

Today's Suggested Schedule—February 2026, Week 1

Bible Story: Jesus Teaches Nicodemus • *John 3:1-21*

Bottom Line: God loves the whole world.

Monthly Memory Verse: *"I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you."* • John 13:34 NIRV

Supplies NOT Included In Activity Bags

Bible Story Review: Story Creation

- Play Doh
- Bible

Application Activity: The Whole World Ball Game

- Soft playground ball

Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse with Motions

- Bibles marked at John 13:34

Prayer Activity: Pray and Dismiss

Bible Story Summary

We start off as Nicodemus visits Jesus at night. While Nicodemus struggles to understand how a grown-up could be born again, Jesus challenges him to see with new eyes. John, recording this scene, interprets for us: "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life." [BOTTOM LINE] God loves the whole world.

Prayer

Before kids arrive, pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time! Thank God that His love is big enough for the entire world, and that it's personal enough for each of us. Recall an age-appropriate story about a time when you realized God's love was bigger than you thought, or a time you were confused about a "church" topic (like Nicodemus) and God brought you clarity. Ask God to help the kids see that "the whole world" means everyone—even people who are different from them or hard to love. Pray they would be so full of God's love that they can't help but share it with others this week.

1. Bible Story Review- Story Creation

What You Need:

- Bible
- Play-Doh® in various colors
- Paper plates

What You Do:

- Give each kid a paper plate and a few different colors of Play-Doh®.
- Explain that you're going to retell the story of Jesus and Nicodemus together.
- As you tell the story, encourage the kids to make the key parts with their Play-Doh®.
- Say, "Nicodemus was a very important teacher. Can you make a person out of Play-Doh®? That can be Nicodemus."
- Say, "Nicodemus came to see Jesus at night, because he was afraid of certain people finding out he was talking to Jesus. Can you make some stars?"
- Say, "Jesus told Nicodemus that He was going to make a way for the whole world to be His friend forever because **[Bottom Line] God loves the whole world**. Can you make a big circle for the world?"
- Say, "In this conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, we learned that God sent His Son, Jesus, for everyone in the world. Can you make a cross to help us remember Jesus?"
- Encourage the kids to show you their creations after each step.
- Open the Bible and read John 3:16 together.

What You Say:

"Look at all your amazing creations! This helps us remember our Bible Story. Jesus helped Nicodemus understand something very important: that He was going to make a way for everyone to have eternal life, that He was going to make a way for everyone to be God's friend forever!

"Jesus explained a little bit of what this means. He told Nicodemus that, '*No one can see God's kingdom unless they are born again*' (John 3:3 NIV). When we accept Jesus' payment on the cross for our sins, Jesus' very Spirit, the Holy Spirit, comes to live inside of us! God's Spirit actually makes us brand-new inside as if we are being born a second time. Jesus explained that God's Spirit is like the wind; you can't see it, but you can see how it changes things.

"Nicodemus also learned that God was going to do this—He was going to give everyone the chance to have a forever friendship with Him—because **[Bottom Line] God loves the whole world!** And the 'whole world' includes you, me, and everyone!

"Jesus was giving Nicodemus a picture of what was coming—that Jesus would give up His life to pay for our sins because He loves us so much. And He would give eternal life to everyone who chooses Him. Anyone who chooses to follow Jesus can be God's friend forever!"

2. Application Activity- The Whole World Ball Game

What You Need:

- Soft playground ball

What You Do:

- Encourage the kids to stand in a single file line.
- Instruct them to stand with their legs shoulder-width apart, creating a tunnel with their legs.
- Stand at the front of the line and gently roll the ball so it goes through every kid's legs.
- After the first roll, move to a different spot, maybe off to the side. Explain that the group has to move together to make sure the ball can still roll through everyone's legs—including yours!
- Roll the ball again. The kids will need to shuffle and adjust their positions as a group to create a new tunnel for the ball.
- Continue a few times, moving to different spots and challenging them to work together.

What You Say:

“Great teamwork! You had to work together to make sure the ball could get through everyone in our line. This game helps us remember that God's love is for everyone, everywhere! No one is left out.

“God loves people who are different from you, who live in different places, and people who do wrong things! **[Bottom Line] God loves the whole world**, and He wants His love to reach every single person. Because you and I are made in God's image—we reflect who God is to the world—we can show His love to others.

“When we're kind, we show the world God's love. When we're compassionate, we show the world God's love. Let's show everyone God's love because **[Bottom Line] God loves the whole world!**”

3. Memory Verse with Motions

What You Need:

- Bibles marked at John 13:34
- “Memory Verse Motions” Activity Page (posted in room and on next page)

What You Do:

- Invite the kids to form groups of 2-3.
- Give every group a Bible and direct them to look up John 13:34
- Demonstrate how to look up the verse using the Bible Navigation Tips below:

***Finding verses for 2-3rd graders:** Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find the name of the book in the list. When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page. When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.*

- Repeat the verse aloud several times.
- Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
- Guide the kids to put their Bibles aside and stand in a circle.
- Hold up the “Memory Verse Motions” Activity Page, and teach the kids the motions for the Memory Verse, adding one part at a time.
 - “I give you a new command. (Hold up one finger.)
 - Love one another. (Hug yourself.)
 - You must love (Make a heart with your hands)
 - one another, (Point to friends around you.)
 - just as I (Point up to God.)
 - have loved you.” (Hug yourself.)
 - John 13:34 (Open your hands like a book.)
- Practice the verse and motions together several times. Make it fun by going fast, then slow.

What You Say:

“Great job with those motions! Jesus gave us the best example of love. Because He loves us so much, we can love others. Our job as followers of Jesus is to be filled up with His love and pour it out on others! We can show people that **[Bottom Line] God loves the whole world!**”



**"I give you a new
command.**



**Love one
another.**



**You must
love**



one another,



just as I



**have loved
you."**



John 13:34

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need:

- Plastic jar
- Bag of candy hearts

What To Do:

- Encourage the kids to sit in a circle with you.
- Show the group the empty jar.
- Say, “Praying for people is a way to share the love of Jesus. This month, every time we pray for someone, we’re going to add a heart to this jar. At the end of the month, we can see all the people we prayed for and all the love we shared!”
- Encourage each kid to think of one person they want to pray for today.
- Go around the circle, and as each kid says the name of the person they are praying for, let them drop a heart into the jar.
- Close the group in prayer.
- Store the jar in a safe place to use again next week.

What You Say:

“We just prayed for a lot of people, and that reminds us that ***[Bottom Line]*** **God loves the whole world**. As we learned in Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus, God loves everyone, everywhere. This week, let’s keep praying for all the people we named and ask God to show His great love to them.

“Dear God, thank You that You love the whole world. Thank You for loving [name a few of the people the kids mentioned]. Please help them know that You love them. Help us to share Your love with everyone this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus’ name. Amen.”