

Born Again: Nicodemus Visits Jesus

#10

Big Idea: People belong to God's family when they believe in Jesus.

Bible Text: John 3:1-21

Pray for Wisdom

Lord, thank You for giving me new life. Thank You for forgiving me for my sins. Help me to communicate Your generous and forgiving nature to the children.

Make the children like Nicodemus, eager to learn more about believing in You. I desire for all the children to come to know You and realize that You offer new life for them. Be with us as we learn Your Word together. In Jesus' name, amen.

Supply Checklist

Welcome & Worship Time:

- ☐ black construction paper, white crayons

Bible Time:

- ☐ Bible teaching picture #10
- ☐ student activity pages 37-40
- ☐ stickers from sticker page
- ☐ snacks
- ☐ tree pattern, green construction paper, scissors, crayons, markers, small fruit stickers (optional)

Disciple Time:

- ☐ Dee-Cy-Paul picture #10
- ☐ puppets (optional)

Add'l "Learn by Doing" Activities:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Children will:



- Know** • Jesus told Nicodemus how to become part of God's family.
- Feel** • Eager to learn more about believing in Jesus.
- Do** • Thank God that they are members of a family and they can belong to His family.

Lesson Summary

Nicodemus was an intelligent and influential man, a leader of the Pharisees and a teacher of the Law. He recognized Jesus as someone special from God. Cautiously seeking a private conversation with Jesus, Nicodemus came to Him at night. Nicodemus wanted to satisfy himself regarding Jesus' claims. The fact that Nicodemus visited Jesus at night could mean that he was guarding his reputation and was reluctant to be associated with Jesus. Or, it could mean that Nicodemus sought a quiet, uninterrupted block of time to interview Jesus.

In this discussion with Nicodemus, Jesus explained the concept of spiritual birth. Nicodemus had always thought that entering God's kingdom depended on obeying God's law and by being good. He thought that God would choose those who had been good enough to enter His Kingdom.

But Jesus told Nicodemus that people are never good enough on their own to enter heaven. Jesus told him that there is only one way to have eternal life—by believing on God's Son and being born anew from above.

It takes a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit to create a member of God's family. Only spiritual eyes can take in the kingdom of God, and only a spiritual mind can understand what the Holy Spirit is doing.

Nicodemus took Jesus' words to heart. During a debate about Jesus in the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus was bold enough to defend Jesus (John 7:50-52). After Jesus' death, Nicodemus brought spices and helped to wrap His body for burial (John 19:38-40).



Greet Each Child

Welcome each child warmly.

Encourage children to present their offerings to the Lord as they arrive.

Learn by Doing

Enjoy the suggested activity below or refer to the *Additional "Learn by Doing" Activities* on page 63 for alternate ideas to introduce this lesson.

Nighttime Scenes

You will need black construction paper, white crayons, or gel pens.

Provide black construction paper and white crayons or gel pens so children can draw where they live and something they like to do outside at night when it is dark.

Let the students know that they will be hearing about one of Jesus' friends named Nicodemus coming to visit Jesus in the nighttime.

Sing with Joy

Move the children from the initial learning activity to the worship time with a favorite song. Select one below or use a preschool songbook or recording.

- *Praise Him, Praise Him* (traditional)
- *Praise the Lord Together* (traditional)
- *Jesus, Lord to Me* (traditional)
- *Into My Heart* (traditional)

Rehearse the Verse

Practice saying the verse several times and then ask them to say it again while pretending to hold water in their mouths or eating sticky peanut butter.

Lesson Memory Verse: John 3:16.

"God loves us so much that He gave His son for me."

Monthly Memory Verse: John 4:10.

"Jesus gives living water and new life."

Quarter Memory Verse: John 3:16.

"God loves us so much that He gave His Son for me."

Seek God's Blessing

Talk with God about your time together with the children today, about the Bible story, and about any special needs.

As you pray, use meaningful and simple words from your heart. The children will learn to pray by listening to you.



Tell the Truth

Open your Bible to the passage and place it on your lap. Show Bible teaching picture #10 as you tell or read the story. (The Bible story is printed on page 62 and on the back of the teaching picture.)

The story "Nicodemus Visits Jesus" is based on John 3:1-21. It captures the interest and attention of older preschool children. If you are teaching younger preschoolers, you may want to use the shorter *Summary/Review*.

Even Bible scholars like Nicodemus, who devoted his life to the study of the Scriptures, did not understand spiritual birth. But salvation does not depend upon scholarly understanding. Rather, it is based on childlike faith.

Before sharing this story with the children, prayerfully read John 3:16. Appreciate the fact that your children may be hearing this wonderful truth for the very first time. Practice the sound effects beforehand to help children sense the sounds of the night

Complete Page 38

Distribute student page 38.

Place the appropriate stickers on the picture as you reinforce the Bible story.

Talk and Snack

Consider serving a slice of bread with a slice of cheese on top; then cut into star or moon shapes with cookie cutters or a knife.

This would represent the stars and moon that Nicodemus might have seen when he went to visit with Jesus.

Use anti-bacterial wipes or soap and water to clean up before enjoying your snack.

While you eat, talk about the Bible story. These questions will help you get started.

- Who came to visit Jesus?
- What time of day did Nicodemus visit Jesus?
- What did Nicodemus want to talk with Jesus about?
- Did Nicodemus want to be part of God's family?

Wash Up

Allow time for your children to clean up and use the rest room.

Play and Move

Pretend you are going on a night walk to visit Jesus at His house. Use your imagination to act out what you might see and hear. Examples might include, seeing cat eyes, light coming from a window, the moon and stars, hearing crickets chirping, an owl hooting, frogs croaking, quiet or noisy sounds all around.

Complete Page 39

Distribute student page 39.

2 & 3 Year-olds: Talk about each student being part of a family. Instruct them to draw a picture of each member of their family in the picture frame. You may want to provide magazine pictures of children and families and glue sticks.

Let them know they can also become a part of God's family around the world.

4 & 5 Year-olds: Talk about each student being part of a family. Instruct them to draw a picture of each member of their family in the picture frame. You may want to provide magazine pictures of children and families and glue sticks. Let them know they can also become a part of God's family around the world.

Learn by Doing

Enjoy the suggested activity below or refer to the *Additional "Learn by Doing" Activities* on page 63 for alternate ideas.

Part of God's Family

Lead the children in singing this song to the tune of *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*.

Nicodemus took a walk.

He went to Jesus' house to talk.

Jesus said you must be born again.
But Nicodemus didn't understand.

Jesus said if you believe.

You'll be a part of My family.

Pray for People

Pray that each student will be eager to learn more about believing in Jesus.

Ask for prayer requests. Pray for each personal concern.

Thank God for each student and the family they belong to.

Bible Story: "Nicodemus Visits Jesus" (based on John 3:1-21)

Hoo-ooo-ooo! The night wind howled through the moonlit sky. A gentle chirrup-chirrup song of crickets spread over the ground like a nighttime lullaby. Nearly everyone was sleeping.

But one man named Nicodemus moved silently through the sleeping city. He stopped at a door. *Rap-tap-tap.* The hinges of the wooden door creaked as it swung open. "Welcome," said Jesus with a friendly voice and a smiling face. "Come in."

Nicodemus stepped into the warmly lit room. "Thank You, Teacher," he said.

Jesus' smile grew bigger. "I'm glad you came."

Nicodemus was an important Jewish teacher. He taught people about God. But Nicodemus came to Jesus to find out the truth about God. Jesus was always happy to tell people about God any time of the day or night. "Teacher," Nicodemus said, "You have done some amazing things. You have spoken some amazing words. God is with You, I can tell."

Jesus told Nicodemus, "To become part of God's family, you must be born again."

Nicodemus raised his eyebrows. Jesus' words surprised him. "How can I be born again?" he asked. "Must I become a little baby all over again?"

"No, but when you were born, your body was brand new," Jesus explained. "Now God wants to make your heart brand new. God's Holy Spirit can do that for you." Nicodemus scratched his head. He still didn't understand.

Hoo-ooo-ooo! The howling wind blew against the house and through the cracks of the door.

Jesus said, "Do you hear that wind, Nicodemus? Even though you can't see it or understand it, you know it's there. That's the way the Holy Spirit is, too. When He gives you a new birth, you'll know it!"

"Please tell me more!" said Nicodemus.

"Nicodemus, God loves you," Jesus said. "He loves people so much that He sent His only Son to them. If they believe in God's Son, they will live forever. He will forgive their sins. They will become part of God's family and get to live with Him in Heaven one day."

Nicodemus' eyes opened wide with excitement. He knew Jesus was right. Nicodemus wanted a brand-new life. He wanted to be part of God's family.

He wished He could talk with Jesus forever.

"Nicodemus Visits Jesus" (Summary/Review)

Hoo-ooo-ooo! The night wind blew as Nicodemus knocked on the door.

Rap-tap-tap. "Come in," said Jesus. He knew that Nicodemus had come to talk about God.

"To know God, you must be born again," Jesus told him.

Nicodemus didn't understand. "Can I become a baby again?" he asked.

Hoo-ooo-ooo! howled the wind. "Listen!" Jesus said. "God is like that wind. You can't see Him, but He's here. He's moving. He's working. God can make you brand new. If you believe in Me, God will forgive your sins, come and live inside you, and make a place for you in Heaven."

That was good news to Nicodemus. He wanted a brand-new life!

Additional "Learn by Doing" Activities

All three *Learn by Doing* sections in this lesson include a suggested learning activity. However, you may want to substitute one or more of the activities below to capture the specific interests and needs of your children.

Select activities based on the age of your children, their learning style preferences, and their developmental needs.

Coloring Page

(for all preschoolers)

Provide copies of the reproducible Bible story picture for this lesson (#10) for children to color. (See page 93 of this *Teacher Guide*.)

Family Tree

(suggested activity for Dee-Cy-Paul story, page 64; for all preschoolers)

You will need: tree pattern (on this page), green construction paper, scissors, crayons, markers, small fruit stickers (optional).

Before class, copy the tree pattern on green construction paper for each child. Write the words, "My Family" on the leafy area and "Jesus" on the trunk of the tree. Give each child a tree. Put the children's names in the center. As you talk about members of each child's family, write those names on the tree, too. You may want to provide small fruit stickers, crayons, or markers for the children to decorate their "Family Tree."

Depending on class size, you may need extra volunteer helpers for this activity.

Let each child know you are happy they are part of a family and they can also belong to God's family.

Explaining Salvation

As a Christian teacher, you have a great responsibility to your students, to their families, and to God. So perhaps you sometimes try too hard, especially when trying to explain salvation.

Most preschoolers are not ready mentally to understand what it means to accept Christ as Savior, for it is difficult to describe salvation without using abstract terms. For example, could anyone draw a picture of faith? The concept is too abstract.

Nevertheless, your teaching does help lay the foundation for salvation. Even before your children accept Christ as Savior, they can begin to love Him and learn to do things that please Him. They can listen as you repeat from time to time some of the steps leading to salvation.

God loves us very much. He wants each one of us to be part of His family.

All of us have done things that are wrong. These wrong things are called sins. Our sins keep us from being part of God's family.

God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for the wrong things we do. He took the blame for our sins when He died.

We need to tell Jesus we are sorry for the wrong things we do. We can tell Jesus we love Him and want to be in God's family.

Jesus is happy when we are sorry. He forgives us for the wrong things we do. When we want to become part of God's family, He is glad to have us.

Pray that all of your students will receive the gift of salvation and continue growing spiritually throughout their lives.

Give your testimony of how you became part of God's family.

My New Life

(for older preschoolers)

You will need: someone who will give a testimony to how they became part of God's family.

Before class, ask someone you know to give his or her testimony of how he or she became part of God's family. Explain to your guest that you will be studying Nicodemus. Choose someone who will be able to relate to the children in a way they will understand and enjoy.

Night-time Scene

(for all preschoolers)

You will need: watered down black tempera paint, 1 paintbrush per child, coloring page for this lesson (#10, see page 93 of this *Teacher Guide*), paint smocks, table covering.

Before class, put a table covering over the table. Put paint smocks on the children to protect their clothing. Let them color the Bible story picture for this lesson with bright colored crayons. Allow them to use the black paint to paint over their picture. They will be amazed as the colored crayon picture comes through the black paint. Tell them they now have a night-time scene like the scene with Jesus and Nicodemus.

Variation: For younger preschoolers, consider painting their pictures for them as they watch. Try to paint one child's picture at a time while the others engage in another activity or free play.

See **Learning Centers** on pages 80-81 for ideas that can be used as additional "Learn by Doing" activities.

Jesus talks to Nicodemus about God's love.

John 3:1-21

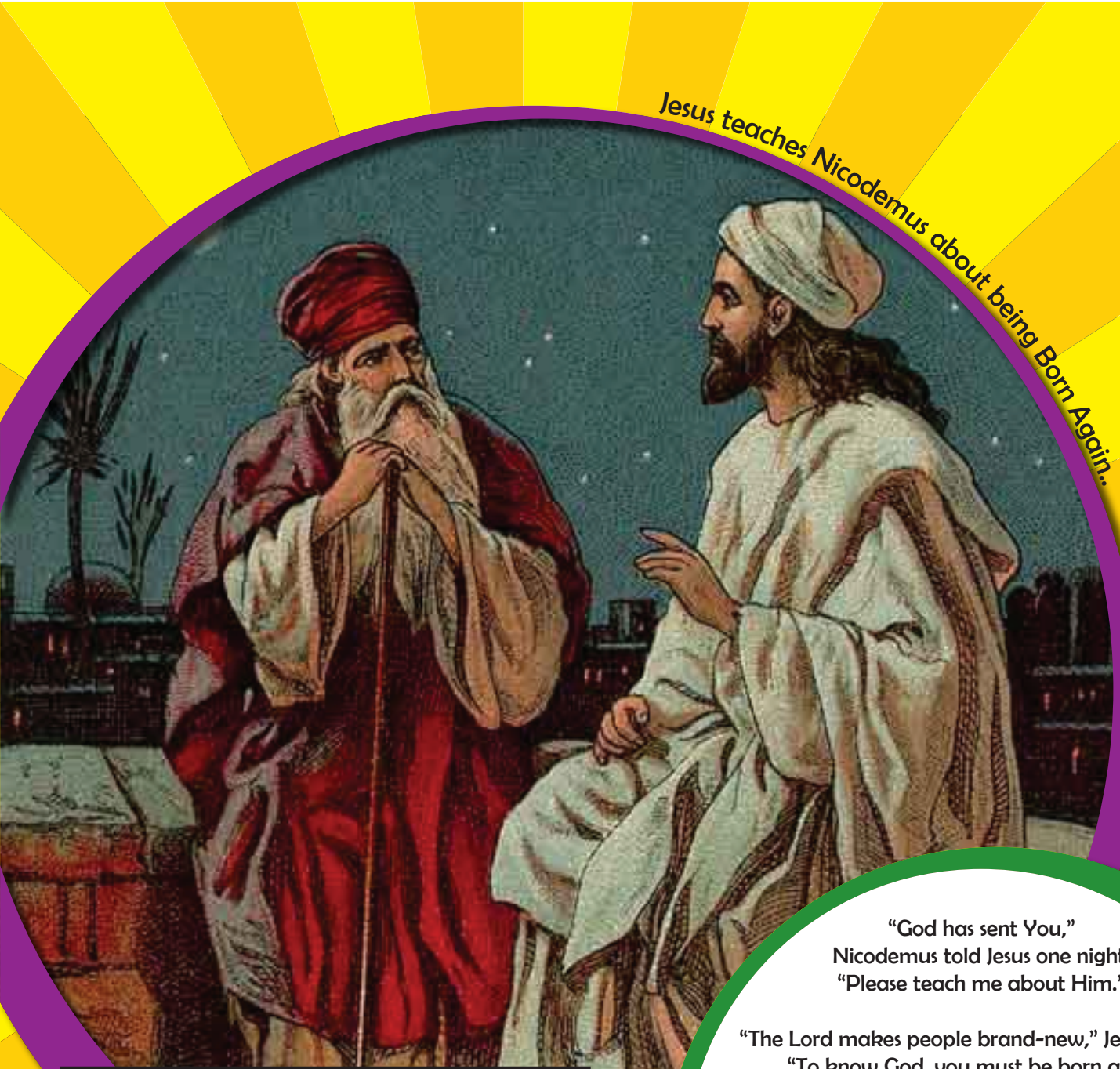


Born Again

Jesus Teaches Nicodemus
John 3:1-21

Name: _____

Jesus teaches Nicodemus about being Born Again.



"God has sent You,"
Nicodemus told Jesus one night.
"Please teach me about Him."

"The Lord makes people brand-new," Jesus replied.
"To know God, you must be born again."

Nicodemus didn't understand. "Can I become a
baby again?" he asked.

"God's Spirit is like the wind. You can't see Him, but He's
here," Jesus explained. "Believe in Me - then God will
forgive your sins."

"God's Spirit will live inside of you, Jesus told
Nicodemus. "He'll change you and give you a
home in heaven."

Jesus teaches Nicodemus - John 3:1-21



Parent Partners

Lesson Focus: Jesus told Nicodemus how to begin a new life..

Ways to reinforce this truth with your child:

ASK:

- Who came to visit Jesus?
- What time of day did Nicodemus visit Jesus?
- What did Nicodemus want to talk with Jesus about?
- Did Nicodemus want to be part of God's family?

ACT:

- Read the Bible story together (or read the summary on the front of this page).
- Lesson focus verse: John 3:16.
"God loves us so much that He gave His Son for me."
- Pray that you child will know Jesus personally.