LESSON 3

JESUS SPEAKS TO NICODEMUS



Aim: **To let the children see how Jesus showed by his teaching that he is the Son of God.**

Scripture Reading: **John 3:1–17; Numbers 21:4–9**

Memory Verse: **John 1:2**
[The Word] was with God in the beginning.

Presenting the Lesson

Starting Point

Suppose you wanted to visit someone but you didn't want anyone else to see you. How would you do it? Give the children time to respond. You might cover yourself with a big coat or a towel, or choose to go out in the dark of night.

Main Points of the Lesson

1. One night an important Jewish religious leader named Nicodemus visited Jesus. He came secretly because he didn't want the other religious leaders to know what he was doing. They hated Jesus, but Nicodemus had questions he wanted to ask. Because of what Jesus said and did Nicodemus realised that Jesus had come from God. However, Jesus was not the kind of person the Jews expected God's messenger to be like (3:1–2).
2. Jesus told Nicodemus that in order to enter into the kingdom of God he needed to be born again. Naturally Nicodemus thought that was impossible! **Show Picture 3.** Here in the corner you can see a mother and child; this picture represents physical birth (3:3–4).
3. Jesus explained that he was talking about a spiritual birth. Everyone who receives eternal life has repented of their sin, which has been washed away. God then gives the gift of his Spirit to that person, so that he or she is born of the Spirit. That is "the second birth" (3:5–7). Just as we cannot control the movement of the wind, we have no control over our salvation; it is a gift from God (3:8).
4. Nicodemus found all of this very hard to understand, even though he was an important religious teacher! Jesus said, "If you can't believe what I am telling you about present events how will you ever believe what I tell you about heaven, where no-one on earth has ever been except me?" (3:9–13).
5. Jesus was the best teacher ever. He knew an explanation works best if one uses an illustration – a word picture. The story about the snakes Jesus refers to here is told in Book 2, Lesson 20. **It would be useful to show the accompanying picture and briefly review the story in Numbers 21:4–9.** Jesus was going to be lifted up on a cross, as the bronze snake was lifted up in the desert. Accepting Jesus is the only way to salvation, as looking at the bronze snake was the only way to survive a snake bite in the desert (3:14–17).

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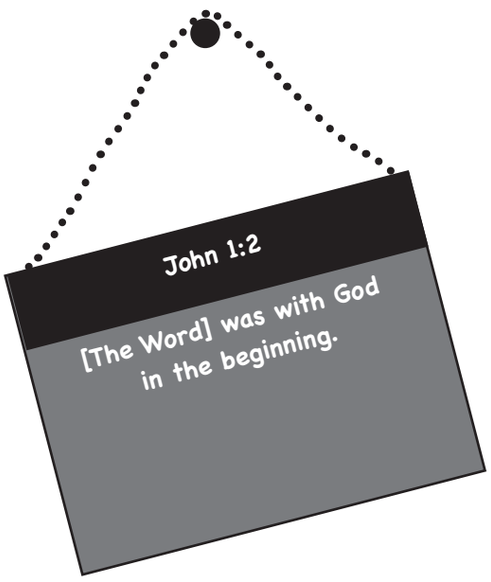


Our Response to the Story

Jesus asked Nicodemus to put his trust in him. Jesus asks us, too, to put our trust in him and accept his gift of salvation.

Read John 3:16 aloud. Or, if the class has already learnt it as a memory verse, let the children say it.

Instil the Memory Verse



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