

Jesus Surprises Nathanael

John 1:43-51

Some young children may think that if a parent or teacher didn't see them do something wrong, they're in the clear. Consequently, it may be hard for them to understand that Jesus knows everything about them. Use this lesson to help children understand that Jesus is always watching them and knows them deeply. But rather than making it seem as if Big Brother is watching, emphasize that no matter what Jesus sees, he loves them unconditionally.



► **Bible Point**
Jesus knows all about us.

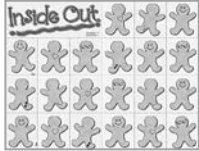
LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	I Know You! <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Play a game to find out how much they know about one another.	Teacher Pack: game spinner	
2 Bible Exploration	Come and See <i>(about 15 min.)</i> Listen to what happened to show Nathanael that Jesus knows all about him.	Bible, CD player Teacher Pack: CD	

Key Verse
"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me"
(Psalm 139:1).

Weaving Faith Into Life
Kids will thank God for knowing them and tell others about his love.

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	Jesus Knows <i>(about 10 min.)</i> Draw pictures of reasons they're glad Jesus knows them.	My Bible Fun, crayons	Tear out the Lesson 7 pages from each My Bible Fun student book.
	Inside Out <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Create figures that show what Jesus knows about them, and learn the Key Verse.	Bibles, My Bible Fun, CD player, scissors, markers, stapler, copies of the lyrics page (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD, "Inside Out" poster 	Cut apart the figures on the "Inside Out" poster.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	My Bible Fun	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



Jesus Surprises Nathanael

John 1:43-51

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Jesus Prepares to Depart for Galilee

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The beginning of this passage finds Jesus ready to depart from Judea for Galilee. It’s interesting that a huge portion of Jesus’ ministry happened in the region of Galilee. This region was looked down on by most Jews. The Galilean Jews had a distinctive accent, and because of their proximity to other ethnic peoples and traditions, they were often viewed as “contaminated,” backward, and inferior. The Judean Jews despised those Jews who couldn’t speak correctly—they considered themselves superior and more pure. We don’t know why Jesus chose his disciples from this area or why he ministered there so often, but perhaps it was because people there were more authentic and less biased than in Judea.

Jesus Calls Philip to Follow

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Philip, when called to follow Jesus, responded as would anyone who realized he’d found the Son of God—he wanted to tell someone else about it! So he sought out Nathanael and told him the good news. Philip’s description of Jesus as “the son of Joseph” didn’t deny Jesus’ divine origin. Philip simply described Jesus in terms of his earthly, legal family.

Philip Tells Doubtful Nathanael About Jesus

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Nathanael responded negatively for a couple of reasons. First, Nazareth was considered a less-than-desirable city because a Roman outpost was located there and brought with it all sorts of false gods and evildoing. Second, Nazareth was an obscure city, never mentioned in the Old Testament. Besides, everyone knew from the prophet Micah that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem.

Philip Challenges Nathanael to See Jesus for Himself

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However, Nathanael’s negativism didn’t stop Philip. He challenged Nathanael to see for himself. As Nathanael approached Jesus, Jesus knew not only where Nathanael had been and what he had been doing, but also that Nathanael was skeptical. So Jesus began his response by telling Nathanael something no stranger would know about him. After Nathanael’s first dumbfounded response, Jesus continued with the facts about where Philip had found Nathanael. With that, Nathanael’s doubts disappeared. He realized that Jesus was indeed who Philip had said he was: the Messiah, the Son of God.

The Jesus Connection

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A friend who knows everything about you—the good and the bad—and still loves you passionately? That’s the kind of friend Jesus is to us. Much of our lives among our earthly friends and acquaintances are spent “keeping up appearances.” We fear that if people knew the real us, they’d abandon us. With Jesus, that won’t happen. He already knows it all, and his love is constant. In what ways are you trying to keep up appearances with Jesus? Tell Jesus today without worry or fear. You can write your prayer here.





I Know You! Supplies

Teacher Pack
game spinner

1 GETTING STARTED

I Know You!

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went.

Gather everyone together in a circle.

Say: **Today we're going to begin with a fun game to see how well we know one another. We'll go around the circle, and everyone will get a chance to spin the game spinner. After you spin the spinner, you'll try to guess something about the person on your left based on these rules:**

- If the arrow points to red, try to guess the person's favorite color.
- If the arrow points to blue, try to guess the person's favorite song.
- If it points to green, try to guess the person's favorite food.
- If it points to yellow, try to guess the person's favorite cartoon character.

Check for understanding. Then say: **Let's see how much we really know about one another.** Go around the circle, letting each child make one guess. After each guess, let the child to the left reveal the correct answer and then spin the spinner.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What clues did you use to try to guess about your person?
- What do you think would make this game easier?
- What things do you think Jesus knows about you?

Say: **In our game, we found that we really didn't know everything about our friends in this group. We were just guessing, weren't we? But ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US. He knows all our favorite things, what we're thinking, how we're feeling, and everything else about us! Today we'll hear about a man named Nathanael who found out how much Jesus knew about him. Let's see what happened.**





2 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Come and See

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Gather children on one side of your room, away from the CD player. Say: **Today we'll hear about a man named Nathanael who met Jesus. At the time they met, Jesus was traveling around the area, choosing friends to help him spread the good news about God's love. One day, as Jesus passed by, John the Baptist told two of his friends that Jesus was the Savior they'd been waiting for. The two friends stopped what they were doing and followed Jesus right away!**

Say: **Let's play a quick game of Follow the Leader to see what that might have been like.** Have kids sit in a single file line while you stand at the head of the line. Explain that you'll wave your arm and say, "Follow me!" and start walking around the room. Then the first child in line will hop up, wave his or her arm, repeat the phrase, and follow you around the room. Each child will repeat the process. Then lead the children back to their original positions.

Open your Bible to John 1:43-51, and show children the passage. Read aloud John 1:43. Then say: **Wow! Here's another person who wants to follow Jesus. Let's follow Jesus as Philip did.** Play Follow the Leader around the room again. Then have kids sit in a circle as you read aloud John 1:44-45.

Say: **Philip couldn't wait to tell his friend Nathanael that Jesus is the Savior the Bible had talked about. He went looking for Nathanael so he could tell him the good news. Nathanael was sitting by himself, under a fig tree. Let's pretend we're sitting under a tree, too.**

Lead children over to the CD player, and invite them to lounge on the floor as if they were resting under a tree. As the children listen, encourage them to close their eyes and picture themselves under a tree as they hear what happened. Say: **As you listen, count each thing you learn about Nathanael. You can count them on your fingers to help you remember the number. After we listen, we'll share some things we heard about Nathanael.** Play "Come and See!" (track 17 on the CD).

Let the children tell how many things they counted and some of the things that they learned about Nathanael.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Explain how easy or hard it was to count and remember all the things about Nathanael.



Come and See Supplies

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- Bible
 - CD player
 - Teacher Pack
 - CD: "Come and See!"
(track 17)





Jesus Knows Supplies

My Bible Fun
crayons

Jesus Knows Easy Prep

Tear out the Lesson 7
pages from each My
Bible Fun student book.

- Why is it so surprising that Jesus knew all about Nathanael?
- What do you like about the fact that Jesus knows all about you?

Say: **Between the different people picking up and leaving their regular lives to follow Jesus, and Philip approaching Nathanael with such excitement, there were a lot of surprising things that happened in these Bible verses. But here's one thing we can be certain of: Jesus is never surprised because ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US! And that's a good thing, because he loves us and can take care of us in the best possible way!**

3 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

Jesus Knows

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US! He knows when we're happy, when we're sad, when we're scared, and when we need help. Turn to someone sitting close to you, and tell that person a specific situation when you'd be glad that Jesus knows everything about you.**

Give children a few moments to talk, and then invite kids to share their answers. If children are slow to respond, ask questions such as "If you were in a scary storm, why would it be nice to know that Jesus knows what's happening?" and "If you were feeling lonely, why might you be glad that Jesus knows?"

After children have shared, give each child a My Bible Fun page. Have kids turn to the "I'm Glad Jesus Knows" section. Have each child draw a picture of a time he or she can be glad that Jesus knows everything. Give kids about five minutes to draw before you continue.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- Tell about the times you most want Jesus to know all about you.
- Tell about the times you least want Jesus to know all about you.
- What might you do differently now that you know Jesus knows all about you?

Say: **Like Jesus knew all about Nathanael, it's a good thing that ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US. Jesus was there for Nathanael. And we know he's always there for us, to protect us and take care of us. And when we do something wrong, we can ask for his forgiveness, and he'll forgive us completely.**





Inside Out

What You'll Do

Direct kids to their My Bible Fun pages. Say: **Pretend that this figure on your My Bible Fun page is you. Use the markers to color the figure to look like you. Draw your hair, your shoes, and the clothes you have on today.** Allow time.


Give each child a cutout from the poster. Say: **Jesus knows what you're like on the outside. But he also knows what you're like on the inside. On this cutout, draw pictures that represent inside things that only Jesus could know about you. For example, you might draw pictures that stand for your feelings, such as a smiley face for when you're happy and a frown for when you're sad. You could also write the names of the people you love right where your heart would be or draw pictures of some of your hopes and dreams.**

Circulate among the children, encouraging and helping as needed. When kids finish drawing, tell them to cut out the figure from My Bible Fun. Show them how to place that figure over the cutout they've just been working on and staple the two figures together at the top.

Say: **Our Key Verse reminds us that ► JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US, too.** Help kids find Psalm 139:1 in their Bibles. Then read it aloud: **"O Lord, you have searched me and you know me" (Psalm 139:1).** Have the kids repeat the verse with you several times.

Say: **Let's sing a song that reminds us what a great thing it is to have a God who knows us and loves us.**

Hand out copies of the lyrics page. Play "And You Love Me" (Psalm 139:1-3) (track 16 on the CD), and encourage the children to sing along.

 **O Lord, you have searched me,
And you know me.
You know when I sit and when I rise;
You perceive my thoughts from afar.
You discern my going out and my lying
down.**

**You are familiar with all my ways.
You are familiar with all my ways.
You are familiar with all my ways,
And you love me (nah, nah, nah, nah),
And you love me (nah, nah, nah, nah).
And you love me.**

(Repeat.)

"And You Love Me" (Psalm 139:1-3) by Carol Smith. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.



Inside Out Supplies

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- Bibles
- My Bible Fun
- CD player
- scissors
- markers
- stapler
- copies of the lyrics page (at the end of the lesson)

Teacher Pack

- CD: "And You Love Me" (Psalm 139:1-3) (track 16)
- "Inside Out" poster

Inside Out Easy Prep

-
- Cut apart the figures on the "Inside Out" poster.





Daily Challenges Supplies

My Bible Fun

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead children in this discussion.

Ask:

- What are some of the differences between the things other people can see about you and the things you drew on your “inside” person?
- What do you think about Jesus knowing all your thoughts?
- What are some things you want Jesus to be able to see in you?

Say: Jesus saw Nathanael—he saw him on the inside and on the outside. Like that, ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US.** He’s the best friend we could ever have, and he wants you to know him, too! We can help others by letting them know Jesus knows about them, too, and loves them.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

What You’ll Do

Say: ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US**—let’s think about how we can act when we remember that.

Have kids find this week’s Daily Challenges on their My Bible Fun pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- Tell each of your family members one thing that you know about them, and then tell them that Jesus knows everything about them!
- Write down three things you know about a friend, and then thank Jesus for knowing everything about everyone!
- Take a walk around your neighborhood, and pray for a neighbor who doesn’t know Jesus.

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What’s a practical way you’re going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.



Say: ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US**, just like he knew all about Nathanael. He knows all our thoughts, worries, and fears. And he understands us, too. This week, let's remember that ► **JESUS KNOWS ALL ABOUT US** as we follow through with our Daily Challenges.

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about Jesus knowing everything about us. Kids can also do the activities in the “HomeConnect” section of their My Bible Fun pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Take a couple of minutes to pray with your kids, thanking God that he knows all about us. Pray: **God, help us not be afraid because you know all about us. Thank you for knowing us so well.** Pause, and encourage kids to silently tell God thank you for something he knows. **Help us think nice things about others because you know all our thoughts, and help us tell others all about you. In Jesus' name, amen.**





Lyrics ■■■■

And You Love Me (Psalm 139:1-3)

O Lord, you have searched me,
And you know me.
You know when I sit and when I rise;
You perceive my thoughts from afar.
You discern my going out and my lying down.

You are familiar with all my ways.
You are familiar with all my ways.
You are familiar with all my ways,
And you love me (nah, nah, nah, nah),
And you love me (nah, nah, nah, nah).
And you love me.

(Repeat.)

"And You Love Me" (Psalm 139:1-3) by Carol Smith. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

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