



MAY 17, 2026

# JESUS AND NICODEMUS

JOHN 3

## CHRIST CONNECTION

Nicodemus was a religious leader, but he needed to be born again to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus shared how the Spirit causes people to be born again to new life. Anyone who believes in Jesus will be born again and receive eternal life.

## BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Did Jesus ever sin? No, Jesus never sinned.

## MEMORY VERSE

1 John 3:5

# PREPARE



Take time to reflect on today's lesson.

## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus reveals the Lord's patience and kindness toward us as we earnestly seek Him. Though Nicodemus had heard Christ's teachings, he had not yet placed faith in the true Ruler and King of the Jews. But here in this chapter, he would learn what it means to be born again.

Nicodemus was curious about Jesus and ventured to see Him under the cover of night. He called Him "Teacher" and declared that only someone who knew God could perform such miracles. Jesus knew the internal struggles of Nicodemus and spoke to his curiosity: "Truly I tell you, unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus' words debunked some Jews' belief that God's salvation was their birthright as His people. Jesus likewise declared salvation for all who would place their trust in Him—Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews) alike.

When Jesus answered Nicodemus' questions, He compared Himself to the bronze snake lifted up in Numbers 21. Just as the Israelites had to look to the snake while trusting in God's salvation, so, too, are we called to look to Christ's work on the cross by faith. Nicodemus no doubt recognized this Old Testament reference; however, he had no way of knowing that Jesus would soon be lifted up on the cross as a sacrifice for his own sin.

In John 3:16, the gospel is proclaimed in a single verse: "For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." Jesus declared God's love for all of humanity, an invitation for anyone to trust in Him by faith. God didn't send His Son to condemn the world, but to save it (John 3:17)!

Pray that the words of John 3:16 will take on fresh meaning in the lives and hearts of the boys and girls who learn from you. May they realize that salvation is possible by faith alone and that they, too, may be born again into the kingdom of God!

# WELCOME



Connect with kids as they arrive.

## OPENING ACTIVITIES

Greet each kid as they arrive. Use this time to build relationships and help new kids connect to your group. Before heading to large group, you can play a game, chat with kids, or do the memory verse activity below!

## MEMORY VERSE

You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.

**1 John 3:5, ESV**

## MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITY

Each month, we'll have a new memory verse that goes with the lessons we're learning from the Bible. Choose one of the provided activities in your room's memory verse folder to review the verse with the kids.

*Note: Our next Bible Bucks Day will be on May 24!*



# LARGE GROUP LESSON



Review what we're learning in large group.

## JESUS AND NICODEMUS

One night, a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus came to Jesus. Nicodemus said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, because no one could perform the miracles you do unless God were with him."

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth: unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus was confused. He asked, "How can anyone be born when he is old? He cannot go back in time and be a baby again."

Jesus answered: "I tell you the truth: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. Don't be amazed that I told you that you must be born again. Like the wind blows where it chooses to blow but you don't know where it came from or where it's going, so it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

Nicodemus still didn't understand. "How can this be possible?" he asked.

Jesus replied, "I can't believe that you are a teacher of Israel and don't know these things! I'm telling you the truth. You can trust me because I am the Son of Man who has descended from heaven.

Then Jesus reminded Nicodemus of a story from the Old Testament. Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." Jesus was talking about the future when He would be lifted up on a cross, and everyone who trusts in Him would be saved from their sins.

Jesus continued, "God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him would not die but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to punish the world, but to save the world. Anyone who believes in him will not be condemned. But everyone who does not believe in the Son of God will be punished for their sin."

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Nicodemus was a religious leader, but he needed to be born again to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus shared how the Spirit causes people to be born again to new life. Anyone who believes in Jesus will be born again and receive eternal life.

# ACTIVITIES



Do crafts and games with kids after large group.

## ACTIVITY: EVERYBODY'S IT

It's tag, but everyone's it!

Either in the large group room, the gym, or outside (weather permitting) have everyone spread out and start the game. If someone gets tagged, they're out and must sit down where they are. If the person who tagged them gets out, then they can stand up and rejoin the game.

If most of the kids are out and the game is going a little too slow, feel free to call a "jailbreak" and everyone gets back in. If there's a tie or a dispute of who tagged who first, play rock, paper, scissors to determine who sits and who keeps running.

Play for as long as time allows.

## CONNECT THE DOTS



When you got tagged in the game, you needed new life to come back in! In our lesson today, Jesus explained to Nicodemus that people needed to be born again to new life. This new life comes from the Holy Spirit, who makes us new when we put our faith in Jesus.

## BIBLE SKILLS: BIBLE DRILLS/TIMELINE REVIEW

Spend some time doing Bible drills or reviewing the timeline in the room. Utilize the provided supplies and games in your extra time folder if needed.

# CLOSING ACTIVITIES



Continue to engage kids before parent pick-up.

## BIBLE STORY REVIEW

**Ask the following questions and lead your small group to discuss.**

1. How does Jesus' death on the cross show us God's love?
2. Why is the gospel good news?
3. What is the kingdom of God?
4. Who can enter the kingdom of God?
5. What does it mean to be born again?

## HAVE EXTRA TIME?

If you have extra time or your group needs to get out some energy, play one of the games/activities in your extra time bin in the cabinet or the "extra time" folder on the TV.

If there's a new game or activity you want to have available for your group in the future, let Taylor know!

## BEFORE YOU GO...

**Second service leaders, please clean up by doing the following:**

1. Put all extra supplies and binders back in the curriculum bins.
2. Clean all trash off the tables.
3. Put all crayons, markers, etc. back in the appropriate containers and cubbies.
4. Erase the whiteboards and put markers/erasers back in the holder.
5. Turn off the TVs as you leave.

**THANK YOU FOR SERVING WITH US!**