

Jesus Answers Tough Questions

John 3:1-21

3

Lesson



Teacher Background

What Happens: A religious leader named Nicodemus comes to see Jesus. Most religious leaders don't like Jesus, so Nicodemus sneaks to see him at night. As he talks with Jesus, Nicodemus asks some hard questions. Jesus answers them because Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions.

Why It Matters: Kids have a lot of questions! Often, the church may feel like an unsafe place for questions. Kids may have gotten the message that asking questions is a sign of a lack of faith. Help kids see that questions are a great way to get to know Jesus better. Questions grow our faith!

Think About: What questions do you have about God? What truths do you know for sure?

Pray that kids will be open and honest about their questions, and pray for wisdom in how to help kids find answers.



Point

Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions.



Key Verse

"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

QUICK TIP

This lesson might make you nervous. After all, if you invite kids to ask hard questions, they might expect you to answer them! It's OK to say "I don't know" when kids ask a question you can't answer. You can also throw it back to kids and invite their insights by saying, "That's a great question. I don't know the answer...What do you think some possibilities are?" Also remind kids to turn to the Bible with their questions. You'll set a great example by showing that even adults have questions about God, rather than having all the answers. And Jesus welcomes our questions.

This Lesson at a Glance



WHAT HAPPENS	KIDS DISCOVER	SUPPLIES
SET THE STAGE Share about a topic related to the lesson.	The connection between their world and the Bible.	
EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE Ask questions, sneak around the dim room and experiment with wind.	How a wise man named Nicodemus came to ask Jesus hard questions one night.	• Bible • flashlight or flicker lights (optional)
HANDS-ON DISCOVERY Play Jenga.	Our questions make us feel “wobbly,” but Jesus stays steady.	• Jenga game set
PLAY A GAME Come up with real and silly questions for various answers.	We can ask Jesus any question.	
PRAY TOGETHER Lean on a wall and think with Jesus.	We can always lean on Jesus.	



SET THE STAGE (5 MINUTES)

SAY: Today we're going to learn that ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions.** I'm going to ask you a question—hopefully it won't be too hard!

ASK: What do you like to do at night?

SAY: In today's Bible story, a man came to talk to Jesus and asked him a few questions. He didn't want other people to see him talking to Jesus, so he visited him at night. Let's dig into the Bible to find out what happened!



EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE (10 MINUTES)



SUPPLIES

- Bible
- flashlight or flicker lights (optional)

QUICK TIP

If your room doesn't have windows, bring a flashlight or flicker lights to use when you dim the lights. If you do have windows, cover them a little bit so your room will be dark but not pitch black.



CALL OUT QUESTIONS

SAY: Since we're going to learn that ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions,** let's see how many questions we can ask Jesus in one minute.

Allow a minute for kids to brainstorm and call out questions.

SAY: You asked some hard questions. They were too hard for me to answer, even though I'm a grown-up! But ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions,** because he knows all the answers.

It's OK if we have tough questions for him sometimes. That just shows we're trying to get to know him better. We may not always understand all his answers until we get to heaven, but he's never afraid to hear us ask the questions.

ASK MORE QUESTIONS

SAY: In the Bible, a man named Nicodemus sneaked out one night to see Jesus. It might seem weird that Nicodemus felt he had to sneak, but he was a religious leader called a Pharisee. The Pharisees did *not* like Jesus. But Nicodemus believed Jesus was from God and wanted to know more about him. Let's sneak around the room like we're Nicodemus.

Dim the lights (and use flashlights if needed), and lead the kids in quietly tiptoeing around the room. Pause periodically to whisper with the kids about what questions Nicodemus should ask Jesus first. Then have kids sit back in their places.



SAY: When Nicodemus met Jesus that night, he said he could tell by Jesus' miracles that God had sent Jesus to teach the people. Right away, Jesus started to say things that confused Nicodemus. As we read what Jesus said, think of what questions *you'd* have during that conversation.

 Read John 3:3.

ASK: What would you ask Jesus after hearing that?

SAY: Nicodemus didn't understand what Jesus meant. He had questions, just like we sometimes do! But ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions.** Let's see what Nicodemus said to Jesus. Let's listen in.

 Read John 3:4-8.

ASK: What would you ask Jesus after hearing that?

SAY: Nicodemus was confused, too! Being *born again* does sound confusing. Basically, it means getting a fresh start. ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions**, but even *he* admitted this was a hard topic to explain. Understanding how the Holy Spirit works is like understanding where wind comes from. Let's try something with wind.

FEEL THE WIND

Have kids blow on their hands.

ASK: How do you know wind is real?

SAY: You could feel the wind of your breath on your hand. And on a windy day, you might see things blowing around. But you still can't see the wind. The Holy Spirit is kind of like wind. He moves us closer to Jesus, but we can't see him doing it!

END WITH LOVE

SAY: Jesus made some confusing statements in this passage. But they all led to some important words that we can understand.

 Read John 3:16.

SAY: This is what God is all about: love. The Bible even says that God *is* love. God loves us and wants to be with us *forever*. That's why he sent Jesus. When you believe in Jesus, you can live with him forever. What a wonderful, loving gift!

Believing in Jesus doesn't mean we'll never have questions. But because he loves us, ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions.** We can talk to him about anything!

Let's talk to him right now. You can ask him anything or tell him anything. Take some time to do that right now silently—just between you and Jesus.

Allow time for silent prayer.

PRAY: Jesus, thank you that ➡ **you're not afraid of hard questions.** Thank you for loving us. And thank you that when we ask you to be our friend, you'll always say yes. In your name, amen.

CELEBRATE SMALL

With a smaller group of kids, you can really tune in to their questions. You may want to make note of ones that kids really seem worried about. If you don't have the answers right then, connect with your pastor on an appropriate response. Then follow up next time you see kids, or even in an email to the child's family.



SUPPLIES

- Jenga game set



BUILD BLOCK TOWERS

SAY: Our Bible story about Nicodemus' questions is a great reminder that we can ask Jesus about anything. Nicodemus had some things he wondered about, and some of them were tough questions. Questions can cause us worry when the answers are hard to find. Questions can make us wobble with worry!

Let's carefully take a block out of a block tower when we ask a question we'd like to ask Jesus. With each question, the tower will get wobblier and wobblier—kind of like us when we're worried by things we're unsure about.

- Have kids build block towers with three blocks in each layer.
- When the tower is built, lead kids in taking turns asking any question that comes to their minds and then removing a block.
- They'll continue until their towers topple, marking the end of the round.
- Have kids reset the blocks and play as many rounds as time allows.

TALK ABOUT IT

ASK: Tell about a time questions made you feel like a worried, wobbly block tower. Maybe you had a question but didn't want to ask because you thought you were the only one who didn't know the answer. Or maybe you saw a question on a test and didn't know the answer. Share an example of your own to start the discussion, and don't be afraid to allow some quiet time for kids to think.

SAY: We might worry that if we have questions about God, our faith isn't strong enough. But unlike our wobbly block towers, Jesus stays strong and steady no matter what question he's asked. ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions.**

Jesus knows everything, and he loves you, so you don't need to be afraid to ask him anything. There are no silly questions for Jesus. And there isn't a question he can't answer. Jesus might not answer you the way you think he will, but he can answer any question you have.



QUESTION ANSWERS

SAY: ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions**, but I am! That's why I have only answers. I'll need you to come up with the questions!

- Tell kids you'll call out an answer, and it's their job to come up with questions that fit your answers. For instance, you might say, "Chicago," and one kid might call out, "What's a city in Illinois?" or "What's something that's never ordered as a pizza topping?"
- The goal is to get one question that fits and a few that don't—but are funny.
- Answers you might share include avocados, Pittsburgh, the Grinch, chili peppers, a hammer, juggling, thumbnails, pencil erasers, hummingbirds, cat litter, earphones, jelly beans, and a bucket of bunny boogers.

TALK ABOUT IT

ASK: What was the silliest part of our game?

ASK: Do you ever feel silly asking a question in real life? Tell me about that. Share your own example first, then let kids share.

SAY: We don't have to feel silly asking Jesus anything! ➡ **Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions**, and he wants us to share with him whatever we wonder about.





PRAY TOGETHER (5 MINUTES)



SAY: We can always pray and talk with Jesus about our questions.

Sometimes it's hard to keep our minds and hearts focused on talking with Jesus. We try to pray, but we start to think about friends or homework or our favorite TV show. Oops!

Here's the good news: Prayer isn't just about talking to Jesus. Prayer happens when we simply spend time with Jesus and remember he is there with us. Let's practice spending quiet time with Jesus right now.

Have everyone move so they can lean against a wall.

ASK: How is leaning on this wall like leaning on Jesus when we pray?

SAY: Like we're leaning on a wall, we can always lean on Jesus. Jesus supports and comforts us no matter where we are.

Now let's spend time thinking about Jesus and welcoming Jesus into our thoughts and our questions. And if your thoughts start to wander? Simply talk with Jesus about whatever you're thinking. Ask him the questions that may be on your mind. We'll have two minutes of quiet, then I'll pray aloud.

After about two minutes, close with this prayer.

PRAY: Dear Jesus, may we always remember that you're with us. Thanks for thinking with us and spending time with us today. We love you. Amen.

SAY: ➡ Jesus isn't afraid of hard questions. So let's think and wonder about things with him!

