Preschool–Grade 6

Jesus and Nicodemus

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: God loves me so much! He gave Jesus.
Bible passage: John 3:1–8 and 3:16. Read all of John 3:1–21 yourself before class.
Memory verse: "For God so loved the world" *John 3:16 (KJV)*. The old words **so loved** mean loved so very much.
You need: a Bible, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at John 3. Find the light switch, for the opening game.

1. Opening game: Night and Day (5 minutes)

Say: "When I say 'Night!', lie down and pretend to sleep. When I say 'Day!', jump up and stretch!" Play a few times. You can dim the lights for "night" and turn them on for "day." Say: "Today we will hear a true story about a man who came to see Jesus at night, when it was dark."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to John 3. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

There was a man named Nicodemus (John 3:1). *(Wave hello.)*
He was a leader and a teacher (3:1, 3:10). *(Stand up tall.)*
One night he came to see Jesus (3:2). *(Tiptoe in place.)*
It was dark outside. *(Cover your eyes.)*
Nicodemus said, "Thou art a teacher come from God" (3:2). *(Point up.)*
Jesus said, "Ye must be born again" (3:7). *(Hold up two fingers.)*
Say it with me: "Born again!"

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The story continues:
Jesus talked about the wind (3:8). *(Blow, "Whoosh!")*
You can hear the wind. You can't see it (3:8). *(Cup your ear.)*
Jesus said, "God so loved the world" (3:16). *(Make a big circle with your arms.)*
Say it with me: "God so loved the world!"
God loves everyone. God loves you! (3:16). *(Hug yourself.)*
Say it with me: "God loves me!"

3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. When did Nicodemus come to see Jesus? *(At night, John 3:2)*
2. What did Jesus talk about that you can hear but can't see? *(The wind, 3:8)*
3. Who does God love? *(The whole world, and me! 3:16)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "Jesus said, 'For God so loved the world.' **So loved** means loved so very much." Teach the motions: point up for "For God," hug yourself for "so loved," and make a big circle with your arms for "the world." Say it with the motions three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy voice. Then say "John 3:16" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! Jesus said we must be born again (John 3:5). The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

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6. Activity: God So Loved the World (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw a big red heart around a round world, colored blue and green. While they color, ask: "Who does God love? Who can you tell, 'God loves you'?" Kids who finish early can play Night and Day again.

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, God, for loving me.
Thank You for Jesus.
In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the story moving and let every child do the motions. If they get wiggly, play Night and Day again. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

If a child asks why Nicodemus came at night: say, The Bible doesn't tell us why. It just says he came at night (John 3:2).

If a child asks how a big man can be born again: say, Nicodemus asked that too! Jesus didn't mean being a baby again (John 3:4–5). He meant being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38).

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