### Worship Theme:
- God gives us eternal life.

### Weaving Faith Into Life:
- Children will praise God for giving the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ and tell someone else about the gift.

### Session Sequence | What Children Will Do | Supplies
---|---|---
Let's Praise God! (up to 25 minutes) | **Sing**
- “One and Only Son” (John 1:14b) (track 17)
- “His Mercy” (Titus 3:5a) (track 1)
- “Were You There?” (track 13)
- “The Spirit Gives Me Life” (Romans 8:10b) (track 5)
- “It Is by Grace” (Ephesians 2:8-9) (track 23)
- “Everybody Ought to Know” (track 9) | **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**
**Songs From FaithWeaver**
**Classroom Supplies:**
Bible, CD player, yarn, scissors, 3x5 cards, tape, pen, rubber bands

### Session Sequence | What Children Will Do | Supplies
---|---|---
Let's Learn the Point! (up to 25 minutes) | **Confused Nicodemus**
Help tell the story of Nicodemus’ visit to Jesus.

**Heavenly Snacks**
Make a snack to represent heaven.

**God Wants Me**
Sing a song and talk about who they can share the good news of eternal life with. | **Classroom Supplies:**
Graham crackers, icing, M&M’S candies, butter knives, paper towels, wet wipes or hand sanitizer
**Session 2 • KidsOwn Worship**

### Let's Learn the Point!
* (up to 25 minutes)

#### What Children Will Do

- **What Was That?**
  - Talk about messages that are hard to understand, and learn about Nicodemus’ visit.

- **“The Doubter”**
  - Watch a video clip about doubt.

#### What Is Salvation?
* Learn about God’s salvation.

#### Supplies

- **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**
  - Talkie Tapes

- **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**
  - *KidsOwn Worship DVD:*
    - “The Doubter” (2)
  - **Classroom Supplies:**
    - TV, DVD player

- **Classroom Supplies:**
  - Bibles, photocopies of “What Is Salvation?” (p. 42), scissors, pencils, markers, newsprint

### Session 3 • KidsOwn Worship

#### Let's Pray!
* (up to 10 minutes)

#### What Children Will Do

- **The Offering**
  - Write prayers on paper people, and give their offerings.

- **The Promise**
  - Sing about God’s promises.

- **Eternal Life Prayers**
  - Pray a prayer of thanksgiving with a partner.

#### Supplies

- **Classroom Supplies:**
  - Offering bowl, photocopies of “Paper People” (p. 43), scissors, markers

- **KidsOwn Worship Kit:**
  - *Songs From FaithWeaver:*
    - “Standing on the Promises” (track 18)
  - **Classroom Supplies:**
    - CD player

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*Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together. Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Let’s Learn the Point! Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.*
This passage tells of Nicodemus’ nighttime visit to Jesus. It’s not clear why Nicodemus came at night. It may simply have been difficult to get time alone with Jesus during the day because of all the people following him. Or Nicodemus may have come at night because he didn’t want to be seen. This seems logical, since he was a member of the Sanhedrin, the ruling council of the Jews, and for that reason wouldn’t have wanted to be seen as a follower of Jesus.

Jesus had apparently impressed Nicodemus to the point that he wanted to find out who Jesus was. Nicodemus’ opening comments were positive, indicating respect for Jesus, but he seemed to stop short of saying that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. Nicodemus was curious because of the miracles Jesus had performed and acknowledged that Jesus could have done them only through God’s power. It is likely that Nicodemus hoped to determine that night if Jesus really was the Messiah.

Jesus’ words must have taken Nicodemus by surprise; they certainly confused him. He didn’t understand that Jesus’ statement about being born again referred to a spiritual change so dramatic it parallels physical birth. Jesus was telling Nicodemus that we become new people spiritually when we are forgiven of our sins and form a relationship with God.

In explaining who he is, Jesus referred to an Old Testament story. Numbers 21 tells of poisonous snakes invading the Hebrews’ camp as a punishment for the Hebrews’ rebellion. When the people cried out in anguish and repentance, God told Moses to make a snake of brass and lift it high on a pole. All who looked upon the snake would be saved from death. Jesus explained that in the same way he would be lifted up so that all could look on him and be saved from eternal suffering and death. Jesus’ death on the cross provided salvation for all who believe in him.

John 3:16 is probably the most frequently quoted verse in the Bible, and for good reason. It is a concise statement of the gospel message, the good news of Jesus Christ. First, it tells us that God loves every human being. And he loves us so much that he was willing to allow his only Son, a part of him, to die an excruciating death so that our sins could be wiped out and we could have an eternal relationship with God. All we have to do is trust in the sacrifice that Jesus made for us.

The verse that follows, John 3:17, is nearly as important, and its message was certainly not lost on Nicodemus. Jesus’ mission wasn’t—and still isn’t—to condemn the world, even though the world was and still is sinful. Instead, Jesus’ mission is to provide eternal life for all who believe in him.

Nicodemus struggled to trust in Jesus. We don’t know if he chose to accept Jesus’ teachings that night. We do know that a bit later he stood up for Jesus in a meeting of the Sanhedrin (John 7:50). And we know that he was there to help take Jesus down from the cross and to bury him (John 19:39). At some point, Nicodemus apparently looked on the one who was lifted up on the cross—and believed.
Why We Worship for Leaders

Today, we worship God because he gives us eternal life. There is no better reason to worship God. God saw that we were enslaved by our sin, and he sent his Son to take the punishment for that sin. Because of Christ’s sacrifice, we who put our faith in Christ can live with God for eternity. Let’s worship our gracious and loving God!

Easy Prep for Leaders

Let’s Praise God!—Cut a 10-foot yarn strand for each child. Punch holes in 3x5 cards, and tie a card to one end of each yarn strand. Gather the yarn strands in groups of six. On five of the cards, write “sorry.” On the sixth card, write “heaven.” Write false ways to get to heaven, such as “good deeds” or “Hinduism” on additional 3x5 cards. Fold these cards in half, and attach one folded card to the other end of each of the strands with a “sorry” card. Write “Jesus” on cards to attach to the “heaven” yarn strands, and fold them. Tape the folded cards shut. Wrap a rubber band around each group of six yarn strands. Set them out so the sets of yarn strands don’t become tangled. You may want to put each set in a plastic bag.

“The Doubter”—Set up a TV and DVD player, and cue the KidsOwn Worship DVD to “The Doubter” (2). Watch the segment at least once before the worship session so you’ll be familiar with it.

What Is Salvation?—Photocopy the “What Is Salvation?” page (p. 42), and cut the copies in half. You’ll need one half for every three children.

The Offering—Photocopy and cut out the “Paper People” handout (p. 43) so you have a paper person for each child to put in the offering bowl.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

Web Help—Get bonus leader tips and ideas at kidsownworship.com.

Let’s Praise God!

Play Songs From FaithWeaver, Spring 2011 as children arrive. Greet children by name, and say to each one, “Let’s celebrate because God gives us eternal life!” When everyone has arrived, begin the worship session.

Say Hello, everyone! Welcome to children’s church. Let’s start our worship session by singing about Jesus’ glory.

Sing “One and Only Son” (John 1:14b).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Say This song tells us that every person and creature and heavenly being should praise God.

Ask • Why does God deserve our praise? (God is Lord of all; he is more powerful than anything.)

Say The God we serve and worship is the only God there is. God is great and mighty—there is no one as wise or as powerful or as loving as he is. And God, because of his mercy, wants a friendship with each one of us. Let’s sing about God’s mercy.
While we sing, praise God in your hearts and thank him for his mercy.

Sing “His Mercy” (Titus 3:5a).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Read John 3:16 aloud.

Say

Turn to the person next to you and say, “John 3:16 says that God so loved you, he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him will never die but have eternal life.” Assist kids as needed.

Jesus paid the price so our sins can be forgiven. Let’s sing about what Jesus did for us.

Sing “Were You There?”

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Say

God knew that people need to be saved from their sins, which are the wrong things that they do. And God knew that people couldn’t save themselves. They needed a savior. That’s why God sent his Son, Jesus. Jesus came to earth to save us from the punishment we deserve for the sins we commit. God’s plan of salvation is for us to have life in the Spirit. Let’s sing about that.

Sing “The Spirit Gives Me Life” (Romans 8:10b).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Help the children form groups of six.

Say

In a moment, I’ll give each group a pile of yarn. In each pile, there are six strands of yarn. Each strand is connected to a card. The word heaven is written on one of these cards. Each person in the group will take the other end of one of the strands of yarn. Each of you should pick the strand you think is attached to the “heaven” card. Then untangle the strands of yarn to see which one of you picked the right strand. Any questions?

Hand out the piles of yarn you assembled before the session. Have the children remove the rubber bands. Then have them each take one of the strands, but ask them not to open the folded cards yet. Have the groups untangle the strands of yarn to see which member of each group chose the strand connected to the “heaven” card.

Ask

• If you got the “heaven” card, how did it feel to end up with that one? (Good; special.)

• How did it feel to end up with a card other than the “heaven” card? (Disappointed; I’d like another chance.)

• How did you decide which strand to follow? (I just guessed; I tried to see which yarn went to the card.)

Say

There’s some information written inside the folded cards on your strands that might have helped you decide which strand to choose.
Have each child open the folded card at the beginning of his or her yarn strand.

**Ask** How would this information have helped you choose which strand to follow? (Only Jesus can show us the way to heaven; we need Jesus to forgive our sins so we can go to heaven.)

**Say** Jesus is the only way to God. It is only by his grace that we are saved. Nothing else leads to us to God. Let’s sing about God’s grace.

Sing “It Is by Grace” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

 Lyrics are in the back of this book.

**Say** God gives us eternal life when we put our faith in Jesus. We want everybody to know about Jesus. Let’s sing “Everybody Ought to Know.”

Sing “Everybody Ought to Know.”

 Lyrics are in the back of this book.

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### Let’s Learn the Point!

#### Preschool Activities, pages 37-38

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let’s Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

#### Elementary Activities

* **What Was That?**

Take the Talkie Tapes out of the KidsOwn Worship Kit. Have the children gather as close to you as they can get.

**Say** This little strip of plastic is called a Talkie Tape. If you listen closely, you’ll hear what it says.

Pinch one of the Talkie Tapes between your fingernails on your thumb and forefinger, putting the nail of your forefinger on the ridged side of the strip. Quickly pull the Talkie Tape through your pinched fingernails. The sound it makes will sound like “Jesus loves you” or “Jesus saves.”

Ask kids if they can hear the words. Then tell them what to listen for.

Let kids experiment with both of the Talkie Tapes until they can make the strips say, “Jesus loves you” or “Jesus saves.”

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**Worship Leader Tip**

You can amplify the sound of the Talkie Tape by holding the end against a sheet of paper as you pull the tape through your fingernails.
Put the Talkie Tapes away.

**Ask** • What made the tapes hard to understand? (The words were not clear; the strips don’t sound like people talking.)

**Say** Sometimes it’s hard to understand what other people are saying. Today our Bible story is about a man named Nicodemus who was having trouble understanding Jesus. Nicodemus visited Jesus in the middle of the night, hoping that Jesus would explain more about who he was and what he wanted to do.

Have the children form pairs. In each pair, have one child pretend to be Nicodemus and the other child pretend to be Jesus.

Nicodemus was an important member of Jewish society. He was a Pharisee. That means he was part of a group that emphasized following all the rules that showed how to be a good Jew. And he was a part of the Sanhedrin, which was the Jewish ruling council. He was an intelligent man who knew a lot about the Bible. If you’re the Nicodemus partner, say something or do an action to show how important and intelligent you are. (Pause.) But there was one thing that really confused Nicodemus. He had watched Jesus do all kinds of miracles. And he watched Jesus teach with wisdom and authority. If you’re the Jesus partner, say something or do an action to show that Jesus did miracles and taught with wisdom and authority. (Pause.)

If you’re the Nicodemus partner, say something or do an action to show that you’re confused. (Pause.)

So Nicodemus decided to visit Jesus at night and find out more about him.

He said to Jesus, “Teacher, you are a great teacher, and you do many miracles. You must be from God because you couldn’t do all these things if you weren’t from God.”

Jesus answered him saying, “I tell you the truth. You must be born again to see the kingdom of God.”

This really confused Nicodemus. He said, “How can you be born if you’re grown up. You can’t become a little baby again and go back inside your mother to be born again.” If you’re the Nicodemus partner, say something or do an action to show that you don’t want to become a little baby again. (Pause.)

Jesus said, “I tell you the truth. You must be born of the Spirit. Your parents gave you human life, but you must be born of the Spirit to have spiritual life.” If you’re the Jesus partner, say something or do an action to show that you must be born of the Spirit. (Pause.)

Nicodemus was still confused. If you’re the Nicodemus partner, say something or do an action to show that you’re still confused. (Pause.)

(continued on page 39)
Confused Nicodemus

Gather the preschoolers in a circle on the floor.

**Say**
Hello, preschoolers! Today we’re going to talk about a man from the Bible who was very confused. His name was Nicodemus.

**Ask**
• Have you ever been confused? Tell us about it.

**Say**
People are confused when they don’t understand something. Sometimes when people are confused, they scratch their heads like this. Scratch your head and make a face to show what people look like when they’re confused. Can you do that?

Good job! You all look as confused as Nicodemus was. Nicodemus was a very smart man. He was a member of an important group of people who studied and knew all about God’s laws. But he was still confused about Jesus. Even smart people get confused sometimes. Let’s scratch our heads again to show how confused Nicodemus was. (Pause.)

Nicodemus had heard about all the wonderful things that Jesus was doing. He knew that Jesus could do miracles and heal sick people, but he still wasn’t too sure about Jesus. He had some questions he wanted Jesus to answer, so he decided to visit Jesus in the middle of the night. Let’s pretend that it’s the middle of the night.

**Ask**
• What do you do in the middle of the night?

**Say**
Jesus may have been sleeping when Nicodemus visited. Find a partner. We’re going to act out the next part of the story.

Help the children find partners and decide which one will be Jesus and which one will be Nicodemus.

**Say**
If you’re the Jesus partner, pretend to be sleeping. (Pause.) If you’re the Nicodemus partner, scratch your head and pretend to be confused. (Pause.) Now gently shake Jesus’ arm to wake him up. (Pause.)

Nicodemus said to Jesus, “I know that you’re a teacher from God. No one could do the miracles you’ve done unless he was from God.”

But Nicodemus didn’t understand who Jesus really was. He was confused. Nicodemus partners, scratch your heads and look confused. Jesus said, “The way to be in God’s kingdom is to be born again.” Jesus partners, say, “You must be born again.” (Pause.)

Well, that really confused Nicodemus! Nicodemus scratched his head and said, “But I’m a grown-up! How could I be born again as a baby?”

Jesus explained that you didn’t become a baby again. Instead, your spirit is born again. That confused Nicodemus, too! He said, “How can this happen?” Nicodemus partners, scratch your heads and say, “How can this happen?” (Pause.)
Confused Nicodemus (continued)

So Jesus explained who he was and what his job on earth was. Jesus said that God loved the world so much that he sent Jesus to the world to save the world from sin and give people life that lasts forever.

Jesus wants people to know that God loved the world and gave his Son, Jesus, so we could live forever in heaven. Let’s say that together. Help children repeat each line.

God loved the world
And gave his Son, Jesus,
So we could
Live forever in heaven.
Let’s praise God with a joyful noise for loving us so much that he gives us eternal life when we believe in him!

Cheer loudly with the children.

* Heavenly Snacks

Have children clean their hands.

**Say**
We know that God gives us eternal life when we believe in him. Let’s talk about what eternal life is.

**Ask**
- What do you think it means to have eternal life?

**Say**
When we believe in God, Jesus is with us. Throughout our lives here on earth, Jesus will stick close to us and be our best friend! That’s a wonderful thing!

But eternal life is even more than that. Someday, when we die, we’ll get to go and live with our best friend, Jesus, in his house.

**Ask**
- Where does Jesus live?

**Say**
Jesus lives in heaven. Heaven is the best place you can imagine. The Bible tells us that heaven is beautiful and a wonderful place.

People in heaven are never sad, they’re never lonely, they’re never sick, and they never get hurt. And best of all, we’ll get to be with God and worship him all day long!

**Say**
 Heaven will be even better than this tasty snack!

Let’s make heavenly snacks to remind us how beautiful and wonderful heaven is.

Set out the graham crackers, icing, M&M’S candies, paper towels, and butter knives. Help the children spread icing on the graham crackers and sprinkle M&M’S on the icing to represent the jewels heaven is made with.

Pray and thank God for the wonderful gift of eternal life and heaven. Then encourage the children to enjoy the snack.

ALLERGY ALERT

Be aware that some children have food allergies that can be dangerous. Know your children, and consult with parents about allergies their children may have. Also be sure to read food labels carefully as hidden ingredients can cause allergy-related problems.

God Wants Me

Help children sing this song to the tune of “This Old Man” to celebrate God’s gift of eternal life. After the song, ask the children who they can tell about eternal life. Then sing the song once more.

God wants me,
God wants you
To go and share the happy news:
Jesus came to show us all God’s love
And point the way to heaven above.

Near and far,
Here and there,
God loves people everywhere!
Let’s all go and tell about God’s love
And point the way to heaven above!
So Jesus said, “You teach about God, yet you don’t understand what I’m saying.” Then Jesus explained it another way. He told Nicodemus that God loved the world very much, so he sent his Son so that anyone who believes in him won’t die but will have eternal life instead.

Jesus explained that God sent his Son to save the world. Whoever believes in God’s Son is saved. But those who don’t believe in him will have to take the punishment for their sins.

The Bible doesn’t tell us for sure whether Nicodemus understood what Jesus was saying. If you’re the Nicodemus partner, decide what you think. Did Nicodemus believe in Jesus or not? Then say something or do an action to show how you think Nicodemus reacted to Jesus’ message. (Pause.)

• How many of you think that Nicodemus believed Jesus? Explain why. (Nicodemus was smart so he would understand and believe; Nicodemus came to Jesus to learn so he probably listened.)

• How many of you think that Nicodemus didn’t believe Jesus? Explain why. (Nicodemus might have thought he knew more than Jesus; he might have thought the miracles were just magic.)

• What did Jesus say about eternal life? (Whoever believes in Jesus will live forever in heaven; we can have eternal life because Jesus died for our sins.)

• What do you think it means to be born again? (To have a new spiritual life; to believe something new.)

• Why is it important to understand Jesus’ message about eternal life? (We need to believe in Jesus to get to heaven; we need to understand that Jesus is the only way to heaven.)

Lots of people in our world are like Nicodemus. They’re confused about God’s gift of salvation and eternal life. But the Bible makes it very clear that people who put their faith in Jesus will receive God’s gift of eternal life. Let’s learn more about the gift of salvation.
* “The Doubter”

**Say** Sometimes we may feel like Nicodemus—confused. Sometimes we have doubts. Let’s watch a video about being doubtful.

Show the *KidsOwn Worship DVD* video clip titled “The Doubter” (2).

**Ask**

- Why do you think this man doubted everything? (He wouldn’t let himself believe anything good; he was in a bad mood.)

- What’s the difference between good doubt and bad doubt? (Good doubt might help us understand better; bad doubt might keep us from believing.)

- Do you think it’s OK to doubt God sometimes? Why or why not? (Yes, because that’s human; no, because we should believe in God.)

- What should we do when we have doubts about God? (We should pray; we should talk to a teacher; we should read the Bible.)

- What do you think God does when people have doubts about him? (God forgives them; God helps people understand.)

**Say** God cares about us even when we doubt. It’s OK to have questions about God. It’s better if we take our doubts and questions to God the way Nicodemus took his questions to Jesus. God is a good God. Bring him your fears, doubts, and questions. He will help you.

**What Is Salvation?**

Help children form groups of three, making sure that younger children are paired with older children.

**Say** Right now, we’re going to explore salvation to figure out what it means to be saved. I’m going to give you a fact sheet about salvation. Read the statements on the fact sheet. Look up the Scripture verses on the sheet and read those, too. Talk with your group about what it means to be saved.

Then I want you to pretend that it’s your job to explain this information to people who have never heard about God’s salvation. Decide how you’ll present the material. Maybe you’ll write a song, or maybe you’ll create a billboard or a radio program. Maybe you’ll think of a game to help people learn about salvation. Then design your presentation. You’ll have about 10 minutes to work.

Give each trio a large sheet of newsprint, at least one Bible, pencils, and markers. Also give each trio a photocopy of the “What Is Salvation?” handout.

Have the groups study the handout, read the verses, and design a presentation. Be ready to explain the concepts to groups that don’t understand them. At the end of 10 minutes, call time. Have each trio make its presentation to one of the other trios.
**Ask**

- Why is it important that everyone in the world has this information? (People need to know about Jesus to go to heaven; only Jesus can free people from their sins.)
- Why is God's salvation such a good gift? (It means I can live in heaven forever; it means I am loved.)

**Say**

God is a great and wonderful God. He offers his salvation to everyone in the world. All he asks is that we believe him and put our faith in him.

### 3 Let’s Pray!

#### The Offering

Give each child a marker and one of the paper figures from the “Paper People” handout.

**Say**

When we put our faith in him, God gives us eternal life. In return, God wants us to give him our whole lives. He wants to be our Lord and our Savior. That means that he directs and guides our lives, and we look for ways to serve and honor him. Let’s tell God that we want to give him our lives. Write your name on your paper person. You can also write any kind of prayer you want on your person shape.

Give the children a couple of minutes to write.

**Say**

As we take the offering, put your person shape in the offering bowl, and tell God that you want to give him your whole life.

Take the offering.

#### The Promise

**Say**

The Bible tells us that those who put their faith in God’s Son, Jesus, will live with him forever in heaven. It’s a promise from God that we can count on! Let’s sing about his promises.

Sing “Standing on the Promises.”

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

#### Eternal Life Prayers

Ask the children to pray with a partner and thank God for his gift of salvation. Then close the worship session with a short prayer.
What Is Salvation?

Everybody sins. That means that all people do things they know to be wrong. *(Romans 3:23)*

The punishment for sin is death—eternal separation from God. It doesn’t matter if you’ve only sinned a little bit or if you’ve sinned a whole lot. The punishment is the same. *(Romans 6:23)*

Everyone who has faith in Jesus is saved and becomes a child of God. *(John 1:12)*

God saves us by grace through our faith. That means that there’s nothing we can do to earn God’s salvation. God gives it to us as a gift because he loves us. *(Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:5a)*

God sent his perfect Son, Jesus, to take our punishment. Jesus died for us so that we can have eternal life. *(John 3:16 and Romans 5:8)*
Paper People