



Jesus and Nicodemus

Lesson Aim: To consider personal salvation and voice questions about God.

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The King Who Serves

THE WORD

Bible Story: John 3:1-9, 13-16

What He has done: Jesus answers Nicodemus' questions about salvation.

Key Verse: John 3:3

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Numbers 21:7-9

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."

"Come, follow Me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 16:24; 4:19

Unit 2: The King Who Serves			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
7	Jesus Teaches: The Beatitudes, Matthew 5:1-12	Jesus taught the crowds about God's blessings.	To know the blessings of the heart God provides for those in His kingdom.
8	Jesus and Nicodemus, John 3:1-9, 13-16	Jesus answers Nicodemus' questions about salvation.	To consider personal salvation and voice questions about God.
9	Jesus and the Woman at the Well, John 4:7, 10-11, 13-14, 25-26, 28-30, 39-42	Jesus spoke with the woman at the well about eternal life and His identity.	To consider the meaning of living water and how to tell others about Jesus.
10	Jesus with Mary and Martha, Luke 10:38-42	Jesus encouraged Martha to spend time with Him.	To focus on Jesus and give priority to time with Him.
11	Jesus and Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1-10	Jesus sought Zacchaeus and went to his home.	To see Jesus transforms us.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read John 1:12-13. Please join us in praying, "Thank you for the gift of eternal life. Help us trust You to prepare the hearts of the children to believe in You and follow You as their Savior. Amen."



Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Meet & Greet	None
		Game: Birthday Race	Rolls of streamers, crepe paper, or toilet paper rolls
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Follow Me" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "For God So Loved the World" "I Am the Way" "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" "Search Me, O God" Additional Hymn Suggestions: "I Want to Know You" "Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus" Additional Song Collection Suggestions: Absolute All Time Favorites For Kids Sunday School Jamz by Worship Jamz
		Worship Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17	Bible
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	Lesson 8 Kingdom Adventures script or storybook
THE WORD	Up to 10	Read the Word: John 3:1-9, 13-16	Map—Jerusalem, Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster, highlighters
THE WAY	Up to 25	Discuss the Word	Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, highlighters, note cards, pencils
		Christ Connection: Numbers 21:7-9	
		Golden Bowl	Golden Bowl, pencils, note cards
GOT TIME?	Final 5	Final Five Minutes	Treasure Treat—Born Again Birthday Candle (small candle), Children's Guide for New Believers, W ³ s, paper, pencils, crayons or markers, prayer notebook, Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song "Follow Me," CD player
	Up to 10	Snack: Birthday Cake	Birthday cake or cupcakes
	Up to 10	Game: Birthday Ball	One ping pong ball, table or hard flat surface with edges or marked boundaries
	Up to 10	Craft: Questions Journal	Sturdy paper or poster board, lined paper, markers, hole punch, yarn, scissors
	Up to 10	Discussion: Questions about Being Born Again	None
	Up to 10	Discussion: The Rest of the Story	Bible
	Up to 10	Discussion: ABC Prayer of Salvation	Children's Guide for New Believers, if available (See ResourceWell.org.)
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Come, Follow Me	Sturdy paper, marker, Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse poster
	Up to 5	Bible Memory Verse Activity: The Wave	Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse poster or Bible
	Up to 5	Bible Timeline Review	Timeline

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

THE WELCOME

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's question.

Meet & Greet Question: When is your birthday?

GAME: BIRTHDAY RACE

Purpose: This game will introduce Jesus' teaching about being born again.

Supplies: Rolls of streamers, crepe paper or toilet paper rolls

Prepare: None

Let's pretend we are at a birthday party. We're going to dress up the birthday boy or girl for the party. Choose the person on your team whose birthday is nearest to today. Work as a team to wrap the entire roll of paper around that birthday boy or girl. The first team to finish wins the Birthday Race!

Directions:

1. Form teams of five or six children each. Give a roll of paper to each team.
2. Have each team choose a birthday boy or girl based on whose birthday is closest to today.
3. On your signal, the teams wrap the birthday child in the entire roll of paper. The goal is to be the first team to finish.

What is your favorite part about birthday parties? (Children respond.) **Celebrating the day you were born can be so much fun! Did you know we can have another kind of birthday, too? Jesus told us about a second kind of birthday. We will find out more about it when we read God's Word.**



Jesus as the King who serves

THE WORSHIP

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as children move to the designated area.

The Seven Stars of Lent

If this lesson is taught during the Lenten season (the 40 days before Easter), we recommend the Seven Stars of Lent activity located at ResourceWell.org under Children - Other Resources. Choose one star for each week of the Lent season.

Today, we worship the King who serves. King Jesus serves the people of His kingdom. To serve someone is to give them what they need. In today's story, Jesus knew Nicodemus needed to be born again into a new life - eternal life forever close with God.



Sing: Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Follow Me." You may also choose to sing songs that focus on eternal life through Christ.

Together, we give Him our offering and sing praise to the One who knows our need for eternal life. God loves us so much He made a way for each of us to be born again. Sing: "I Am the Way" as offering is collected.



Perform Kingdom Adventures script or read storybook: Kings & Kingdoms Unit 2, Lesson 8.



Read Worship Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:17. **Jesus tells Nicodemus He must be born again. When we believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, God gives us eternal life. The day we choose to believe in Jesus is the day we are born again. From that day forward, we are a new creation – a child of God that will live forever close to Him. If you would like Jesus to be Lord over your life, and if you believe He is the Savior who died and rose again to save you from your sins, then you can pray a simple prayer to receive God's gift of eternal life. You will be born again.**



Lead any child who expresses a desire to receive Jesus as his or her Lord and Savior in praying the ABC Prayer below or any simple prayer of salvation.

ABC PRAYER (Admit – Believe – Come)

Lord Jesus,

I Admit I am a sinner.

I Believe You are the Lord who died to take my sins away.

Please Come into my heart and I'll follow You forever.

In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.



Sing: "For God So Loved the World" in celebration of the gift of eternal life.



Jesus teaches Nicodemus

THE WORD

Teacher Tip: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write his or her name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word; knowing God is my goal."

Last time, we learned Jesus taught the crowd on the mountainside about kingdom blessings. Who remembers what we call those blessings? (The Beatitudes.) Today, we'll learn about a man named Nicodemus who came by himself at night to see Jesus. They were in Jerusalem. If a map is available, point out Jerusalem.



Let's play Find It First! Bring out your Bible; keep it right in front of you. Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals the Bible Story Scripture reference: John 3:1-9, 13-16. **Let's see who can Find It First. Ready? Set? Go!** Children race to find it first. The winner helps others find it. **Let's highlight our Key Verse: John 3:3.**

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to His Word today. Who'd like to pray that for us? Child prays aloud. **Be seated.**

Nicodemus was a Jewish ruler and a Pharisee. The Pharisees were people who were very concerned about strictly following religious rules. Many of them said Jesus was not God's Son. But Nicodemus wanted to meet Jesus for himself. Let's find out what Jesus taught Nicodemus. Read John 3:1-9, 13-16.



Being born again

THE WAY

What did Jesus say must happen in order for us to enter God's kingdom? (We must be born again.) **How is believing in Jesus like being born a second time?** (Being born is the beginning of life. Being born again is the beginning of life with Jesus.) **When you believe, God gives you a new start with a new life. You will live forever, even if your body dies.**

Jesus said when we are born again, it is through water and the Holy Spirit. Water reminds us that Jesus washes our sins away. Who knows what baptism is? (Believers are sprinkled or dunked in water as a sign that they believe in Jesus as the Lord who washed their sins away.)

When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes and lives in our hearts forever. What does the Holy Spirit help us do? (Follow Jesus and do what is right in God's eyes.) **In what way is the Holy Spirit like the wind?** (Both are invisible and cause things to move and change.) **The Holy Spirit is like the breath or wind that moves us in the right direction to keep us following Jesus.**

Who can put John 3:16 into their own words? (Children respond.) **If you have never accepted this gift of a new life forever close with God, and you are ready to do that, you can pray to Him right now and you will be born again.** If any child expresses a desire to be born again, offer to lead that child in the ABC Prayer or any simple prayer of salvation. The ABC Prayer is located in THE WORSHIP and GOT TIME? segments of this lesson. Give any child who prayed a prayer of salvation a Children's Guide for New Believers to take home.

QUESTION CARDS: Even though he was very religious, Nicodemus had questions about God. No one understands everything about God and His Word, except God Himself. Nicodemus came alone at night to ask Jesus his questions. Like Nicodemus, some of us have important questions we don't want to ask in front of others. We don't need to be afraid to ask about God. If you have a question like that, raise your hand for a Question Card. Hand out note cards and pencils. Write your question on the card. Do not write your name. In the coming weeks, your questions will be answered by people who love God and study the Bible. After the lesson, gather question cards and meet with your ministry leaders to write scripture references and answers for each question. Print a classroom collection titled "Our Questions about God." Make copies available to the children. To honor privacy, do not include children's names with the questions.



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

To help Nicodemus understand Jesus was the only way to eternal life, He spoke of the time God saved the people from deadly snakes. Let's check it out.



FIND IT FIRST > Everyone, place your Bible closed on your lap. Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Numbers 21:7-9. **Let's see who can Find It First! Ready? Set? Go! Find it and highlight it.** Read Numbers 21:7-9.

The people confessed their sins and all who looked at the bronze snake were saved. How is this a picture of those who look to Jesus on the cross? (To be saved, we must confess our sin and look to Jesus as the only One who can save us.)

THE WAY *continued...*



Revelation 5:8

GOLDEN BOWL

Teacher Tip: Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, and children in other nations or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

Revelation 5:8 says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. I'm going to lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then we will pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____. Read names in Golden Bowl.

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is a Born Again Birthday Candle. Show your family and friends your candle and tell them what it means to be born again. Offer a Children's Guide for New Believers to any child who prayed the ABC prayer or prayer of salvation.

W³: Take home today's W³ Journal Entry #8 as your personal devotional study. Keep your journal entries together at home in a notebook or in your Bible. Distribute W³ Journal Entry #8. Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible!

OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of Jesus talking to Nicodemus at night. The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering for the teacher to display.

PRAYER REQUESTS: As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SNACK: BIRTHDAY CAKE

Purpose: Connect with your students while enjoying a snack to help them think about being born again.

Snack Suggestion: Birthday cake or cupcakes

Jesus told Nicodemus how he could be born into God's family. Many people think of the day they became a follower of Jesus as their second or new birthday. We celebrate our birthdays into this world with parties and cake. God and all of heaven celebrate our second birth when we become a follower of Jesus and are born into God's family.

Directions:

1. Give each child a snack and drink.
2. Ask a child to pray and thank God for the snack.
3. Talk with the children about the day they were born and their favorite birthday celebrations.

GAME: BIRTHDAY BALL

Purpose: This game serves as an object lesson about how the invisible Holy Spirit guides us.

Supplies: One ping pong ball, table or hard flat surface with edges or marked boundaries, optional: straws

Teacher Tip: For large groups, play more than one game at a time. Supply a table and ball for each additional pair of teams.

Directions:

1. Form two teams.
2. Team one surrounds half of the hard table or surface. Team two surrounds the other half.
3. Drop the ping pong ball in the center of the hard table or surface.
4. All of the children blow on the ball or blow through the straw to try and guide the ball over the opposite team's edge.

Isn't it amazing what our invisible breath can do? How is our breath or the wind like the Holy Spirit? (Both are invisible. Both give movement to other people or things.)

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: QUESTIONS JOURNAL

Purpose: For children to create a journal to record their questions.

Supplies: Sturdy paper or poster board, lined paper, markers, hole punch, yarn, scissors

Why did Nicodemus go to see Jesus? (To ask questions.) **Nicodemus wanted to know more about God. Even though he was a wise man who had studied God's Word, Nicodemus asked Jesus questions about God. You can ask questions about God, too.**

Earlier, you wrote down some of your questions about God. Let's make journals so you can keep writing down questions you think of at home. Anytime you like, you can bring your journal to me or to anyone who loves God and studies the Bible: your pastor, parents or grandparents. Together we can help you in your search for answers to your questions.

Directions:

1. Place several sheets of lined school paper between two sheets of sturdy paper. Be sure all of the edges are even.
2. Punch three holes (top, middle and bottom) along the left edge of the papers. Punch all the way through all of the layers of paper.
3. Cut three pieces of yarn.
4. Thread one piece of yarn through each hole and tie to secure the pages together as a book.
5. Write this title on your journal: insert name's Question Journal.
6. Decorate your journal cover.

Take your journal home and write down your questions about God and the Bible.

DISCUSSION: QUESTIONS ABOUT BEING BORN AGAIN

Purpose: For children to grow in understanding about being "born again."

Supplies: None

Teacher Tip: Children's Guide for New Believers contains more information about the gift of eternal life.

At first, it was hard for Nicodemus to understand what it meant to be born again. You may have a question as Nicodemus did. Does anyone have a question about being born again? (Children respond.) **Now, I have some questions for you. Let's try to answer them together.**

1. **What does it feel like to be born again?** Some people feel like a whole new person. Some people don't feel anything. No matter how you feel, if you believe Jesus is God's Son who died for you and you've decided to follow Him the rest of your life—you are born again. The Holy Spirit is living in your heart even if you don't feel differently.
2. **What happens if we sin after we have been born again?** If we admit our sin and are sorry, God is faithful to forgive us because Jesus died to save us from all our sins - past, present and future. The Holy Spirit inside a born again believer helps him or her turn away from those sins.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

DISCUSSION: THE REST OF THE STORY

Purpose: To show how Nicodemus continued to impact God's kingdom.

Supplies: Bible

This was not the last time we will hear about Nicodemus in the Bible. Let's see what he did later to serve King Jesus. Check out how Nicodemus bravely stood up for Jesus in front of his non-believing friends in the Jewish council. Read John 7:45-52. What do you think you would do if you were with people who were saying bad things about Jesus? (Children respond.)

Does anyone remember what Nicodemus did after Jesus died? (He honored Jesus after His death by giving Him a proper burial.) Read John 19:38-42. **How did Nicodemus use his time and money to serve Jesus after He died on the cross?** (Buying spices and burying His body.) **How can you serve Jesus with your time and money?** (Children respond.)

DISCUSSION: ABC PRAYER OF SALVATION

Purpose: To offer a simple prayer of salvation to any child expressing a desire to receive Jesus as Lord.

Supplies: Children's Guide for New Believers if available (See ResourceWell.org.)

If needed, review the information in the Children's Guide for New Believers. Lead any child expressing the desire to receive Jesus as Lord in the ABC Prayer below or any simple prayer of salvation in Jesus.

ABC PRAYER (Admit – Believe – Come):
Lord Jesus, I Admit that I'm a sinner.
I Believe You are the Lord who died to take my sins away.
Please Come into my heart and I'll follow You forever.
In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

Give the child a Children's Guide for New Believers to take home.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."

"'Come, follow Me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.'" Matthew 16:24; 4:19

GAME: COME, FOLLOW ME

Purpose: Children step on footprints to learn the words and meaning of the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Sturdy paper, a marker, Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse poster

Prepare: Cut 31 footprint shapes from sturdy paper. Write one word of the Bible Memory Verse on each footprint. Display the poster where the children can see it.

Shuffle the footprints as you ask the following questions:

Who should we follow? (Jesus.) **Jesus says we must do some things to follow Him. What does He want us to do?** (Deny yourself and take up your cross.) **This means following Jesus is not easy. Denying ourselves means not being selfish. Taking up our cross means following Jesus even when it's hard or we don't want to. When might serving Jesus be hard?** (When others make fun of us, when it's more fun to make fun of someone instead of help them, when we should stand up for what is right when everyone else likes the wrong way.)

What does Jesus say He will do for us? (Make us fishers of men.) **What is a "fisher of men?"** (Someone who helps others learn about and follow Jesus.) **If we follow Jesus with all of our hearts by obeying and serving Him no matter what, He will lead us to help others follow Him, too.**

Directions:

1. Say the Bible Memory Verse together.
2. Distribute the footprints as evenly as possible among the children.
3. On your signal, children race to place the footprints on the floor in the correct order.

Teacher Tip: For a more competitive version of this game, divide the children into two teams. Time the first team as they place the 31 footprints in order. Then have the second team race to see which team is the fastest at placing the footprints in the correct order.

GAME: THE WAVE

Purpose: Children memorize the Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse: Matthew 16:24; 4:19.

Supplies: Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse poster or Bible

Directions:

1. Assign one phrase from Matthew 16:24; 4:19 to each child or group.
2. Direct each child or group to quickly stand, say the assigned phrase while raising both hands up to the sky and then down to the thighs and then sit down.
3. Repeat three times, faster each time.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE TIMELINE REVIEW

Kings & Kingdoms Part One studies the life of Jesus (Circa 0-33 A.D.) beginning with the only story of His childhood and then focusing on His relationships, His ministry, His teachings, and the events surrounding His death, resurrection, and ascension. It concludes with a study of His kingdom parables. Review recent Bible stories to see the continuing story of who God is and what He has done.

Jesus is Transfigured (Circa 30 A.D.) How did Jesus' face and clothes change on the mountain? (His face shone; His clothes were bright white.) **What two men suddenly appeared with Jesus?** (Moses and Elijah.) **What did God's voice say?** "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to Him." **How does this story show you Jesus was both God and man?** (Children respond.)

Jesus Teaches the Beatitudes (Circa 30 A.D.) Jesus sat down on the mountainside and taught the crowd about the Beatitudes; nine blessings that come to the humble. These blessings are not earned by good deeds, but given freely to those who are fit to receive them. **Which beatitude is most meaningful to you?** (Children respond.)

Jesus and Nicodemus (Circa 30 A.D.) What time of day did Nicodemus come to ask Jesus questions? (At night.) **What did Jesus say we must do to see the kingdom of God?** (Be born again.) **How did Jesus say we receive the gift of eternal life?** (Believe in Him.)

How to create a Bible Timeline for the Life of Jesus:

1. Print each footprint on sturdy paper.
2. Choose a wall or other visible location to display the timeline.
3. Before each lesson, add the footprint for that lesson to the Bible Timeline using the list below.
Children can follow in Jesus' footsteps as they review past lessons.
4. To review, ask the corresponding questions as you point to the associated footprint.

Life of Jesus: Jesus and His Father's House > Jesus Is Baptized > Jesus Is Tempted > Jesus Calls His Disciples > Jesus Clears the Temple > Jesus Is Transfigured > Jesus Teaches the Beatitudes > Jesus and Nicodemus > Jesus and the Woman at the Well > Jesus with Mary and Martha > Jesus and Zacchaeus > Jesus Is Anointed > The Triumphal Entry > Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet > Jesus and the Last Supper > Jesus in the Garden > Jesus and the Cross > Jesus Is Risen > The Road to Emmaus > Jesus Talks with Peter > The Great Commission > The King Ascends

Kingdom Parables: The Lost Sheep > The Sower > The Vine and the Branches > The Workers in the Vineyard > The Great Banquet > The Rich Fool > The Talents > Lazarus and the Rich Man > The Lost Son > The Good Samaritan