

## Jesus and Nicodemus

John 3

**Did Jesus ever sin?**  
No, Jesus never sinned.

“But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.”  
1 John 3:5

### Story Point:

Jesus taught that people must be born again to enter the kingdom of God.



### PREPARE HEARTS

- Welcome - How do you Grow?
- Starter Activity - Wind of the Spirit Relay



### ACTIVATE HEARTS

- 9:20 - Bible Lesson in LG2
- Review and discuss the Bible Story
- Reflection and Prayer
- Questions from Kids Video



### ENGAGE HEARTS

- Key Passage Activity - Memory Motions
- Group Craft - New Life Butterfly
- Group Activity - Flashlight Seek and Find

## SHEPHERD GUIDE

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!

**REMINDER:** Our VIP meeting is from 8:30-8:40 in C1. Your supply bin will be in your classroom.

## MAIN TAKEAWAYS: We want our kids to:

- \*KNOW that Jesus offers new life - through His Spirit!
- \*BELIEVE and TRUST in Jesus with their whole lives.
- \*ASK questions and bring them to Jesus.



*As children arrive - Welcome them by name and invite them to play with you and the other children. Use this time to get to know your kids - ask them about their week, about their likes and dislikes and about their school, family and friends.*

*Ways to connect - Play a game from the closet, color or draw together, build with legos/blocks, etc. When most kids have arrived for first service (by 9:05ish), ask them to clean up the toys and find a seat at one of the tables to begin the class.  
\*Pen Pal Kit!!*



## PREPARE HEARTS

### OPENING QUESTIONS:

## WELCOME

### How Do You Grow?

- Activity page
- pencils
- markers

**Who do you usually go to when you need to ask a question? Why do you choose this person?**

Invite kids to complete the “How Do You Grow?” activity page.

In today’s story, we will see how Jesus taught that people must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. I am looking forward to sharing this story with you.

Gather kids around a long rectangular table.

Ask for two kids to volunteer to go first. Direct the volunteers to line up on one end of the table and give them each a craft pom pom and a straw.

Challenge them to use their straws to blow their pom pom across the table. The kid who gets their pom pom across the table first wins that round.

Continue playing until each kid (or most of the kids!) have had a turn.

**SAY:** You used your breath to get the pom pom across the table. Today we will see how Jesus compares the work of the Holy Spirit to the wind that blows. You can’t see the wind, but you can see what it does and the effect it has on what’s around it.



## STARTER

### Wind of the Spirit Relay

- Craft pom poms
- Straws



## ACTIVE MINDS

Taught by the Bible Teacher:

### INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

(Quick 1 minute review!)

9:20 – 9:35

K - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade in LG2

### BIBLE STORY:

#### Jesus and Nicodemus

Bibles, Powerpoint slides

Quick Review of where we are in the Big Story of the Bible and Big Picture Question:

**Did Jesus ever sin?** No, Jesus never sinned.

Open your Bible to John 3.

#### STORYTELLING OPTIONS / TIPS:

**Act it out:** Invite kid volunteers to act out the story as you tell it. Assign one volunteer to play the part of Jesus and another the part of Nicodemus. You can even provide simple costumes and props for the kids to use.

**Listen Close:** Challenge kids to listen carefully for the word born as you tell the story. Each time they hear that word, encourage them to give a thumbs up.

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.



### REVIEW AND DISCUSS

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Allow time to have the children think and process - however this works best for your class. We want our kids to feel known and heard!

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Blank paper, Bible Story coloring page, colored pencils/crayons

In small groups (or as a large group), use the coloring page (on the other side of the worksheet) and have children color while you talk through these questions.

Nicodemus was a religious leader, but after hearing about Jesus and the things He had done, Nicodemus had some questions, so he went to see Jesus at night.

**How did Nicodemus know Jesus had come from God?** [Allow responses.] He said that no one could perform the signs and miracles Jesus did unless God was with him. Then, Jesus explained how to enter the kingdom of God. **What did Jesus tell Nicodemus about entering the kingdom of God?** [Allow responses.] Jesus taught that people must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. This puzzled Nicodemus because he did not understand what being born again meant.

Jesus told Nicodemus that the Holy Spirit causes people to be born again and have a new life with God. Jesus told Nicodemus that God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, Jesus, so that anyone who trusts in Him will have new life forever with Him. Nicodemus had to decide if he believed that what Jesus said was true. Was Jesus really the Son of God, the promised Messiah? Is being born again really the way to enter the kingdom of God? We must make this same decision. Will we trust Jesus as our Savior or not?

Nicodemus was a religious leader, but he needed to be born again to new life. Anyone who believes in Jesus will be born again and receive eternal life.



## Reflection and Prayer

Have children use a blank sheet of paper. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions. Or, just talk about it together.

- **What does this story teach me about God?**

*That God invites us to ask questions because He wants us to know Him. That God gives us new life in Him through His Holy Spirit and anyone who believes in Him can be a part of God's Kingdom.*

- **What does this story teach me about myself?**

*That I can ask God questions and pray to him about anything and everything. That I don't have to do life on my own anymore. Jesus changes me on the inside so that I can live more like Him everyday.*

**Pray together:** *Jesus, thank You for loving us and for giving us new life. Help us to be curious like Nicodemus and to ask questions so we can know You better. Thank You for being perfect and taking away our sin. Help us listen to Your Spirit and live like You each day. Amen.*



## Questions from Kids Video

USB on TV

Show the "Unit 21, Session 3" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

- How did Pastor Kevin become a Christian?
- What would you tell someone about how to become a Christian?



## ENGAGE HEARTS

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 John 3:5

### Key Passage Activity:

### Memory Motions

- Key Passage Poster

Form kids into small groups.

Challenge them to work together to create hand motions for words or phrases in the key passage. For example, for the phrase You know, kids could point out for the word you and point to their heads for the word know.

Once kids have created their motions, invite each group to come to the front and demonstrate them in front of the group while saying the key passage.

**SAY:** Great job! It is so important to memorize God's Word and have it in our hearts and minds as we live for Him!



## New Life Butterfly

- Green Caterpillar
- White Butterfly
- Glue sticks
- Markers
- Colored Pencils

Ask: What does a butterfly start out as? (A caterpillar!)

Some people may think caterpillars are cute, some may think that they are funny, but probably no one would say that they are beautiful. A caterpillar is a worm -- and worms are not beautiful! Then, one day the caterpillar spins a cocoon about himself and when it comes out, it is no longer a caterpillar, it has been miraculously changed into a beautiful butterfly.



God didn't just take a caterpillar and stick some wings on him and paint the wings all different colors. When the cocoon opens and the butterfly crawls out, it is a new creation. The caterpillar is gone! It has now become a butterfly.

That is a good picture of what Jesus meant when he said we had to be "born again." The Bible says, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" When we place our faith in Jesus, we become a new creation. God doesn't just clean us up and slap on a little paint, he makes us into a new person and the Holy Spirit is the one who changes how we live. It's a gift that God gives us through Jesus.

Pass out the green caterpillar and have the children add eyes and a mouth and antennae. They can also add the word "Old Life" to the body of the caterpillar.

Then, pass out the folded butterfly. Have them paste the green caterpillar on the back of the butterfly. Then have them flip it over and open it up to see the whole butterfly! Have them write "New Life in Christ" in the middle and then have them decorate the wings with markers and colored pencils. (Sample will be in the bin).



## Flashlight Seek and Find

- TV (the real one in the corner!)
- Smartphone (use yours!)
- Bible
- Book
- Gold coins
- Picture of friends

Before this activity, place objects around the room.

Invite kids to sit in the center of the room and then dim the lights. Use a flashlight to direct kids' attention to the different objects spread out around the room.

When you shine the light on an object, challenge kids to shout out what object they see. Then, discuss how people might use that thing to try to find truth. For example, when you shine the light on a phone, you could discuss how some people try to find truth on the internet or by asking friends or family members.

Continue until you have discussed all the objects around the room.

**SAY:** Today we learned about a man who came to seek the truth and found it in Jesus because Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus taught that people must be born again to enter the kingdom of God.