



The Word Became Flesh

John 1:1-18

For preschoolers, families are the gatekeepers of how they experience the world around them. Children learn to understand their emotions, roles, and abilities within the context of family. Naturally, then, family is a powerful metaphor that helps little ones understand how God relates to them. However, be aware of the human families from which these children come. Negative emotions stemming from family experience easily transfer to God. Use this lesson to help children understand what it means to be a child of the God who loves perfectly and unconditionally.



► Bible Point

We can be God's children.

Key Verse

“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will know how they become God's children.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started <i>about 5 min.</i>	Welcome and Celebrate Welcome each other, and praise God through music.	signal, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	
2 Key Verse Activity <i>about 10 min.</i>	Family Album Learn the Key Verse, and look at family pictures as they discover they're in God's family.	Bible, family photo album	If you don't have a photo album, tape some family photos into a notebook.
3 Bible Exploration <i>about 15 min.</i>	Puppy Pointers Hear how Theo needed a flashlight to find his family.	CD player, Theo puppet, flashlight, rubber band Teacher Pack: CD	Use the rubber band to attach the flashlight to Theo's paw.
	Bible Time: God's Big Tent Discover how Jesus is like a flashlight that helps people find their way into God's family.	Bible, dot stickers, flashlight, large blanket Teacher Pack: “Jesus Became Human” poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack) 	Drape the blanket over a table in your room to make a “tent.” Put the dot stickers and poster under the table.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
<p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Weaving Faith Into Life <i>about 20 min.</i> <i>(Choose 2 centers.)</i></p>	<p>Center 1: Family Camp Create a fingerprint family on their student pages.</p>	My Bible Hugs, washable markers, wet wipes	Remove the Lesson 6 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.
	<p>Center 2: Who's Home? Make a yummy snack to remind themselves that they're in God's family.</p>	graham crackers, whipped topping, elf- or bear-shaped cookies, spoons, paper plates, antibacterial gel (optional)	
	<p>Center 3: Big House Play with dolls to help understand the Bible Point.</p>	dolls or action figures to portray a family	
	<p>Center 4: Light Bright Make craft "flashlights" to remind them that Jesus lights their way into God's family.</p>	card stock, clear tape, yellow tissue paper	
<p style="text-align: center;">5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lasting Impressions <i>about 10 min.</i></p>	<p>Daily Challenges Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.</p>	My Bible Hugs, pens	
	<p>Action Prayer Thank Jesus for helping us find the way to be in God's family.</p>	flashlight	
	<p>Weaving Faith at Home Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.</p>		

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





Welcome and Celebrate Supplies

signal
CD player
Teacher Pack
CD: "Glad You're Here Today" (track 7)

Family Album Supplies

Bible
family photo album

Family Album Easy Prep

If you don't have a photo album, tape some family photos into a notebook.

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 "Glad You're Here Today" (track 7 on the CD) to the tune of "Ten Little Indians." Encourage children to follow the motions in parentheses.

 **Come sing and play and hear the Bible.** (*cup hands over mouth*)
Sing and play and hear the Bible. (*turn in a circle*)
Sing and play and hear the Bible. (*put hand to ear*)
We're so glad you're here! (*both thumbs up*)
We're so glad you're here today! (*hands on hips and shake head*)
We're so glad you're here today! (*hands on hips and shake head*)
We're so glad you're here today! (*hands on hips and shake head*)
Come sing and play with us. (*make "come here" motion*)
(Repeat.)

Say: **Today as we sing and play, we get to learn about how ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN. Let's learn more now!**

2 KEY VERSE ACTIVITY

Family Album

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children form a circle and sit down. Open your Bible to John 1:12, and show children the words. Tell kids the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Our Key Verse tells us that ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN. It says, "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). Let's say our Key Verse together.** Lead children in saying the





simplified Key Verse with you: **Those who believe in Jesus can become children of God (John 1:12).**

Say: **It's so amazing that we can be part of God's family. Let's learn a little more about that.**

Show the family photo album, and show children the pictures. As you turn the pages, encourage children to discuss what kinds of things families do together.

Say: **We all have families. But the best news is that if we believe in Jesus, then we can join God's happy family, too! And his family is the best family of all—we can know that in God's family we'll all be taken care of and loved in the best way possible. Because of Jesus, ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN.**



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 2 on the CD), and bring out Theophilus the FaithRetriever.

Theo: Hi, everybody!

Teacher: Theo, why do you have a flashlight?

Theo: I'm returning the flashlight. Boy, did I need it last night! My family was camping, and I got lost. This other dog, Ralphie, was with me. We left our campsite and went into the woods to play. After a while, I realized that we couldn't find our way back to our tent. I was so scared!

Teacher: That's awful. What did you do?

Theo: I barked and barked until I woke up another family that was camping. They weren't too happy with my howling. But the man was nice and gave me his flashlight.

Teacher: That was nice of him. What happened then?

Theo: Ralphie and I used the flashlight to find my family. I was so happy; I thought I'd lost them forever.

Teacher: Well, Theo, it's not right to wander away from home. But I'm glad you found your family again. Our Bible Point today tells us something important about families. Friends, let's tell Theo our Bible Point for today. *(Lead children in saying the Bible Point for Theo: ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN.)*

Theo: I'm so glad you can be God's children! And I think you should take my advice—don't wander away from God's family like I did with mine. Well, I'd better return this flashlight and get back to my tent before it gets dark.

Teacher: That's great! Friends, let's say goodbye to Theo.

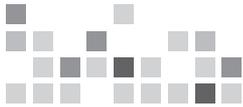
Puppy Pointers Supplies

- CD player
- Theo puppet
- flashlight
- rubber band
- Teacher Pack**
- CD: "Here, Theo" (track 2)

Puppy Pointers Easy Prep

Use the rubber band to attach the flashlight to Theo's paw.





Bible Time: God's Big Tent Supplies

Bible
dot stickers
flashlight
large blanket
Teacher Pack
"Jesus Became Human"
poster (from the Big Bible Poster Pack)

Bible Time: God's Big Tent Easy Prep

Drape the blanket over a table in your room to make a "tent." Put the dot stickers and poster under the table.

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:

- What do you think about how Theo got lost?
- Tell about a time you or someone you know was lost.
- Why would you want to stay close to God and his family?

Say: **Theo had some good advice—stay close to your family. And that's especially important when it comes to God's family. We know that, because of Jesus, ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN. And we want to stay close to God always. Let's learn more about what it means to be part of God's family.**

Bible Time: God's Big Tent

What You'll Do ■■■■

Open your Bible to John 1, and show children the words. Tell children that the Bible is God's special book.

Say: **Did you know that the Bible says we're a lot like Theo? Do you remember how Theo lost his family's tent because it was dark? Well, the Bible says that we're like people lost in the dark, and we can't find the way to God's happy family.**

Clear a path between the children and the covered table. Say: **Let's play a game to help us think about that.** Dim the lights, and then instruct the children to place both hands over their eyes. Tell them to find the tent with their eyes closed. Allow time. Then gather children together in a circle again. Have them talk about what it was like to try to find the tent with their eyes closed.

Say: **It doesn't feel very good when you're alone in the dark. And people feel awful when they can't find their way into God's family. God sent a man named John to help people find out how to get to God's family. John told people that Jesus was like a light.**

Turn on the flashlight, and pass it around the circle. Say: **A flashlight lights the way. Jesus is like a flashlight. John said Jesus helps people find their way into God's big family. Let's pretend that we're using this flashlight to find the tent.** Lead the children underneath the tent. Show children the "Jesus Became Human" poster. Shine the flashlight on the poster.

Say: **Jesus is like a flashlight that shows us how to become God's children and be a part of God's happy family. When we believe in Jesus, ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN!**



Show the children the stickers. Say: **These stickers remind me of a child's face. Pretend that your sticker is like a picture of your face. Let's each place a sticker on the poster to remind us that ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN.** Give each child a sticker, and have kids place their stickers on the poster. As children add their stickers, encourage them to say "I can be a child of God."

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What was it like to try to find the tent with your eyes closed?
- What was it like when you could use the flashlight?
- What do you like about knowing that Jesus helps you find your way into God's family?

Say: **It was a little scary to try to find our way with no lights and our eyes closed. But the flashlight helped us. Jesus is like a flashlight because he helps us see better and shows us which way to go. When we believe in Jesus, ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN.**

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:

Family Camp

What You'll Do ■■■■

Give each child a Lesson 6 page from My Bible Hugs. Point out the picture of the tent. Say: **Today we learned that Jesus helps us find our way to God's family. Let's fill our tents with pictures of God's kids.**

Demonstrate by using a washable marker to color on the pad of your pointer finger. Then help children do the same. Show them how to press the same finger inside the tent to make a fingerprint "head." Have children repeat the same process until there's a family of many fingerprint kids inside the tent.

Give children each a wet wipe to clean their fingers.



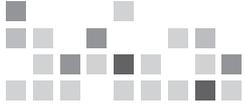
Center 1: Family Camp Supplies

My Bible Hugs
washable markers
wet wipes

Center 1: Family Camp Easy Prep

Remove the Lesson 6 pages from each My Bible Hugs student book, and write children's names on them.





Center 2: Who's Home? Supplies

graham crackers
whipped topping
elf- or bear-shaped
cookies
spoons
paper plates
antibacterial gel
(optional)

**! ALLERGY
■ ALERT**

Big House Supplies

dolls or action figures to
portray a family

Say: ► **WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN** when we believe in Jesus. God's family is big because he loves everyone and he wants everyone to join his family. God's family tent would have to be much bigger than the tent in our pictures!

■ CENTER 2:

Who's Home?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have children clean their hands and then sit down for the snack. Say: **Today we're learning about how Jesus lights the way for us to God's family. Let's make a snack to help us think about that.**

Give each child a plate with a graham cracker and three or four elf- or bear-shaped cookies. Show the children how to make houses full of God's kids. Instruct them to put dabs of whipped topping on their graham crackers and then stand their cookies upright in the whipped topping.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- **What's great about knowing you can be part of God's family?**

Say: **God's family is the best family ever. God loves us better than anyone else does, and being God's child is really special. Let's thank Jesus for coming to earth so ► WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN.** Pray, and then let children enjoy their snacks.

■ CENTER 3:

Big House

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: ► **WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN.** Let's think about what it means to be part of a family.

Set out dolls or action figures. Say: **Let's use these toys to act out some things your families do together.** Invite individual children to share ideas, and after each idea, have children work together to act out what the child said. Let several children give examples. As children share examples, help children understand that God's love for his family is perfect.





Talk With Kids

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What is the best part of being in your family?
- Explain whether you're part of God's family.

Say: Families can be great, and we can be so thankful for adults who take care of us. But even though our families aren't perfect, God's family is perfect. ► **WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN**, and we can know that he'll be the perfect parent.

CENTER 4:

Light Bright

What You'll Do

Say: Today we learned that Jesus lights our way into God's family. When we believe in him, ► **WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN**. Let's make pretend flashlights to help us remember that Jesus' light helps us be part of God's family.

Give each child a piece of card stock. Help children roll their card stock and look through it. As children play, tape their card stock rolls to hold them in place. Help the children each bunch up some tissue paper and stuff it in one end of their card stock rolls so it sticks out like shining light.

Let children pretend that it's nighttime and that they're looking for God's tent. As they play, remind them that Jesus is like a light that helps us into God's family.

Say: Jesus came to earth because he wants us to be part of God's family. His light shows us how ► **WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN**.

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 choose a Daily Challenge for applying today's lesson to their lives this week. Use this challenge for encouraging your children's growing relationships with Jesus.



Center 4: Light Bright Supplies

- card stock
- clear tape
- yellow tissue paper

Daily Challenges Supplies

- My Bible Hugs
- pens





Action Prayer Supplies

flashlight

Talk With Kids

Say: Today we learned that ► **WE CAN BE GOD'S CHILDREN.** I would like each of you to choose a way to think about God's family this week.

Give kids these two challenges to choose from:

- **Pray with your mom or dad and thank Jesus for making it possible for you to be a child of God.**
- **Look through a photo album of family pictures with your dad or mom. Tell him or her that you want to be part of God's family, too!**

Say: **If you want to pray, circle the choice with one dot. If you want to look at a photo album, circle the choice with two dots.** Check that each child circled a choice on his or her My Bible Hugs page. Make sure you tell kids the challenge you choose. 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. Turn off the lights, and turn on the flashlight. Pass the flashlight around the circle. As each child holds the flashlight, have him or her say "Dear Jesus, thank you for showing me how I can be one of God's children. In your name, amen."

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.

