

# NICODEMUS VISITS JESUS

John 3:1-21



**Key Verse:**

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life .”

John 3:17

**The Point:**

Even those who have difficulty with Jesus’ message have a place in God’s story.

**Making Connections:**

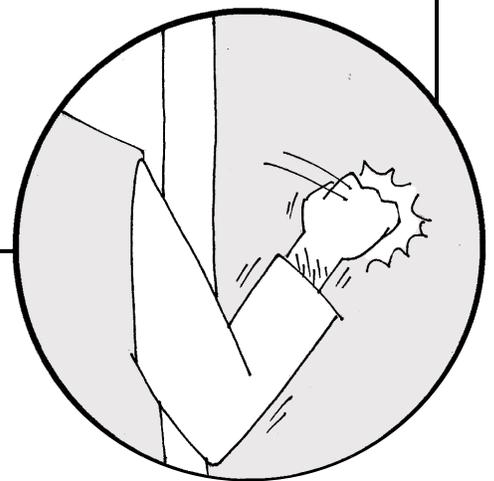
Invitation to Abundant Life

**Bible Nuts & Bolts:**

Images of God

**Spiritual Practice:**

Fellowship



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# BACKGROUND

## Making Connections

We have been hearing stories from Jesus' ministry that emphasize his power and identity as the Son of God. He has turned the water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana and cleansed the temple in Jerusalem with the promise to rebuild it in three days after its destruction. We now turn to stories in which Jesus invites others into the abundant life that he offers.

## Story Summary:

### *Nicodemus Visits Jesus*

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, an educated man, and he was intrigued by Jesus. He had many questions about who Jesus was and the news that Jesus had to share with the world. Early in the story, Nicodemus seems to have trouble understanding Jesus' answers.

Nicodemus believed that Jesus had come from God because of the miracles that Jesus was carrying out. Nicodemus came looking for more proof of who Jesus really was as well as what that meant for him and other believers. Yet Jesus' answers were unclear and Nicodemus became even more confused. When he spoke of being born again (or from above, the original text can mean both), did Jesus really mean a person could literally climb back into the womb? What did Jesus mean?

After all the confusion Nicodemus experienced, he was finally silent when he heard Jesus' words of promise: "Yes, God so loved the world as to give the Only Begotten One, that whoever believes may not die, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, *The Inclusive Bible*). God's good news was as welcome in Nicodemus' ears as it is in our own. These are words that need to be heard again and again.

## The Point

**Even those who have difficulty with Jesus' message have a place in God's story.** Nicodemus was a scholar, Jewish leader, and Pharisee. Nicodemus was used to living under the letter of the law and thriving. Yet, when he came to Jesus at night, Nicodemus was confused. In spite of all of his education and knowledge—or perhaps because of it—Nicodemus struggled with Jesus' message. Jesus gently shared God's good news with him.

## Bible Nuts and Bolts:

### *Images of God*

God is so much more than our human minds can comprehend. Because our language is inadequate to fully convey who God is, we turn to metaphors that describe single aspects of God. Using a wide variety of images found in Scripture and elsewhere helps us to understand more completely the fullness of God.

## Spiritual Practice: Fellowship

Because the good news shared with Nicodemus is life changing, we repeat it to one another often, both in words and in how we care for one another. Students already understand the importance of relationships among their families and friends and can be encouraged to continue looking for ways to care for and support one another.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# John 3:1-17

R H W C S B A H I I B M O W T K O K O V R P V Y  
U E T E R N A L L I F E R R W H X C Y O K L M B  
Q A K H D Y M O D G N I K R Q W Y Z A S V B S V  
Y E G U B H M S J H V B W E O Z Z T Y H P B D T  
R E H C A E T V A D P N C E U Q Y N J F U C C W  
Y R C M M Z L H N X E X O J E E R B W O G B A E  
K U F P M X Z M Z U P U R E L E A R S I D V F B  
D L R O W B K S U M E D O C I N P M L R I T J R  
Q R O N W U R A M U G W Q O G M P E R I S H K U  
Y O F N E V A E H Y N X E P T S P A B V D G P I  
E X G T V P L S Y L X J K K S C G A F Y K O A K  
P Z O U C X N K N O O E K I X B L S A V B F O D  
N P S U T M X Z D V F S D S T Q B V V P X R Z H  
V L O E M L B X W T C U H U I P E I B I N O S S  
R V S M U B O I L E W S S Z R G L N U Y W J Q E  
L Z H J B K C Z B P V U A Z I O I L U V H U P L  
V M N R E Q E R S M Q Z V N P D E S X V N O A F  
S R D G Q N C S Y H X D E O S S V B I R G D Y L  
D D N I W H O E V E R G D S S O E X R E E O G M  
P N A E U I F U K F G X F L N L S W I T B I W G  
J I P X C H F U E N P F C I P O M J F A J T F A  
J W L I O B G I K H R I C H O V V D S W E Z W X  
K J M Y F Z X J J A F T G S Z E S S E E T H X A  
H Z P H A R I S E E S V E H N D G P W T U F A Q

ETERNAL LIFE  
BELIEVES  
HEAVEN  
SAVED  
JESUS

GODS LOVED  
WHOEVER  
PERISH  
WORLD  
WIND

NICODEMUS  
TEACHER  
ISRAEL  
FLESH  
WOMB

PHARISEES  
KINGDOM  
SPIRIT  
WATER  
SON

John 3:16



God's Love

Use the code to figure out the message about God's love.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

6 15 18    7 15 4    19 15    12 15 22 5 4    20 8 5    23 15 18 12 4    20 8 1 20    8 5

7 1 22 5    8 9 19    15 14 12 25    2 5 7 15 20 20 5 14    19 15 14    20 8 1 20

23 8 15 19 15 5 22 5 18    2 5 12 9 5 22 5 20 8    9 14    8 9 13    19 8 15 21 12 4

14 15 20    16 5 18 9 19 8    2 21 20    8 1 22 5    5 22 5 18 12 1 19 20 9 14 7

12 9 6 5    6 15 18    7 15 4    19 5 14 20    14 15 20    8 9 19    19 15 14    9 14 20 15

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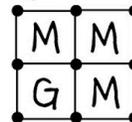
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2 5    19 1 22 5 4

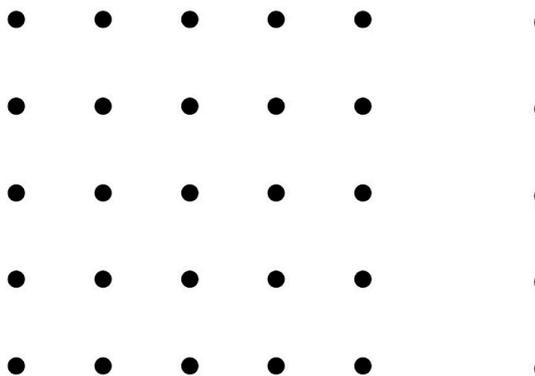
# Dots and Boxes

Play: Each player takes turn drawing one line between two dots (no diagonals!) If that line completes a square, the player writes their initial in the box and draws another line. Play continues until all dots have been connected. The player with the most boxes wins!

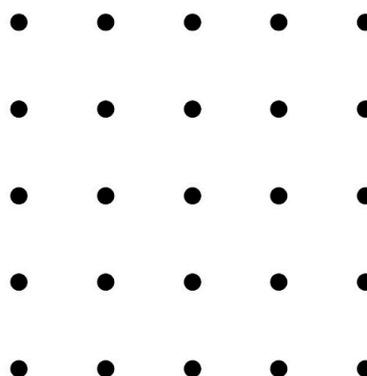
sample: M wins!



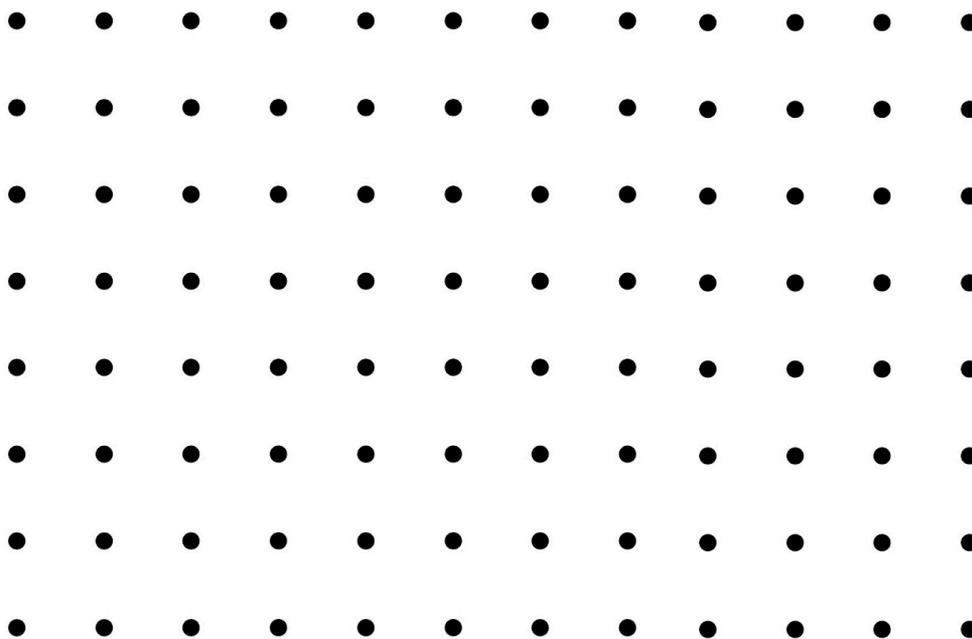
Game 1

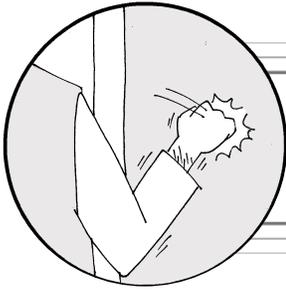


Game 2



Game 3





# THE STORY @ HOME



**Living the Word: Teaching Kids God's Story**  
Narrative Lectionary, Year 4 (2025-2026)

Lesson #4-20  
John 3:1-21

## LAST WEEK

Jesus chased the money changers out of the temple, and made a prophecy about his own resurrection (John 2:13-25).

## THIS WEEK

A Pharisee, Nicodemus, comes to Jesus under the cover of darkness, asking questions and seeking understanding. As Jesus explains his ministry, the Pharisee becomes more confused (John 3:1-21).

## THE POINT

Even those who have difficulty with Jesus' message have a place in God's story.

## STORY SUMMARY

### Nicodemus Visits Jesus

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, an educated man, and he was intrigued by Jesus. He had many questions about who Jesus was and the news that Jesus had to share with the world. Yet Jesus' answers were unclear. After all the confusion Nicodemus experienced, he was finally silent when he heard Jesus' words of promise: "Yes, God so loved the world as to give the Only Begotten One, that whoever believes may not die, but have eternal life" (John 3:16, *The Inclusive Bible*).

## BIBLE NUTS & BOLTS

### *Images of God*

God is so much more than our human minds can comprehend. Because our language is inadequate to fully convey who God is, we turn to metaphors that describe single aspects of God. Using a wide variety of images found in Scripture and elsewhere helps us to understand more completely the fullness of God.

## PRACTICE: FELLOWSHIP

Because the good news shared with Nicodemus is life changing, we repeat it to one another often, both in words and in how we care for one another. Students already understand the importance of relationships among their families and friends. Every day, look for ways to care for and support one another.

## NEXT WEEK

Jesus encounters a Samaritan woman at a well. The ensuing conversation breaks several taboos, and brings the woman and her village to believe in Jesus (John 4:1-42).

### *Family Discussions*

Use the questions below—or any you have—to discuss this lesson’s Scripture reading with your family.

- † Did you find anything in this reading that was surprising?
- † What does this Scripture have to do with our lives today?
- † What part of this Scripture is the most interesting to you? Why?

### *Family Devotions*

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God’s message to us? How should we respond?

**Sunday—Read John 3:1-21**

Nicodemus visits Jesus. Write notes to each other (using your Love Mailbox if your student brought one home) expressing affirmation, inspiration, or love. Memorize John 3:16 and say it together as a family.

**Monday—Read John 3:22-30**

John the Baptist preaches about Jesus. Pretend you are John the Baptist, telling about Jesus. What would you say?

**Tuesday—Read John 3:31-36**

John continues to preach about Jesus. Share stories of where and when you have seen Jesus active in your life or the lives of others.

**Wednesday—Read Luke 3:19-20**

John is put in prison. Sometimes speaking the truth can get you in trouble. Has this ever happened to you?

**Thursday—Read Matthew 11:2-6**

John sends messengers to Jesus from prison. Act out one of the healings mentioned in verse 5.

**Friday—Read Matthew 11:7-15**

Jesus compares John to Elijah. Talk about a good role model of the faith.

**Saturday—Read Matthew 11:16-19**

Jesus compares himself to John. What are some ways you might be tempted to act foolishly this week? How can you act with wisdom instead?