

# "For God so Loved the World" Lectionary Lesson from John 3:14-21

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This free Bible lesson is based on John 3:14-21 when Jesus speaks to Nicodemus about salvation and living in the light. It is designed for children's church or Sunday School. Please modify as best fits your ministry.

If your church follows the Revised Common Lectionary, this teaching plan would correspond to Year B – 4th Sunday in Lent, Gospel Reading – John 3:14-21.

## **Opening Activity – For God so Loved the World**

Supplies – index cards, writing utensils, Bible

Prior to class write the following Bible verses on index cards, then hide them around the room. When the kids arrive, give each child a chance to find a verse and read it aloud.

- Psalms 18:1
- Proverbs 17:17
- Luke 10:27
- John 15:13
- Romans 5:8
- Romans 8:28
- Romans 13:10
- I Corinthians 13:4
- I Corinthians 13:13
- Ephesians 4:2
- I Peter 4:8
- I John 3:18
- I John 4:7
- I John 4:19

## **Lesson – For God so Loved the World**

I've got another Bible verse to share, and if you know it, say it with me, ok?

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” – John 3:16 NIV

I thought some of you might know that one. John 3:16 is one of the most popular verses in the whole Bible. But I wonder, does knowing the words mean you know what means and how important it really is?

This really is a great verse to know. It tells us Jesus's whole purpose in just a few short words. So let's take a minute to really learn what Jesus was saying.

"For God so loved the world..." Do you believe that? That God really does love the world. The WHOLE world. The good, bad, rich, poor, young, old, sick, healthy, angry, and joyful. God loves us all. He loves those who love Him, and He loves those who hate Him.

Do you know why that is so important? It means you don't have to earn God's love. He already loves you, and there is absolutely nothing you could do that would change His love. Whew, that makes me feel better! We all sin sometimes, but it is so nice to know that God will still love us even when do mess up.

Ok, next section. "...that He gave His one and only Son,..."

If you ever think that maybe God doesn't love you, just think about this part. God loved you so much that He gave up His own Son for you. God knew we needed a perfect sacrifice, and He knew His Son Jesus was the only one who be that sacrifice.

And why do we need that perfect sacrifice? That's in our next section.

"...that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

With that perfect sacrifice we can live forever with God. And that's God biggest wish. He wants nothing more than for you to live with Him in heaven. Yes, YOU!

God loves YOU so much that He was willing to send His Son Jesus as YOUR sacrifice, so YOU could live in heaven with Him. YOU!

Have you ever really thought about that verse like that? It becomes more than just words I've memorized; it's REAL.

Raise your right hand if you are happy to know God loves you. Keep it up! Raise your left hand if you are happy Jesus took your place as a sacrifice. Keep it up! Now wave those hands if you want to live in heaven with God and Jesus forever and ever and ever. Woohoo!

And how do we get there? That is in the verse too! All we have to do is believe in God. We don't have to be perfect, or grown up, or super smart, we just have to believe in God, put our faith and trust in Him, and love Him in return.

God loves YOU. YOU love God.

### **Activity A – For God so Loved the World– Bible Verse Challenge**

Supplies – Bibles

Verse – John 3:16

Pass out Bibles to students. Bibles should be closed and sitting on the table face up in front of each child. When you say go, have the kids look up this week's Bible verse. As each child finds the verse, have them stick one finger on the verse and quietly raise their other hand. The first one to find the verse gets to read it to the rest of the class.

Help younger kids and new kids find the verse by following these steps.

Look in the Table of Contents for the book you are looking for. Make an effort to show them if it is found in the Old Testament or New Testament to help them in the future. Then open the Bible to the page number listed in the Table of Contents.

Show them the large numbers in the text, known as the chapters. Flip through pages until you find the large chapter number you are looking for.

Then scan through the text with them pointing out the smaller verse numbers until the

correct number is found.

## **Activity B – For God so Loved the World – God loves YOU**

Supplies – none

Arrange chairs in a circle, with 1 less chair than person. Have each child sit in a chair, with one child sitting in the middle. This person will be 'it'.

The person who is 'it' will say "God loves everyone..." followed by a description; for example, 'with brown shoes', 'in kindergarten', etc. Then, anyone who meets that description will stand up and switch places, while the person who is 'it' also tries to find an empty seat.

If someone is having trouble coming up with a description, have them say "God loves YOU", and everyone must get up and switch seats.

\*Be sure to make it clear that God really does love everyone, and that while you may say God loves everyone in kindergarten, He also loves everyone in 1st grade, 2nd grade, etc.\*

## **Closing Prayer – For God so Loved the World**

Ask for a volunteer to pray for the class before leaving, and encourage them to thank God for them enough to Jesus in our place.

## **Check out these other lessons and resources for John 3:16**

- [John 3:16 Decoding Bible Verse Worksheet](#)
- [John 3:16 Coloring Sheet](#)
- [Nicodemus Coloring Page and Worksheet Maze](#)
- [Nicodemus seeks Jesus Sunday School Lesson](#)