



WEEK ONE – DECEMBER 2018 – KINDER/FIRST

Bible Story: *The Greatest Love of All* • John 3:16

Bottom Line: *God did something about our greatest need.*

Memory Verse: *“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.” John 3:16(NIV)*

Life App: *Compassion – Caring enough to do something about someone else’s need*

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what.*

Summary: We kick off the month with the greatest verse in all of Scripture, John 3:16. God loves the world so much that He wants to spend forever with us. That was made possible through Jesus!

8:50–9:00 | 10:20–10:30 | 11:50–12:00 – EARLY ARRIVERS ACTIVITIES

1. Early Arriver Idea

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines & working as a group

What You Need: Ball

What You Do:

- Guide kids to sit in a circle with you.
- If you have a smaller group, encourage them to make the circle as large as possible by standing, holding hands, stepping back until they're a comfortable distance apart, dropping hands, and sitting down.
- Hold the ball and say, "I'm decorating a Christmas tree, and I might need [item]."
- Roll the ball to a child, who then says, "I'm decorating a Christmas tree, and I might need [item you named] and [item of their choice]."
- The game continues, with each player stating the previous items and then naming a new item.
 - *NOTE: If you have a primarily younger group, omit the "memory" aspect of the game and simply ask each child to name something you might need to decorate a Christmas tree.*
 - The items can be practical (a star, colored lights, strings of popcorn, blinking lights, candy canes, hot chocolate, Christmas music) or as whimsical (a skiing Santa ornament, strings of jelly beans, a singing Snoopy ornament) as kids choose.
- End the game before interest (and creativity!) runs out.
- Close by inviting kids to tell how their families decorate their Christmas trees.

2. Clock–centration

Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines & working as a group

What You Need: "Clock–centration" Activity Pages

What You Do:

- Sequentially place the "Clock–centration" cards face down (numbers up) in a circle on the floor, creating a large "clock."
- Invite kids to take turns calling out two numbers.
- Turn over the corresponding cards.
- If the pictures match an animal to something it needs, place the matches to the side.
- If the pictures don't make a match, turn them face down again.
- Continue until kids match all the cards.

What You Say:

“Animals need many things. They need food, the right kind of home, shelter, and friends. What are some things that PEOPLE need? (food, water, clothing, shoes, friends, places to live) Yes, people need all these things. But did you know that there’s something people need more than anything else? [Transition] Let’s go to Large Group to find out what it is.”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

9:10–9:45 | 10:40–11:15 | 12:10–12:45 – LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Bottom Line: *God did something about our greatest need.* Jesus was God’s gift to the world. We pray that kids start to understand their need for a Savior and put their trust in Jesus.

9:45–10:05 | 11:15–11:35 | 12:45–1:05 SMALL GROUP

1. I Spy

[Application Activity]

Create: an activity that explores spiritual ideas through the process of drawing/building/designing

What You Need: Pre-cut chenille stems

What You Do:

- Make chenille stem “glasses” that can remind kids to “spy” for people who need compassion.
- Invite each child to choose one small piece and four half pieces of chenille stems.
- First, show kids how to bend two of the halves into circles, twisting the ends together to secure. These are the glasses’ “rims.”
- Next, guide kids to wrap one end of the short piece around one of the circles and the other end around the second circle, creating the “bridge.”
- Help them wrap one end of a remaining half around one “rim,” opposite the bridge.
- Repeat on the other side. These are the “temples.”
- Finally, show them how to curl the ends of the temples into ear hooks.
 - *IMPORTANT: Do a safety inspection of each child’s creation. Bend or twist any exposed wire. For comfort, bend the tips of the earpieces.*

What You Say:

“God knew that we needed a Savior. We needed a Savior because we all do and say and think things that we know are wrong. Those things are called sin, and sin hurts our friendship with God.

*“So [Bottom Line] **God did something about our greatest need.** He had compassion on us and sent His only Son, Jesus, to be our Savior and to rescue us from our sin.*

“Since God had compassion for us, we can have compassion for others, too. We can help others when they need help. We can give hugs to people who are sad. What else can we do to have compassion and show others that we care for them? (Let my sister hold one of my stuffed animals when she’s sick, help my brother pick up his mess, let someone else go first, etc.)

“So this week, let your glasses remind you to look for ways to show compassion to others. Because when you do, you’re showing them how much God loves them!”

2. Advent-urous Compassion

[Bible Story Review]

Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy & facilitates biblical application through reenactment

What You Need: “Advent-urous Compassion” & “Compassion Cues Stickers” Activity Pages; sticky notes (red/green); markers

What You Do:

- Ask kids if they have ever seen an advent calendar.
- Explain that an advent calendar is a way that we count the days until Christmas.
- Tell kids that they’re going to make their own advent calendars to help them remember that **[Bottom Line] God did something about our greatest need** when He gave us Jesus.
- Give each child an “Advent-urous Compassion” page. Tell them that each space on the calendar represents a day until Christmas.
- Read the verse aloud, leading kids to point to each word as you read.
- Show the “Compassion Cues Stickers” and guide kids to identify ways the people are showing compassion.
- Invite each child to choose four stickers and stick one on each “blank” calendar day.
- Set out the sticky notes and guide kids to press one over each calendar day.
 - *HINT: Guide kids to cover the bottom row first, then the next to bottom row, and so on.*
- Tell kids that every day until Christmas, they’ll take a sticky note off the calendar. Each day they’ll be able to read more of the verse.
- When they come to a day with a sticker, they can look for a way do that act of compassion for someone.
 - *NOTE: Go ahead and guide kids to remove the notes from any preceding days.*
- When kids finish, they can draw Christmas pictures on the notes.

What You Say:

[Bottom Line] *“God did something about our greatest need. He sent His Son, Jesus, to live on earth, to die on a cross, and to come back to life so that if we truly believe in Jesus, we can live with Him forever!*”

“That’s why Christmas is so amazing! It’s the day we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus. Because: 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, John 3:16 (NIRV).”

*“So this month, share God’s love with others and show them compassion. You can use your advent calendars to help remind you. And never forget: **[Bottom Line]** God did something about our greatest need and gave us Jesus!”*

3. God So Loved the World

[Memory Verse Activity]

Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Bibles; inflatable globe

What You Do:

- Give each child a Bible. Help kids look up John 3:16 using the navigation tips below.
 - **Finding verses with kindergartners:** *Guide children to open the Bibles to the marked page. Point to the word John at the top of the page as you say “John” aloud. Then guide children to find the big number 3 on the page. Explain that this is the chapter number. Finally, guide them to look under the big 3 for the little 16; this is the verse number. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.*
 - **Finding verses with 1st 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 John in the list under “New Testament.” You can help by telling them that John starts with the letters J–O. When the kids find John, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find John. Help the kids find the page. When they find John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 3. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 16 in chapter 3. Tell them to leave their finger on the verse as you read the verse aloud. Then lead everyone to say the verse together.*

- Briefly unpack the concept that “the world” means EVERYONE God made: people in your town, your state or province, your country, and around the world—people everywhere!
- Guide kids to sit in a circle.
- Begin passing the ball. Guide each child to say a word of the verse when he holds the ball. (Provide as much help as needed.)
- When it’s a child’s turn to say, “world,” guide that child to hold the globe over her head as she says the word.
- Lead kids to quote the verse up to “only Son” and then begin again. (They’ll learn the rest of the verse later this month.)
- As kids become more comfortable saying the verse, encourage them to pass the globe more quickly.
- For variety, guide kids to pass the globe different ways: standing in a straight line, alternating over their heads and between their legs; using only their elbows; sitting and using only their feet; etc.

What You Say:

“God had compassion on us and did something about our greatest need. He gave His one and only Son to be our Savior. So if you truly believe that Jesus is God’s Son and that God sent Jesus to live on earth, die on the cross for your sins, and come back to life, then you’ll live FOREVER with God.

[Make It Personal] (Briefly tell how you came to believe in Jesus and follow Him. Be sure to use words and phrases the kids can understand.)

(Note: Depending on what you know about your kids, it might be a good idea to simply “plant the seeds” and have a conversation about salvation, without explicitly leading kids to take the step of faith. If a child’s parents are already believers, they will probably want to be present for the moment when their child accepts the gift of salvation. Use your judgment and your knowledge of your kids’ home lives when having this conversation.)

*“So always remember: **[Bottom Line] God did something about our greatest need. He sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior!**”*

4. Pray and Dismiss

[Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Inflatable Globe

What You Do:

- Hold the globe and guide kids to gather around and point to a place on the globe.

- Use the conversation below as a guide to lead kids in prayer.

What You Say:

“God so loved the people in (name the places or continents the kids are pointing to) that He gave His one and only Son. Jesus was God’s gift to the world. (Point to where you live.) He was God’s gift to [your city’s name]. He was God’s gift to me and to YOU! Let’s pray.

“Dear God, thank You so much for having compassion on us and doing something about our greatest need. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. We love You so much, God. It’s in Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage kids to finish the verse as you say, “God so loved the world that he gave _____ (his one and only Son).” Also, hand out the weekly Parent Cue card.