



# Jesus Explains Why God Sent Him

John 3:12-21

As young children learn many new things at a rapid pace, they develop confidence in their ability to do these things and find pride in what they learn. Most young children won't fully understand why they need to be saved or how Jesus' life, death, and resurrection showed God's great big love. Use this lesson to help children know why Jesus came to earth.



### ► Bible Point

Jesus came to show God's love.

### Key Verse

"Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:11).

### Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will thank God for Jesus.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<b>1</b> Getting Started <i>about 5 min.</i>	<b>Welcome and Celebrate</b> Welcome each other, and praise God through music.	CD player <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	
<b>2</b> Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	<b>God Loves Us</b> Imitate kings and leaders and learn the Key Verse.	Bible	
<b>3</b> Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i>	<b>Puppy Pointers</b> Find out what Theo gets for free.	CD player, Theo puppet, paper, marker, tape <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD	Write "free" on a slip of paper, and tape it to Theo's paw.
	<b>Bible Time: He Came to Save</b> Discuss Jesus' gift and clap to identify the Bible Point while hearing what happened.	Bible, CD player, "free" coupon from the "Puppy Pointers" activity <b>Teacher Pack:</b> CD, inflatable globe	

*Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.*

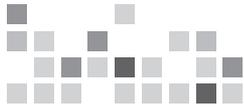


LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>4</b> Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> (Choose 2 centers.)</p>	<p><b>Center 1: God Loves the World</b> Make a globe, and glue it to the take-home page.</p>	<p>My Bible Hugs, one 5-inch foam craft ball for every 2 kids, blue and green tempera paints, bowls, glue, sharp knife, permanent marker, newspaper <b>Teacher Pack:</b> inflatable globe</p>	<p>Remove the Lesson 3 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them. Cover surfaces with newspaper to protect them. Cut foam balls in half.</p>
	<p><b>Center 2: Jailhouse Snack</b> Make a snack that looks like a jail.</p>	<p>bread, string cheese, teddy bear-shaped cookies, napkins, antibacterial gel (optional)</p>	
	<p><b>Center 3: Thanks to Jesus</b> Pretend to be in jail, and then pretend to be set free.</p>	<p>blocks</p>	
	<p><b>Center 4: Valuable Coupons</b> Make "free" coupons, and plan to give them away.</p>	<p>index cards, crayons, "free" coupon from the "Puppy Pointers" activity</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b> Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p><b>Daily Challenges</b> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	<p>My Bible Hugs</p>	
	<p><b>Action Prayer</b> Talk to God in sign language.</p>		
	<p><b>Weaving Faith at Home</b> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

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







## Welcome and Celebrate Supplies

CD player

### Teacher Pack

CD: "I Am So Happy" (track 10), "Love Is Patient and Kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5a) (track 6)

# 1 GETTING STARTED

## Welcome and Celebrate

**Tip** Consistently use the same signal to announce a transition to the next activity. You could flip the lights off and on, use a train whistle, have a puppet rustling inside a bag, or sing cleanup songs. Keep it simple, consistent, and fun.

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

As the children arrive, greet each one with a smile. When it's time to begin, use your signal to gather the children together in a circle on the floor.

Lead children in singing "I Am So Happy" (track 10 on the CD), to the tune of "I Have the Joy." Encourage children to shout and do the motions as the text in parentheses indicates.

 **I am so happy, happy, happy, happy**  
**That you are here.**  
*(children shout and throw their hands in the air) What?*  
**That you are here.**  
*(children shout and throw their hands in the air) What?*  
**That you are here.**  
**I am so happy, happy, happy, happy**  
**That you are here.**  
*(children shout and throw their hands in the air) Where?*  
**Here in God's church today.**  
*(Repeat from the beginning.)*

Say: **Do you know what else I'm happy about? I'm happy that ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE. Today we get to hear all about God's love. Let's sing a song about that.**

Lead children in singing "Love Is Patient and Kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5a) (track 6 on the CD). Encourage children to stand in a circle and put their arms over one another's shoulders as they sing. Lead children in swaying back and forth as well.

 **Love is patient and kind.**  
**Love is not jealous**  
**Or boastful**  
**Or proud or rude.**  
**Love is patient and kind.**  
**Love is not jealous**  
**Or boastful**





**Or proud or rude.  
Love is patient and kind.**  
*(Repeat from the beginning.)*

**Love is patient and kind.**  
*(Repeat 3x.)*

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Say: **Today in the Bible we'll learn that ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE. Because of God's great love, we can love others, too. Let's hear what Jesus said about love.**

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## **2** KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

### God Loves Us

#### What You'll Do

Have children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to Philippians 2:11, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Our Key Verse from the Bible says, "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:11). This means that Jesus is the only God, and he's in charge of everything. Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the Key Verse with you: **"Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:11).**

Say: **Jesus is the boss of everything, and he's the king of everything. Think of someone who's boss of you.** Allow time, and let kids take turns pretending to be those people by imitating things they might do or say.

Say: **Jesus is boss of all those people! Think of a king or someone who's in charge in a really big way.** Allow time, and help kids with examples, such as the president of a country or kings they've seen in stories. Invite them to take turns pretending to be kings or other leaders by imitating things they might do or say.

Say: **Jesus is king over all those people, too. He's king over the whole entire world. And that's a great thing because he loves us so much! Let's say our Key Verse one more time.** Lead children in saying the Key Verse with you: **"Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:11).**

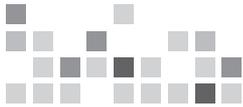


God Loves Us  
Supplies

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Bible





### Puppy Pointers Supplies

CD player  
Theo puppet  
paper  
marker  
tape

#### Teacher Pack

CD: "Here, Theo"  
(track 5)

### Puppy Pointers Easy Prep

Write "free" on a slip  
of paper, and tape it to  
Theo's paw.

## Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What did you like or not like about pretending to be in charge?
- What are some reasons you might not want to be in charge of everything?
- Why are you happy that Jesus is in charge of everything?

Say: **It's fun to pretend to be kings and leaders. But being a leader like that can be a really big job. We can be happy that Jesus is the king of all because we don't have to worry or be scared about anything. ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE, so we know we can trust him to be a really great king.**

## 3 BIBLE EXPLORATION

# Puppy Pointers

## What You'll Do ■■■■

Say: **Listen, everyone, Theo's coming! He has something to show us. Let's find out what it is.** Play "Here, Theo" (track 5 on the CD), and bring out Theophilus the FaithRetriever.

**Theo:** Hi, everybody!

**Teacher:** Hello, Theo! It's nice of you to come to church with us today.

**Theo:** It's good to be here.

**Teacher:** What do you have with you today?

**Theo:** I have a coupon to get something for free!

**Teacher:** Well, isn't that exciting!

**Theo:** Yup! You can't get much for free these days.

**Teacher:** There is one really great thing that we can all get.

**Theo:** What's that?

**Teacher:** We can be forgiven for our sins because God loves us so much. Friends, let's tell Theo our Bible Point for today.

*(Lead children in saying the Bible Point for Theo: ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE.)*

**Theo:** And it's free?

**Teacher:** Yes—just like when you use a coupon to get something for free. Only you don't even need a coupon for forgiveness.

**Theo:** Wow! Well, I better go tell someone about forgiveness!

**Teacher:** Good idea. Boys and girls, say goodbye to Theo!

Encourage the children to wave or say goodbye to Theo. Then put Theo away in a safe place for next week's use.



## Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why do you think it's neat to get something for free?
- Tell about a time you wanted forgiveness. What did you do?
- Why is it extra special that Jesus gives us forgiveness for free?

Say: **Theo was excited to get something for free, as anyone would be. Today we'll learn what Jesus said about how we can get forgiveness for free. We'll learn that**  
**▶ JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE.**

## Bible Time: He Came to Save

### What You'll Do

Open your Bible to John 3:12-21, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Today in the Bible, we'll hear how** ▶ **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE** **and what a great big deal that is.** Pause. **Whenever someone does something really great, people usually clap. Let's practice clapping now.** Show the children several different claps, such as a fast clap, a slow clap, an over-the-head clap, or a cupped-hand clap.

Say: **As I tell what happened in John 3:12-21, I need your help. Each time I say the Bible Point, you'll clap. But remember, it's a really big deal that** ▶ **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE, so we really want to cheer and clap loudly.** Have each child choose one type of clap so there are several different sounds each time you clap and cheer. Check for understanding, and then practice a few times saying the Bible Point and leading children to cheer and clap.

Say: **In our Bible verses today, Jesus was talking to a man named Nicodemus. The man asked Jesus about how someone can go to heaven. Nicodemus knew that Jesus was special, but he didn't understand that** ▶ **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE.** Lead the children in clapping and cheering.

Say: **Jesus explained that he came so everyone who believes in him can live with him in heaven someday. Because Jesus is God's Son, he can help us be friends with God. And God really wants to be friends with us. So** ▶ **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE.** Lead the children in clapping and cheering.

Hold up the globe. Say: **Jesus said that God loves the world so much. He loves each of you, and he loves me.** ▶ **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE.** Lead the children in clapping and cheering.

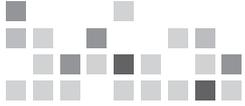
Show the "free" coupon, and read the word aloud.



### Bible Time: He Came to Save Supplies

- 
- Bible
  - CD player
  - "free" coupon from the "Puppy Pointers" activity
  - Teacher Pack**
  - CD: "I Need Jesus" (track 12)
  - inflatable globe





Say: **Jesus said God sent him into the world to save the world. And all we have to do is believe in Jesus, and each of us who believes will go to heaven for free.**

Point to the “free” coupon. Say: **We don’t need a coupon like this. Jesus already paid for us when he died so our sins would be forgiven. Jesus did a really amazing thing— ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD’S LOVE.** Lead the children in clapping and cheering.

Say: **Every one of you is a special child to God, and he loves you. But we all do bad things, and we need God’s forgiveness. That’s why ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD’S LOVE. You can ask Jesus to be part of your life and help you not to sin.** Lead any children who want to do this in a prayer. If any children choose to pray, lead all the children in cheering and clapping.

Lead children in singing “I Need Jesus” (track 12 on the CD) to the tune of “The Wheels on the Bus.” Encourage children to follow the motions in parentheses.

 **I need Jesus in my life,** (*point to heaven and then to self*)  
**In my life, in my life.** (*point to self*)  
**I need Jesus in my life.** (*point to heaven and then to self*)  
**He wants to be my friend.** (*put arm around a friend*)

**Jesus, please erase my sins,** (*pretend to scrub your heart*)  
**Erase my sins, erase my sins.** (*continue scrubbing motion*)  
**Jesus, please erase my sins,**  
**And make my heart brand-new.** (*hold out hands as if presenting a gift*)

**Heaven is my gift from God,** (*point up*)  
**Gift from God, gift from God.** (*hold out hands as if presenting a gift*)  
**Heaven is my gift from God** (*hold out hands as if presenting a gift*)  
**'Cause he loves me every day!** (*give yourself a big hug*)

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What was it like to cheer in this activity?**
- **Tell about something else you cheered for.**
- **Why do you want to cheer about God’s love?**

Say: ► **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD’S LOVE,** and when we believe in him, we can live forever with him in heaven. That’s something to cheer about! This week, let’s tell others about God’s great big love.





## 4 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Choose at least two of the learning centers to help reinforce today's Bible lesson. Gather the needed materials, and put the supplies in an out-of-sight area until you're ready for them. Allow the children to choose which center they'd like to explore first. Then circulate among the children as they create and explore. Encourage them to make connections between their activities and the Bible by asking them the questions included with each center's description.

### CENTER 1:

## God Loves the World

### What You'll Do

Give each child a Lesson 3 page from My Bible Hugs. Say: **In the Bible, it says ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE to the world.** Show the globe. Say: **This is a globe. It shows us what the world looks like.** Point out that people live all over the world, and then show kids where they live.

Say: **Let's make some globes to remind us of God's love for the world.** Give each child half a foam ball. Set out blue and green tempera paints in bowls. Have kids finger-paint the curved sides of the balls to look like globes. Then have kids glue them to the My Bible Hugs pages. Set them aside to dry, and have kids clean their hands.

### Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Why do you want to remember that God loves the world?
- Tell about someone you want to know about God's love.

Say: **We learned today that ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE.** God loved the world so much that he sent his Son to save us. **Let's remember to tell others about God's love this week.**

### CENTER 2:

## Jailhouse Snack

### What You'll Do

Have children clean their hands and then sit down for the snack. Say: **► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE—he came to save us and set us free. Without Jesus, it's**



### Center 1: God Loves the World Supplies

My Bible Hugs  
 one 5-inch foam ball for every 2 kids  
 blue and green tempera paints  
 bowls  
 glue  
 sharp knife  
 permanent marker  
 newspaper  
**Teacher Pack**  
 inflatable globe

### Center 1: God Loves the World Easy Prep

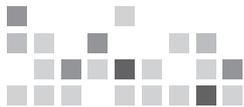
Remove the Lesson 3 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them. Cover surfaces with newspaper to protect them. Cut foam balls in half.

### Center 2: Jailhouse Snack Supplies

bread  
 string cheese  
 teddy bear-shaped cookies  
 napkins  
 antibacterial gel (optional)

**! ALLERGY ALERT**





**like we're stuck in a jail. Without Jesus, we're not free.** Have kids use the snack items to make pretend jails. They can separate the string cheese and place the strips on the bread so they resemble jail bars.

Say: **Sometimes when people do really bad things, they have to go to jail.** Have kids place their teddy bear-shaped cookies behind the bars.

Say: **Every person does bad things. But Jesus came so we can be forgiven for the wrong things we do. When we believe in him, he sets us free. It's like he pays for the bad things we did so we can be free.** Have kids pretend to "free" the teddy bear-shaped cookies from jail. Lead the children in a prayer, and then let them enjoy the snack.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to free your teddy bear cookie from jail?
- Why do you want Jesus to free you?
- Why do you know God loves you?

Say: **God knew that all people need forgiveness. And God loves the world so much. So ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE. When people believe in Jesus, they're forgiven and they're set free, kind of like our teddy bear cookies. Each of us can be set free, too, when we believe in Jesus.**

### ■ CENTER 3:

## Thanks to Jesus

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that our sins keep us from being free. It's as if our sins put us in jail. When Jesus forgives our sins, it's as if he sets us free from jail. Jesus saves us.**

Choose a child to pretend to be in jail, and have several children use blocks to build a pretend jail around that child. Choose another child to pretend to be Jesus. Have the child playing the part of Jesus pretend to unlock an imaginary door to let the jailed child go free. Then have all the children chant this rhyme:

**One, two, three!  
Thanks to Jesus,  
[Name of child in "jail"] is free!**

Have the "free" child kick over the blocks. Then have the children change roles and repeat the game.

Center 3: Thanks to  
Jesus  
Supplies

.....  
blocks





### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to be in our pretend jail?
- What was it like to be set free from the jail?
- What does Jesus set you free from?
- Why do you know God loves you?

Say: We know that ► **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD’S LOVE** and when we believe in Jesus he sets us free. Let’s thank God this week for loving us so much.

### ■ **CENTER 4:**

## Valuable Coupons

### What You’ll Do ■■■■

Show the “free” coupon. Say: **Sometimes coupons give us free stuff. But we don’t always need a coupon. Sometimes people do things for free just because they want to be nice.**

Give each child an index card. Say: **Today we’re going to make coupons to give away to people. These coupons won’t be for something to buy. These coupons will be for a chore or a helpful thing you can do for someone, such as cleaning up toys, helping do the dishes, or dusting the furniture.**

Help children think of helpful things they can do for others. Then have each child choose one thing he or she wants to do for someone this week. Have the children decorate their “coupons.” As they do, write on each child’s card something such as “Good for one free half hour of help with the dishes.”

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about your coupon and who you plan to give it to.
- What do you like about helping someone for free?
- What’s so great about Jesus’ free forgiveness?

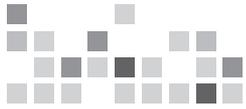
Say: ► **JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD’S LOVE**, for free. This week, let’s help someone for free to show how thankful we are that God gives us forgiveness for free through Jesus.



### Center 4: Valuable Coupons Supplies

- .....
- index cards
  - crayons
  - “free” coupon from the “Puppy Pointers” activity





## Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Hugs

# 5 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

## Daily Challenges

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

After the children have cleaned up their centers, bring everyone back to a circle area on the floor. Review the lesson activities and the Bible Point, and then encourage the children to share what they remember about what they learned from the Bible today.

Also use this time to challenge kids in their faith. Encourage them to do the Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.

### Talk With Kids ■■■■

Say: **Today we learned that ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE. As this week's Daily Challenge, try to follow through on giving someone your "free" coupon and helping that person as you said you would on the coupon.**

Tell the kids how you'll help someone for free. Your commitment will inspire children and will give them an opportunity to see God at work in your life as well as in theirs!

## Action Prayer

### What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Form a circle, and have the children sit down.

Say: **We've learned that ► JESUS CAME TO SHOW GOD'S LOVE. Let's thank God for Jesus.** Invite each child to thank God for Jesus. Then lead children in the prayer and sign language in parentheses.

Pray:

**Dear God,**

**Thank you** (*throw a kiss toward God using both hands*)

**For sending** (*place the right bent hand over the left open hand, and then lift right hand up as you open it*)

**Jesus** (*point middle finger of right hand into left palm, and then do the same with other hand*)

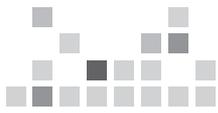
**To save** (*cross fists, palms facing chest, and then separate fists and turn them to face out*)

**Me and make** (*tap closed fists, right over left, and then left over right*)

**Me your child.** (*pat an imaginary child's head with right open palm*)

**In Jesus' name, amen.** (*make praying hands and bow head*)





## Weaving Faith at Home

Have children take home their My Bible Hugs pages whether they worked on them or not. Have the children tell their parents the challenge they committed to in the “Daily Challenges” activity. Encourage the parents to help their kids fulfill this commitment during the week. By working together and focusing on the same goals, you and parents can help children weave faith into their lives!

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



