

# Jesus Explains Why God Sent Him

John 3:12-21



► **Bible Point**  
Jesus came to save us.

### Key Verse

“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).

### Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will thank God for sending Jesus and tell others about him.

First- and second-graders may not have a clear concept of exactly what sin is, but they do know when they’ve done something wrong. Don’t be surprised if your kids sometimes try to equivocate their wrong actions by saying that everyone does it, denying the action, or even blaming it on someone else. It’s important to hold kids accountable for their actions; it’s also important to remind them that Jesus is ready and willing to forgive. Use this lesson to emphasize that we all need Jesus because we all sin.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>1</b> Getting Started	<b>God Is Love</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Draw pictures, and discuss how God shows his love for us.	My Bible Fun, markers	Tear out the Lesson 3 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.
<b>2</b> Bible Exploration	<b>God Loves You!</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Learn the Key Verse and how it relates to the lesson.	Bible	
	<b>Nic at Night</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Experience Nicodemus’ dramatic search for and meeting with Jesus.	Bible, flashlight	Clear a path around your room, suitable for a flashlight journey through the dark.
	<b>Into the Light</b> <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Discover that Jesus is our light and that he forgives our sins.	Bible, flashlight	

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*





LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>3</b> Weaving Faith Into Life	<b>Love Letters</b> <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Create cards that remind them of God's love in sending Jesus.	My Bible Fun, scissors, markers, CD player, 1 copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson) <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	
<b>4</b> Lasting Impressions	<b>Daily Challenges</b> <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Fun	
	<b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

***Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.***







### God Is Love Supplies

My Bible Fun  
markers

### God Is Love Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 3  
pages from each My  
Bible Fun student book.

### God Loves You! Supplies

Bible

## 1 GETTING STARTED

### God Is Love

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together.

Distribute the Lesson 3 My Bible Fun pages to kids, and point out the “What Is Love?” section. Say: **Think about some ways God shows he loves us. Let’s see how many ways we can think of. When you think of a way, draw a picture inside the heart on your My Bible Fun page.** Give examples, such as sunshine, families, friends, and good food. Then let kids draw for several minutes.

Give kids a chance to briefly explain what they drew.

#### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Think about all the ways people shared. Explain which way stood out most to you.**
- **Why do you like knowing that God loves you?**

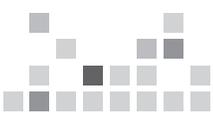
Say: **Knowing God loves us helps us remember that he’ll always take care of us. He gives us sunshine and food to eat and loving families and friends to play with. But there’s another way he shows he loves us—God loved us so much that he gave us Jesus! Our Bible Point for today tells us that ► JESUS CAME TO SAVE US. We’ll learn more about that today.**

## 2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

### God Loves You!

#### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to John 3:16, and show it to kids. Say: **Our Key Verse today reminds us that ► JESUS CAME TO SAVE US. Listen while I read 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” (John 3:16).**



Say: **That means that anyone who believes in Jesus won't die but will go to heaven to live with him forever. Our bodies may die, but if we believe in Jesus, our spirits will live forever with him in heaven. Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead kids in the adapted verse: **God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).** Have kids repeat the Key Verse with you several times.

Say: **One amazing thing about this verse is that it tells us that God loves everyone. Think of someone you love very much. Pause. Got it? Shout out that person's name. Pause. God loves that person! And God loves each of you, too. When I count to three shout your own full name—first, middle, and last. Ready? One, two, three. Pause. God loves you. Now think of someone you might have trouble getting along with, but keep it to yourself. Got it? God loves that person you're thinking of, too. Let's pray for that person now. Ready?** Have kids bow their heads. **Dear God, we know you love every single person, even the people we're thinking of right now. Please help us love those people, too. Amen.**

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What do you think about God loving everyone?
- Why do you think God sending Jesus shows that he loves us?

Say: **Our Key Verse reminds us that ► JESUS CAME TO SAVE US—each one of us. Jesus came to save me and you and your parents and the kids in school. He wants to save everyone! All we have to do is believe in Jesus. That's wonderful news! Let's see how Jesus taught one man about God's love for him.**

## Nic at Night

### What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **As we read the Bible today, we'll hear about a man named Nicodemus. Actually, let's call him Nic. Nic was a Pharisee, which means he was a Jewish ruler during the time Jesus was preaching. He was a pretty big deal. Most of the Pharisees were afraid of Jesus and didn't like him. But Nic was different—he wanted to learn more about Jesus.**

Open your Bible to John 3:12-21, and show kids the verses. Say: **Nic couldn't just go up to Jesus, because the other Pharisees might get upset with him. Nic decided to go see Jesus at night so that no one would see him. I'll turn off the lights to make our room more like night.** Turn on your flashlight, and then turn off the lights.

Say: **We'll all travel at night to see what Jesus has to say, just as Nic did.** Have children line up single file behind you. Then say: **Along the way, I'll stop and say something to the person behind me. That person will pass the message to the next in line, and so on, until the last person receives the message. Then we'll continue.** Check for understanding.



### Nic at Night Supplies

Bible  
flashlight

### Nic at Night Easy Prep

Clear a path around your room, suitable for a flashlight journey through the dark.





Lead kids around the room several times. Along the way, stop at intervals and say to the child behind you phrases such as the following:

- **Shh!**
- **I wonder if anyone saw me.**
- **Stop! I think I hear footsteps!**
- **We're almost there.**

Pause after each phrase to let kids pass the message down the line.

Then have kids sit in a circle on the floor with you. Shine your flashlight on John 3:12-21 in your Bible.

Say: **When Nic reached Jesus that night, Jesus told him some important information. In fact, it's the most important news anyone ever told! Listen to what Jesus told Nic that night.** Read aloud the adapted Key Verse: **God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).** Have kids repeat the Key Verse with you.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to travel around our room in the dark?**
- **Tell about a time you went somewhere in the dark on purpose.**
- **What things might people want to keep in the dark, or hidden?**
- **Why do you want Jesus to forgive those things you might want to hide?**

Say: **Nic went to find Jesus in the dark. He wanted to know more about Jesus, but many of the Pharisees, like Nic, didn't want to know more about Jesus. When Nic met Jesus, he found out that ► JESUS CAME TO SAVE US and forgive us of our sins. He learned that because of Jesus, we don't have to keep those things we want to hide in the dark; when we believe in Jesus, he forgives us!**

## Into the Light

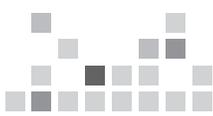
### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Keep the lights off and shine your flashlight on John 3:12-21 again. Say: **Jesus and Nic had a nice, long talk that night. Jesus told Nic that God sent him into the world to save people from the darkness of their sins. Think of some things you've done that you knew were wrong—you won't have to share. Just think of them.** Allow time.

Say: **Sometimes when we do bad things, we feel like hiding because we're so ashamed of what we've done. But Jesus came to forgive us for the bad things we do, so we don't have to feel like hiding. Hold your hand out, palm up.** Allow time. **Imagine holding in your hand those wrong things you were thinking of.** Pause. **Now squeeze your fist, like you're crumpling paper to throw it away.** Tell kids to keep their hands like that until you tell them differently.

### Into the Light Supplies

Bible  
flashlight



Say: **Let's read what Jesus said to Nic.** Read aloud John 3:19-21. **These verses mean that when we do bad things, we don't want to stand in the spotlight and let everyone know what we've done. But when we believe in Jesus, we don't have to be afraid to stand in the spotlight of his love. Jesus forgives us for the bad things we do—every time we ask him! When we believe in Jesus, we can stand in the light of his love.**

Say: **Let's see what that's like.** Shine your flashlight on the child to your left and say, "Jesus loves you!" Have the child pretend to throw away the thing in his or her hand. Then pass the flashlight to that child, and have him or her do the same to the next child in the circle. Continue until the flashlight comes back to you.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What do you think about after you've done something bad?**
- **Why might you want to hide something you did that you knew was wrong?**
- **Why do you know you can stand in the light?**

Say: **Jesus told Nic that even though people want to hide when they've done something bad, they don't have to hide. ► JESUS CAME TO SAVE US, and when we believe in him, he'll forgive us and we can stand in the light.** Turn on the lights in your room, and turn off the flashlight.

## 3

### WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

## Love Letters

### What You'll Do ■■■■

Distribute the Lesson 3 My Bible Fun pages, and point out the "Love Letters" section.

Say: **Today we learned how much God loves us—he loves us so much that he sent Jesus to save us. Let's say our Key Verse one more time.** Lead kids in saying the adapted verse: **God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus (John 3:16).**

Say: **Let's make some cards that remind us how much God loves us.** Let kids cut out their cards, and then have them fold their cards on the dotted centerline. Then let kids write their names on the lines provided in the note from God. Play "God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) (track 6 on the CD) as kids work.

If time allows, hand out the lyrics pages and let kids sing along.



**I believe in God:**

**'Cause what he says is true.**

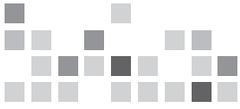
### Love Letters Supplies

- My Bible Fun
- scissors
- markers
- CD player
- 1 copy per child of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson)

### Teacher Pack

- CD: "God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) (track 6)





I believe that Jesus died  
To save me and save you.

I believe in God  
And all that he came to do.  
I believe that Jesus died,  
Because he loved both me and you.

For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Shall not perish.

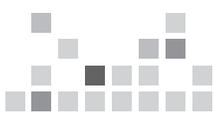
For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Will have eternal life.  
*(Repeat from the beginning.)*

For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Shall not perish.

For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Will have eternal life.  
Will have eternal life.

“God So Loved the World” (John 3:16) by Ben Glover. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Say: ► **JESUS CAME TO SAVE US**—he told this to Nic when Nic sneaked out at night to meet Jesus. God sent Jesus for us, and we know he loves us so much that he wants us to live forever with him.



## 4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

### Daily Challenges

#### What You'll Do

Say: **Let's think about how ► JESUS CAME TO SAVE US.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges in their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Tell each of your family members that Jesus loves them!**
- **Write God a letter thanking him for sending his Son, Jesus.**
- **Pray for a friend at school who doesn't know Jesus.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

#### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.**

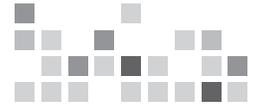
Say: **Nicodemus learned that Jesus loves everyone and will forgive everyone who believes in him. In fact, Jesus loves your family and he loves your friends that don't even know who he is. This week, help others know that ► JESUS CAME TO SAVE US by following through on our Daily Challenges.**

### Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about how God loves us so much that he sent Jesus to save us. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

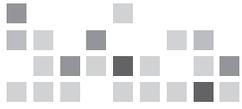
Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at [group.com/digital](http://group.com/digital).

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God that he loves us and he sent Jesus to save us. Ask the children if any of them want to tell Jesus they believe in him so they can be saved by Jesus. Lead any children who do want that in a prayer specific to each of them. Then pray: **God, we're so thankful that you sent Jesus to save us, and we're thankful that you forgive us when we believe in you. In Jesus' name, amen.**



#### Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Fun



## Lyrics ■■■■

# God So Loved the World (John 3:16)

I believe in God:  
'Cause what he says is true.  
I believe that Jesus died  
To save me and save you.

I believe in God  
And all that he came to do.  
I believe that Jesus died,  
Because he loved both me and you.

For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Shall not perish.

For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Will have eternal life.  
*(Repeat from the beginning.)*

For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Shall not perish.

For God so loved the world  
He gave his one and only Son,  
That whoever believes in him  
Will have eternal life.  
Will have eternal life.

"God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) by Ben Glover. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

