



How do Christians use Christmas as a time to start again?

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For most Christians, Easter and not Christmas, is seen as the time for new life and new beginnings. New Year resolutions have their origins in ancient Babylonia, about 600 years before Christ, when the Babylonian people used New Year as the time to return their neighbour's farming implements!

Acceptance and Rejection

- Play hangman with the word REJECTION.
- Talk about what it means to feel rejected.
- Look at Lippi's painting of the Annunciation in Jesus Through Art (or view courtesy of the National Gallery). Does Mary look as if she is accepting or rejecting the Angel's news? The story of the Annunciation is in the accompanying material in Jesus Through Art or read it from a children's version of the Christmas story. JTA has lesson ideas and activities to complement the picture. Think about the rejection that Mary may have faced from her family, from Joseph.
- Look together at some baby pictures. What do we need to get ready for a new baby?
- What sort of place would we expect a royal baby to be born in?
- Find some Christmas cards that depict the stable and think what it must have been like.
- Make a list of words that describe the stable.
- Ask the children to write a piece about 'Where Jesus was born'.

Rejection today

- Who might feel rejected in our society today?
- Do we accept other people?
- What does it feel like to be rejected?
- Think about those who do not fit in and look at the work of [Watford New Hope Trust](#) which seeks to show acceptance to the homeless in our town.
- Look at the work of the charity [Samaritan's Purse](#). They have produced an excellent resource CD to accompany their Operation Christmas Child campaign.

The Big Step Down

Christians believe it was a big step down for God's son to come as a helpless baby.

- Show a small bowl - imagine all the sea in the world fitting in the bowl.
- Show a small jar - imagine all the sunshine fitting into the cup.

Christians believe it is equally impossible to imagine God's son becoming a baby, but they believe this is what happened on that first Christmas.

- Look at some pictures of famous people - for example, Gordon Brown, the Queen and David Beckham.
- Ask the children to imagine Gordon Brown working in Tesco's. Or to think about the Queen being a dinner lady at their school. Or David Beckham playing for Watford! It would be a big step down for all of them.

Christians believe that God's son became part of the world he had created and took the big step down, because he cared so much for people.

To do:

- Make a list of the things a baby cannot do.
- Write a sentence about why God's son came to earth as a baby.
- Compare some very large things with some very small ones e.g. an elephant in a glass, or a skyscraper in a matchbox.
- Illustrate these ideas or use them to build a poem, finishing with a last line about Christmas, such as 'Creator God became a tiny baby'.