

April 18th and 19th

Bible Passage: John 2:23–25; 3:1–21

(Nicodemus's Question)

God Is Love

REMEMBER VERSE

The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love.
Psalm 145:8

***In this lesson packet, **the bolded words are designed to be what you say out loud**, while the non-bold words are actions to help set the story or activity.*

SCHEDULE

1. DISCOVER : Big God Story
2. RESPOND : Worship Response, Small Group Questions and Optional Activities
3. BLESS : Speaking God's Truth over your child

SUPPLIES

- **Bible; Pharisee Clothes** (robe, graduation gown, fancy hat or headwear, shiny belt, etc.); **Everyday clothes** (jacket, baseball hat, normal belt, etc.); **Fan**
- Bible; Paper; Coloring utensils
- Bible; Globe or map of the world; Ball
- Paper; Markers or Crayons; Scissors

DISCOVER // Big God Story

Bible Passage: John 2:23–25; 3:1–21

SET UP

Place the fan at the front of room, and make sure it's plugged in. Put on the Pharisee clothes.

RELATE

You can enter the room from the back, moving stealthily around the room. Hide behind objects and crawl on the ground as if you're sneaking in for a secret mission. Eventually, come to the front of your home storytelling area.

Dust yourself off and clear your throat as if composing yourself. **In today's story we'll hear about a man named Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a Pharisee.** Arrogantly puff out your chest and adjust your clothes. **Pharisees were important Jewish leaders, very religious, and they thought perfect obedience to the Old Testament Law would cause God to send His Messiah. Ask your children the following question: Who was the Messiah?** (Give them time to answer and to think about Jesus.) **That's right—Jesus. The Pharisees expected the Messiah to be a king who would rule Israel and overthrow Israel's enemies. This wasn't God's plan for Jesus quite yet. Before we hear more, let's pray together.** Lead your children in a prayer to pause, be still, and to ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

One night, Nicodemus secretly went to speak to Jesus. *Dim the lights.* Move around stealthily for a moment; then return to your teaching area. *Turn up the lights.* **Nicodemus had a lot of questions for Jesus.** Read John 3:2–4 with your children.

Jesus talked about being born again with Nicodemus. Ask your children what does it mean to be born again? The Bible says that when we were “dead in [our] sins ... God made [us] alive with Christ” (Colossians 2:13). To be born again means God gives us a new spiritual life when we trust and obey Jesus.

Being born again isn't something you can see; it's sort of like the wind. *Read John 3:8 with your children.* Jesus said, “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going—so it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” Turn on the fan. If one of your children have long hair, have your son or daughter face the fan, as it blows their hair. **Can you see the wind? No! But you can see the effects of the wind. In the**

same way, Jesus said that we can't see God's spirit, but we can see God's spirit in people's lives. How can you see God's spirit working in you and your children?

Jesus went on to tell Nicodemus what He would do to offer salvation to the world. He reminded Nicodemus of something that happened to the people of Israel in the Old Testament. The people of Israel disobeyed God, so God allowed poisonous snakes to bite the people, and many died. But when the people repented of their sin and prayed, God told Moses to make a bronze snake and “put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live” ... Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived” (Numbers 21:8–9).

Jesus explained that He was like that bronze snake! In John 3:14. Jesus said, “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him” (vv. 14–15). Jesus knew He would be lifted up on a cross and die for the sins of the world, so people can live forever with Him and be in relationship with Him. Jesus knew His life was a sacrifice, and He generously gave it away. Ask your children what it mean to sacrifice and if they have ever made a sacrifice for anyone.

The Pharisees didn't think the Messiah should die on a cross. They expected Him to be a ruling, reigning king. Jesus knew His job was to be a servant to all, so Jesus laid it all out for Nicodemus with what He said next. Jesus said, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” John 3:16. Have you heard this verse before? This is what the Bible is all about: God is love, and He sent His Son to save us from our sins.

Remove your Pharisee clothes and accessories, fold them, and lay them aside. The Bible never specifically tells us that Nicodemus decided to follow Jesus, but we can see that Nicodemus's encounter with Jesus changed his life. Later in the book of John, Nicodemus spoke up for Jesus before all the other Pharisees. Then, after Jesus died, Nicodemus helped take Jesus' body and prepare it to be buried. Nicodemus risked his reputation and humbled himself to serve the Messiah he had come to love. He did this because He knew that God loved him.

Tell your children about when you came to know Jesus. We can't be born again on our own; we must believe that Jesus died for our sins on the cross to save us. When we're born again, God gives us His Holy Spirit. Begin to put on everyday clothes. The Bible describes having the Holy Spirit as being “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Continue putting on everyday clothes. The Holy Spirit gives us new life so we can become God's children.

This is such good news—and it’s what The Big God Story is all about! Because God loved the world, He sent His Son, Jesus, to save us.

RESPOND // Worship as Response

This time allows your children to respond to God through worship. Lead your children in a time of response.

There are 4 Worship Responses – Curriculum will change weekly; Mission, Gratitude and Identity, will repeat weekly. Your family can go through all of them or one of them. You might consider spreading them out throughout the week. You can choose how to go about these different “stations”, whether you do them all as a family, or individually, allowing everyone to respond in their own way. Whatever way you choose, we strongly encourage parents and guardians to take part in the worship response (whether with your child or on your own) to be an example for them.

*At church, we like to play soft worship music during Worship Response. If you would like to do the same, we’ve created a playlist for you to use at home! [Click here to access our **Worship playlist**.](#)*

Curriculum – The Big God Story

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Paper
- Coloring utensils of your child’s choice

SETUP

If it’s a nice day, consider taking your Worship Response outside for a nature prayer walk. Have your supplies on hand, whether you’re indoors or out.

RELATE

Today we heard some amazing truths from God: He loves everyone so much that He sent His Son to die for our sins and give us a life with Him forever. Can you think of a verse in the Bible that declares this truth? It’s actually part of today’s lesson passage! Go ahead and give your kids a hint if they need help (John 3:16). Next, have someone read the verse aloud or you can say it all together:

John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

That’s incredible! Take a moment and think about how incredible it is! **This news of God’s sacrifice and Jesus’ death is the most important news in all the world. God offered His son [Jesus] and Jesus offered Himself, in obedience, to save YOU.**

Like Nicodemus, it’s okay to have questions about God, Jesus, salvation, what it means to a Christian, what it means to “believe”, how we hear God, how we speak to God, etc... invite your child(ren) to ask questions they may have. Today’s lesson talked about some big topics, so we’ve provided some questions that will help your child understand the power and beauty of the gift of Jesus. **What does it mean to perish? In your own words, why did Jesus die on the cross? What does it mean to be born again?**

Take some time to draw a picture or write some words that describe how you feel when you think about God. How does it make you feel to know that God sacrificed His one and only Son just for you? Feel free to take your time with this activity – join in on the fun and draw and write with your kids!

As they draw and/or write, you can also ask your child(ren) what they think about this Good News. **What does it mean to believe in Jesus? Do you believe in Jesus? Why or why not?** This is an awesome opportunity to share with your child(ren) why YOU believe!

It is through faith in Jesus that we get to be born again and live forever with God. Only God can give us His Spirit and new life so we can be His children.

Close your time by reading Romans 10:9.

**There’s so much more to the John 3:16 verse, so we encourage you to read the whole passage, John 3:1-21, with your child again sometime later this week.*

Mission

Visit woodmenvalley.org/serve to learn about these two missions we support in Kids Ministry, and many more!

COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL

Compassion is one of our global partners at Woodmen. Since 2012, Woodmen Kids has sponsored 3 kids: Alex (Peru), Laban (Kenya) and Rosmery (Peru). While your family has some extra time at home, we would love for you to continue praying for these kids. [Click here to download a prayer card](#) and let's be praying for these kids and their families!

You can also be praying for different missions at Woodmen, in Colorado Springs and around the world!

FEEDING FAMILIES

Through ACTS Ministry, we collect non-perishable food items to give to people in our very own city. During this time of isolation, we do have bins set up at Rockrimmon and Woodmen Heights, so people can continue to drop off food for ACTS Ministry. You can also help with online shopping – [see the ACTS Amazon Wishlist](#).

For these last two worship response “stations”, give each child a notebook, so they can respond by writing or drawing their thoughts. If you do not have notebooks available, with supplies around your house, let your kid(s) create their own notebook.

Gratitude

What am I grateful for this week / today?

Identity

1. What is one fact I know to be true about God?
2. What does God think of me? Who does He say I am?
3. What is one thing I learned about God, from today's story?

// Small Group Questions

This time allows kids to open their Bibles, read the suggested passages and recap what they've learned in today's lesson.

Encourage your child to open the Bible and read the suggested passages.

Questions for Younger Kids

- **What was the name of the man who spoke with Jesus?** John 3:1
- **What was that man's job?** John 3:1
- **Why did God send His Son, Jesus, to earth?** John 3:16–17
- **Can we become children of God all on our own? Why or why not?** John 3:5
- **How do we become born again?** Romans 10:9

Questions for Older Kids

- **Who was Nicodemus, and why did He want to speak with Jesus?** John 3:1
- **What does it mean to be born again?** John 3:6, 16b
- **Why did God send His Son, Jesus, to earth?** John 3:16–17
- **Why did Jesus say that wind was like God's Spirit?** John 3:5–8
- **In what way did Jesus say He was like the bronze snake Moses set up?** Numbers 21:8; John 3:14–15
- **Can we become children of God all on our own?** John 3:5

// Optional Activities

God Loves the World

Children will use a globe to pray for the world to know God's love.

Activity One

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Globe or map of the world
- Ball

SETUP

Set the globe or map so your children can sit around it. Open the Bible to John 3:16 and place it beside the globe.

RELATE

Invite your family to stand in a circle. Say the first few words of John 3:16, Continue tossing the ball from person to person, with each person saying the next word in the verse. Continue until you've said the whole verse.

After the ball tossing game, ask your family to sit around the map or globe and pick out different places around the world. Each family member can pray for that particular place and ask Jesus to show His love in that part of the world.

Activity Two

SUPPLIES

- Paper
- Markers
- Crayons
- Children's scissors

RELATE

Encourage your children to continue thinking about the place that they just prayed for in the previous globe/map activity. Invite them to draw and color 6 people from different places around the world. (Each person should look different with different hair, clothes, skin color, etc.) Cut out the people and place them all on a table or on the floor. Remind the children that Jesus loves all people around the world, and He wants them to be part of His family. We are all loved by God. Just like Jesus loved Nicodemus in our story, He loves all people!!

Activity Three

SUPPLIES

- Paper
- Markers

RELATE

Allow your child to be creative during this activity. Give each of your children a piece of paper. Ask them to draw a beautiful, smiling heart with arms and feet that are full of love for others. The arms represent our love for other people, while the feet represent us helping others and being the feet for Jesus.

BLESS //

Children receive a blessing from you. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

Open a Bible and read 2 Thessalonians 2:16–17 to your children.

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. May you help others come to know God’s Son, Jesus, the Savior of the world.

Pray together thanking God for Jesus, our Savior.