

Use “The Scene” to introduce “While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks” the High School Sunday school lesson for December 18, 2016. The lesson is found on page 17 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.



For more than 250 years, the 17th-century Clones Castle, on the Irish border, had been deemed “lost.” A recent archaeological excavation had failed to uncover the castle’s remains. Little did those diggers know that not very far from where they were digging, the walls of the building were still standing, covered in ivy and hidden in plain sight. In fact, the building stood behind a Georgian terrace known as Castle Street, which also contained a building called Castle House.

As county heritage officer Shirley Clerkin observed, “when you start opening your eyes, looking afresh at things, you can rediscover really, really interesting buildings” (from Julian Fowler’s article at www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-37186135).

It’s looking a lot like Christmas everywhere you go right now, but sometimes it seems like it’s hard to find much about Jesus in all the bright lights, busy stores, and packed holiday schedules. But if we keep our eyes open and look around at the meaning behind our madness, you can rediscover some really, really interesting things—things like peace, and joy, and comfort, all wrapped up with a tiny baby in a manger.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above article to read. Then discuss it in this way:

Have you ever lost something that was right in front of you all the time? What happened?

The shepherds were busy doing their jobs when the angel interrupted them with the good news. What do you think might have happened if the angel had not brought that message to the shepherds? Do you think they would have known that anything special was happening in the nearby town of Bethlehem? If you had been a shepherd, what do you think you would have thought about this amazing news?

Sometimes we get so busy at Christmastime, we almost forget to stop and celebrate Jesus. How do you make time to remember Jesus at Christmas? Do you and your family do anything special?

The Christmas season finds people looking for many things, often material things. But many people are also seeking a savior—someone or something to give them purpose, hope, and a sense of personal value. The shepherds on that Bethlehem hillside many years ago were told about *the* Savior. The Bible tells us how they continued their search for Him.