



Jesus and Nicodemus

Lesson Aim: To consider personal salvation and discover the meaning of being born again.

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The King Who Serves

THE WORD

Bible Story: John 3:1-5, 16

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

Key Verse: John 3:3

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Ezekiel 36:25-27

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 3:1-5, 16	Jesus answers Nicodemus' questions about salvation.	To consider personal salvation and discover the meaning of being born again.
9	Jesus and the Woman at the Well, John 4:7, 10-11, 13-14, 25-26, 28-30, 41-42	Jesus spoke with the woman at the well about eternal life and His identity.	To tell others about Jesus.
10	Jesus with Mary and Martha, Luke 10:38-42	Jesus encouraged Martha to spend time with Him.	To give priority to spending time with Jesus.
11	Jesus and Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1-10	Jesus sought Zacchaeus and went to his home.	To know Jesus came to seek and save the lost.

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 3:1-5, 16	Map—Jerusalem, Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster
THE WAY	Up to 25	Discuss the Word	Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, 1 ping pong ball
		Christ Connection: Ezekiel 36:25-27	
		Golden Bowl	
	Final 5	Final Five Minutes	Treasure Treat—Born Again Birthday Candle (small candle), Children's Guide for New Believers, Daily Ways, basket, paper, pencils, crayons or markers, prayer notebook, Unit 2 Bible Memory Verse Song "Follow Me," CD player
GOT TIME?	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, optional: straws
	Up to 10	Craft: Born Again Birthday Candle	White votive candles or thin candles at least 2" in length, tacky glue, scissors, assorted craft supplies
	Up to 10	Discussion: Questions about Being Born Again	None
	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 will 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.



If you brought your Bible, open it now and share with others. Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals Bible Story Scripture reference: John 3:1-5, 16.

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 a group of 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 3:1-5.

Nicodemus still did not understand. So, Jesus explained it this way. Read John 3:16.



Being born again

THE WAY

Being born is the beginning of your life in this world. Being born again is the beginning of your new life of following Jesus. When you believe in Him, God gives you a whole new start with a new life. It's an eternal life, which means you will live forever, even if your body dies.

Jesus told Nicodemus in order to enter God's kingdom, we must be born again. Our first birth is as a baby born from a mother. Nicodemus wondered how a grownup can be born like that again. He asked, "How can it be?"

Jesus answered Nicodemus by saying that when we are born again, it is through water and the Holy Spirit. What does water do for us when we are dirty? (Washes away the dirt.) When we believe in Jesus as our Lord, our sins are washed away and we are given a new start – we are born again.

When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes and lives in our hearts forever. He helps us follow Jesus. Jesus compares the Holy Spirit to the wind. Let's try to picture what Jesus meant by that. Choose volunteer to hold a ping pong ball. We cannot see the Holy Spirit because He is invisible like the wind. Instruct volunteer to place ping pong ball on a flat hard surface and blow on it until it rolls. Just as we cannot see breath or wind blowing, we cannot see the Holy Spirit. But can you see the ping pong ball move in the way the wind blows it? (Yes.) When we are born again, we are like this ping pong ball. The Holy Spirit is like the breath or wind that moves us in the right direction to keep us following Jesus.

Even though Nicodemus was a wise and religious man, he still had questions about what it meant to be born again. Does anyone have a question about being born again? (Children respond.) For more, see Questions about Being Born Again in GOT TIME? segment.



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

More than 500 years before Jesus taught Nicodemus about being born again, Ezekiel spoke of God's promise to give us a new heart and a new spirit for our new life close with Him. Let's listen carefully to this promise that has now come true for all who believe in Jesus.



Everyone, place your Bible on your lap. Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Ezekiel 36:25-27. **Let's find these verses.** Read Ezekiel 36:25-27.

Jesus says believing in Him is the only way to eternal life. 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.

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. So I'm going to lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then we'll pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let's pray.

The Bible 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.

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.

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE: Did anyone bring in their completed Daily Way from last time? Praise or reward those who return a Daily Way. Distribute Lesson 8 Daily Way 5-day Bible study. **Complete this week's Daily Way at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Join the Daily Way Challenge by returning your completed Daily Way.**

Teacher Tip: Collect Daily Ways in a basket or other container and periodically reward children as a group for completing the challenge.

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: BORN AGAIN BIRTHDAY CANDLE

Purpose: For children to decorate a candle to help them remember they can be born again.

Supplies: White votive candles or thin candles at least 2" in length, tacky glue, scissors, assorted craft supplies (ribbon, yarn, puff paint, sequins, etc.)

Teacher Tip: Do not light the candle. It is for decoration only.

What did Jesus tell Nicodemus he needed to do? (Be born again.) **When you promise to follow Jesus, you are born again! Let's each make a special birthday candle to remember we can be born again to a new life forever with God. If you have already promised to follow Jesus, this candle can remind you of when you were born again. If you are not ready to follow Jesus, keep this candle in a special place to remember you can be born again!**

Directions:

1. Use the assorted craft supplies to decorate the candle.
2. Take the candle home to remember Jesus gives you new life forever with God.

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. **Does being born again mean we become babies again?** No, our body does not change its size or age.
2. **If we are born again, do we have to live with a different family in a different home?** No, we have our same family and friends, but we also belong to a giant family of people all over the world who follow Jesus.
3. **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.

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