

Focus Forty 2012

Supplemental Children's Material

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Nicodemus

There was a man named Nicodemus who was a Jewish Pharisee. He was very interested in who Jesus was and in the miracles that Jesus was performing. Nicodemus was searching for answers to his questions. He believed that Jesus would have the answers he was looking for. So after dark, he snuck to go see Jesus because he was afraid what his friends (the other Pharisees) would think. He did not want anyone to know what he was doing.

Read John 3:1–17 and find out the whole story about Nicodemus.

In verse 3, what is an important truth that Nicodemus learned? Write out this verse.

What does it mean to be “born again”?

Can you remember a specific time in your life when you asked Jesus to be your Savior? Who helped you with that decision?

Read verses 16 and 17. What is the great promise that is given to us in these two verses?

Memorize John 3:16–17 and share it with someone who does not know Jesus.

“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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” —John 3:16–17 NIV1984

It is so exciting to know that God looks at us all and values us for who we are. We don't have to do anything special in order for God to love us. He sees us as someone who is highly valued. God sees each person and wants to bless their life. All we have to do is believe in our hearts, and call on the name of the Lord and we will be saved. Romans 10:13 says, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (NIV1984).

But once that happens, God has a mission for us. He wants us to take the good news of Jesus and share it with others. Romans 10:15 says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (NIV1984). If you don't talk to others about Jesus, who will?

Is God calling you to go to someone who needs to know about Jesus?

Right now, write down the name of someone that you could share the good news of Jesus with.

Pray and ask Jesus to give you courage, and then go and talk to them.

Have you ever started eating French fries and realized that something was missing? Someone forgot to add the salt. Not to mention that you need some ketchup too! Without the salt the French fries are lacking some flavor. They are just kind of bland.

When we make the decision to be Christ-followers, God has an important job for us to do. He wants our “flavor” to rub off on those around us. If we act like everyone else, we don’t have a lot to offer others and we become useless to God. Just like salt makes our French fries taste good, we need to have a positive effect on the people we come in contact with.

What will you do to stay salty?

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.”

—Matthew 5:13 NIV1984

Have you ever flown in an airplane at night? You can look out the window and see the lights of the city below you. Even though you are really high up in the sky, you can see the lights glowing for miles away.

As Christian young people who love Jesus, you have the ability to shine brightly for him. You can show others what Jesus looks like. But that takes effort and concentration.

- Don't be afraid to speak out for Jesus
- Don't follow the crowd—follow Jesus
- Look out for others—help meet their needs
- Be a friend to someone that is all alone or hurting
- Speak words of truth—do not lie

Don't hide your light, remove your lamp shade and shine brightly!!

“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” —Matthew 5:16 NIV1984

Have you ever misplaced an item and been driven crazy until you found it? In Luke 15:1–10, Jesus tells two parables about some missing items. The first story is about a missing sheep. The second is about a missing coin. Read this Scripture passage and see what happens.

What did the man who lost his sheep and the woman who lost her coin do?

Why do you think it was so important to them to find these two items?

What did both of them do when they found their lost items?

How do you think God looks at people who don't know him as their Savior?

Jesus came to earth to look for people who were lost, those who did not know him. This is the same amazing love that God has for you.

Who do you know that is lost that needs your help to find Jesus?

“In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” —Luke 15:10 NIV1984

Sometimes people think they are so powerful and can do whatever they want. The Assyrians acted just like that. But God's message of salvation is for all people, regardless of whether they are naughty or proud. God chose Jonah to deliver his message to the city of Ninevah. But Jonah ran from God and didn't want to be obedient. Because of that, he ended up in the belly of a great fish. He spent three days and three nights in there, with plenty of time to think. Eventually Jonah went to Ninevah and helped the people to turn from their wicked ways.

God doesn't want us to just hear his word; he wants us to do what he tells us to do. Sometimes we might not feel like obeying God. But if we do it anyway, God can use us to do great and mighty things for him.

Who do you need to go to and share God's message of salvation with?

“But Ninevah has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?”
—Jonah 4:11 NIV1984

It is always fun to receive gifts on special days such as our birthday or Christmas. It is exciting to guess what is inside the packages and then to open them up and actually see for ourselves. It can be equally thrilling to give gifts to others as well, to see their face light up, and then be thankful for what they received. We give gifts to others, not because they deserve them, but because we love them and want to show it.

Ephesians 2:8–9 tells us, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is a gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (NIV1984). God’s gift to us is salvation. We don’t have to do anything to receive the gift—just accept it. It is the best gift that we will ever receive that we have the opportunity to share with others.

How has God’s great gift to you made a difference in your life?

What are some ways you can share this gift with others?

Who does God want you to share this gift with?

Everyone is excited when a new baby is born into a family. We can't wait to hold them, take them a special gift, and to see who they look like.

When we first meet Jesus and ask him to be our Savior, we are being reborn spiritually. Just as a baby is born into their family, we are receiving a new life from God and being born into the family of God.

When we are first born, we receive our physical birth. When we accept Jesus as our Savior, we experience our spiritual birth.

Just as a baby grows and matures, as Christians we change and grow from the inside out. Our attitudes, our words, our thoughts, and our actions begin to be more like God's.

Have you ever asked Jesus to be your Savior and to make you into someone new?

Do you have a friend who is waiting for you to introduce them to Jesus?

“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.” —John 1:12–13 NIV1984

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.” —Revelation 3:20 NIV1984

When we go to someone's house, we don't just walk in. We knock at the door. When a door is closed, it is good manners to knock before opening it. Someone usually calls for us to come in, or they come and greet us at the door. If we are at home waiting for someone to come, if we aren't listening, we might not hear them knocking!

That is exactly what Jesus does to us. He comes to us and knocks on the door of our heart and waits to see if we will open the door and invite him in. Jesus isn't like a burglar who would just break in and enter. He allows us to decide whether or not we want him to be our very best friend.

We have the ability to help others invite Jesus into their heart. We can share the good news of how we opened the door when Jesus knocked at our heart door. Will you be bold enough to share your best friend with them?

There have been times when I have been driving and realized I was going the wrong direction. I thought I knew where I was headed, but the road signs told me differently. In order to get on the right track I had to make a U-turn.

That's what it means to repent of our sins. We have to make a U-turn, go the other direction, and turn to Jesus. Some people might say that's what happens when you become a Christian. It's not something we can do on our own. We need God's power to help us. When we repent of our sins, we ask Jesus to forgive us and to help us be like him.

Can you think of a special time when you repented of your sins and made a U-turn?

Can you help a friend to change direction in their life and become a friend of God?