do that from a heavenly throne. So here’s what Jesus did: He let go of the perks and privileges of being God and came to earth to live among his people, to show us how to live well, and to give up his life to save ours. Jesus came as a helpless baby – a commoner.

read: Philippians 2:5-8

Introduce this passage as another perspective of the Christmas story. You might consider reading this in *The Message* paraphrase.

ask students:

- What does this passage say Jesus gave up? (You might read it a second time after asking this question.)
- Why would Jesus let go of those things?

say something like:

If Jesus had stayed on his throne in heaven, his power and status would have kept him from fully loving us. But Jesus let go of that power to come to earth, become human, suffer, and even die and rise from the dead, to fully love us. It certainly could not have been easy for Jesus to let go, but he did it for us... for you!

During the Christmas season, we celebrate letting go! We celebrate that we have a savior who *literally* had it all, but let go of everything so he could come to earth and take hold of us. That's why we celebrate Jesus' birth each year. And one way we celebrate Christmas is by following Jesus' demonstration of giving selflessly. It's why gift-giving is part of Christmas! But we can be like Jesus in more than only our gift-giving at Christmas. Jesus let go of everything that would keep him from fully loving us, and Jesus invites us to let go, too.

ask students:

- What are some things that keep people from fully loving others or fully loving God?
Keep in mind that these things, in and of themselves, don't necessarily have to be bad things – for example, the power and privilege of being God that Jesus let go of wasn't a bad thing.
- What is one thing that gets in the way of your love for others?
- What is one thing that gets in the way of your love for God?
- What are a couple things you can let go this week to better love God and others? What are some tangible ways you will do that?

If it fits, you might invite students to pair up with one person and share their answers to the above questions and then keep each other accountable by checking in the next week.

to close...

Challenge students to remember the way Jesus let go and look for ways they can do the same during this Christmas season – especially since the focus of Christmas can become about *getting* instead of *giving*. Remind them of the incredible gift Jesus gave when he came to earth. Invite students to pray for each other and, specifically, what each person feels they should let go.

This outline was adapted from YouthWorks Summer 2014 theme material. You can see the context for this talk and see more talking points at <https://www.youthworks.com/let-go-like-jesus>