Lesson Objective: Each child will learn that Jesus loves him and will help him love others.

Bible Memory Words: I John 4:14 — “The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” (KJV)
“The Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.” (NIV)

Preparation: Before the lesson, prepare the heart poster for the Welcome Activity. Cut two small red paper hearts for each child and print her name on each. Cut an 8-inch length of yarn for each child, dip one end in glue to keep it from fraying, and tie a piece of macaroni or a cereal loop to the other end. Read through this lesson for additional preparation tips. Place a check in the box next to each activity you plan to include in your lesson, so you can see at a glance what supplies will be needed.

Arrival Activity

Welcome
Before the lesson, form a large red yarn heart on a poster, bulletin board, or wall at the children’s eye level. Inside the heart, place the Large Heart Pattern (with Jesus in the center) from Teaching Visuals 1A. Print each child's name on a small red heart traced from the Small Heart Pattern from Teaching Visuals 1A (one heart for each child). The hearts may be taped within the yarn heart on the bulletin board or poster and removed after the lesson for use the following week. Greet each child as she arrives. Hand her a heart with her name on it. Say, [Donna], this week you may place a heart with your name on it on the heart poster. Read the words printed on the poster.

Home Living Center
Bring dolls, dishes, cookware, and dress-up clothes. As the children play, talk about how the people in a family show love for one another. Say, [Abby], Jesus loves you. You are taking good care of that doll. God planned for parents to show love by taking care of us.

Art Center
Before this lesson, cut an 8-inch length of yarn for each child. Print each child’s name on a small red heart traced from the Small Heart Pattern (one heart for each child). Punch two holes in the top of each heart. Bring macaroni or cereal loops, a hole punch, tape, and scissors. Give each child a prepared length of yarn, a small paper heart with her name on it, and some macaroni. Let the child string the macaroni and heart onto the yarn to form a bracelet. Say, Your bracelet will help you remember that Jesus loves you.

Circle Time

Prayer Time
As the children gather, encourage them to share their learning center experiences. Pray, thanking God for sending us Jesus, and asking God to help the children learn more about Jesus today.

Puppet Skit
Use the Cubby Bear Puppet or a puppet of your choice in a conversation with the leader.
CUBBY: (Singing) Jesus loves me, this I know.
LEADER: Hi, Cubby! What are you singing about?
CUBBY: I’m singing about how much Jesus loves me.
LEADER: Cubby, how do you know Jesus loves you?
CUBBY: (Sadly) I don’t know. I forgot the words to the song.
LEADER: (To the children) Can you help Cubby, boys and girls? (Let the children respond. Then sing JESUS LOVES ME, THIS I KNOW.)

Song Time
Let volunteers share their learning center experiences. Sing JESUS LOVES ME, THIS I KNOW and JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN.

Bible Story

Listen to the Bible Story
Before the lesson, cut the Cross, Open Tomb, Jesus, Heaven (both visuals), Manger, and People visuals from Teaching Visuals sheets 1A, 1B, and 1C. Back each visual with flannel. Tape a 7-inch length of yarn across the middle of the back of
Jesus lived and died for me

Before Jesus came to earth, He lived in heaven with God. (Place the yarn-backed heaven visual on the flannel board.) God looked down from heaven and saw the people He made on earth. He loved them very much. When they finished their lives on earth, God wanted them to come and live with Him in heaven, too. But there was a problem … a BIG problem! All the people on earth had sinned. Sin is doing what God says is wrong. Everyone had sinned. Short people, tall people, boys and girls, moms and dads — everyone had sinned!

There is no sin in heaven, so people on earth could not go to heaven because everyone had sinned. So God made a plan to change this. God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth to tell people about His love. Jesus would die to take the punishment for their sins so they could go to heaven and live with God. God did this because He loved people so much. When Jesus came from heaven, He was born as a baby. (Place the Manger visual on the board. Connect the yarn from the Heaven visual to the Manger.) Mary put Jesus in a manger because there was no crib for Him to sleep in. Angels from heaven filled the sky announcing Jesus’ birth. One angel said that Jesus was the Savior. Jesus came to save people from their sins so they could go to heaven.

Jesus grew up and showed people God’s love. (Place the Jesus visual on the board, connecting the yarn from the Manger.) Jesus showed love to everyone. (Place the People visual on the board, connecting the yarn.) He made sick people well. He held children in His arms. Jesus told them about God’s plan to save them from sin.

Then the time came for Jesus to die. (Place the Cross visual on the board, connecting the yarn.) He loved us so much that He let people be mean to Him and hang Him on a cross. Jesus died on the cross. Then they put His body in a tomb or a grave.

Three days later, Jesus came alive again. (Place the Open Tomb visual on the board, connecting the yarn.) Now Jesus is in heaven preparing for all those who love Him to join Him there someday. (Place the second Heaven visual, connecting the yarn.)

God wants us to believe in His Son, Jesus, so He can forgive all our sins. When we believe, we are saved from the punishment for our sin! With our sins forgiven, we can go to heaven. Jesus is the Savior. He saves us from our sin because He loves us so much. Jesus is wonderful! I’m glad Jesus loves you and me!

Let’s Do Something Special

Before the lesson, prepare a special love box decorated with hearts or red paper. Inside the box place a mirror. One by one, ask the children to come and look inside the box. Tell them they will look into the box and see someone whom Jesus loves very much. Try to keep the mirror a secret (whisper to each child as he looks in the box not to tell anyone what he sees in it), so each child will be surprised when he looks into the box. However, don’t be discouraged if an excited child blurts out the secret. After each child looks in the box say, Jesus loves you, [Angela].

Review the Bible Story

Arrange chairs or sports cones to form a simple maze around the play area. Place today’s Bible story visuals along the maze path (taping them to the back of some of the chairs or cones) to help the children review the story. Move the children through the maze, stopping to discuss each visual. As you review Jesus’ life on earth, explain to the children, Because Jesus loves us so much, He came to earth to show us His love and to teach us how to love each other.

Bible Activity Sheet A

Hand out crayons and Bible Activity Sheet IA. Help the children trace the broken lines to connect the pictures in the correct story order. Talk to them about how much Jesus loves us and how we can show love to others — by helping others, hugging others, and telling others about God’s plan to save us from our sins through Jesus.

Bible Memory

Bible Words Memory Time

I John 4:14 — “The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” (KJV)
“The Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.” (NIV)

Before the lesson, use the Large Heart Pattern from Teaching Visuals sheet 1 to cut a large red construction paper heart. Print the words, “The Father sent the Son,” (or “The Father has sent His Son”) on the heart. Use the Cross visual from the Bible story. Print the words, “to be the Saviour of the world,” on the cross.

Talk about the meaning of the Bible Words. Point to them in your Bible. Say, God sent Jesus to be the Savior because He loves us so much. Divide your children into two groups. Select one person from each group to hold the visuals. One child will hold the heart and say, “The Father sent the Son.” The other child will hold the cross and say, “to be the Saviour of the world.” Let the children in each group take turns holding the visuals as everyone repeats the Bible Words.

Bible Activities

❑ Bible Activity Sheet B

Hand out Bible Activity Sheet 1B, crayons and three stickers (or three small paper hearts) to each child. Point out the pictures on the page. Have the children describe what is happening in each picture. Read the directions aloud, and let them place a sticker (or glue a paper heart) beside the pictures in which children are showing love to others (all pictures except the child hitting another child). Let the children color the pictures. Praise them for their efforts. Say, God is pleased when we show love to each other.

❑ Bible Activity Sheet C: Fiction Story

Read the fiction story from Bible Activity Sheet 1C. Show the pictures as you tell the story. Then talk about the questions. Say, Jesus loves us so much that He wants each of us to live with Him in heaven someday. (Talk privately with any child who seems interested in accepting Jesus as his Savior. See the Tip at the end of this lesson.)

❑ Bible Activity Sheet D: Craft Time

Today, each child will make a heart booklet. Give each child Bible Activity Sheet 1D-KJV or 1D-NIV. Also provide glue, crayons, safety scissors, and tape. Read aloud the Bible Words and the sentence on the page. Give instructions for making the first picture pages of the Jesus Loves Me Booklet. Let the child cut out the yellow words box. Help the child fold the page in half and cut out the heart. (Bring tape for repairs.) The child will then color the inside heart pages and glue the yellow words box inside the heart. Let him print his name somewhere on the heart. As the children work, talk to them about ways they can show love. Remind them that Jesus loves each of them.

❑ Snack Time

Prepare one frosted heart cookie for each child, or use a heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut heart shapes from bread slices and top each slice with jelly. Also serve juice. Ask a volunteer to say a prayer of thanks before eating. As the children eat ask, How does this snack remind you of today’s lesson? Point out that the heart reminds us that Jesus loves us and wants us to love each other.

❑ Hopping Bunnies Game

Help the children form a circle. Show them how to bend in a stooping position, hands behind ears, palms forward. Have them walk around the circle as you count, “1, 2, 3, hop!” On the word “hop,” everyone hops with both feet together, landing in a squatting position. Play music in the background. Say, We can be as happy as hopping bunnies because Jesus loves each of us. Continue the bunny hop as time allows.

❑ Take-Home Paper

Give each child a Take-Home Paper 1. Explain that the children can complete the activity and do the Family Project at home during the week. As an incentive, ask the children to bring the completed paper back next week to receive a sticker. (Give a sticker to any child who brought back last week’s paper.)

❑ Closing Prayer Time

Sing JESUS LOVES ME one more time. Lead the children in a closing prayer to thank God for loving us and sending Jesus to be our Savior. Hand out today’s craft and the completed activity sheets to each child.

Teacher Tip

❑ Tip: The Salvation Message for Preschoolers

If a child comes to you and says, “I would like Jesus to forgive my sins,” be aware that the Holy Spirit may be tugging at that child’s heart. It is not the time to give the child a test to see if he knows what he’s doing; it is time to lead him in a simple prayer of invitation. But it’s best not to ask the children, either as a group or individually, “Would you like to become God’s child?” Let the initiative come from them. Otherwise, some children may only be following the lead of their peers.
Jesus Loves Me

Jesus left heaven, was born as a baby, grew up, and showed people God’s love. He died on a cross for our sins, and He rose again. Now He lives in heaven and in the hearts of those who love Him. Jesus loves each of us (Luke 2:4-11; 18:15-17, 35-42; 19:8-11; 24:1-6; John 3:16; Romans 3:23-24; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Use a crayon to connect the numbered pictures so they tell the story of Jesus’ life and death in the correct order. The first two are done for you.
I Can Love Others

Color the pictures. Place a sticker beside each picture of a child showing love to others.
Jason and Jenny were sitting on the family room floor, coloring pictures. Jason drew a cowboy. Jenny drew a tree, a lake, a fish, and a bird.

“Look at my picture,” said Jason.

“That’s a good picture,” replied Jenny. “I wish I could draw as good as you.” She had always thought Jason’s pictures were good. He was five, and she was only four. She couldn’t wait until she was five and could draw pictures like Jason’s.

“Let me see your picture, Jenny,” said Jason.

“Okay, but don’t laugh!” said Jenny. Jason looked at Jenny’s picture. Then he laughed. “Your picture is so funny, Jenny,” he said.

Mother looked at Jenny’s sad face.

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Mother looked at Jenny’s picture. Then she smiled.

Jenny looked at the picture again. She saw the bird in the lake and the fish in the tree. That was a funny picture. Jenny started to laugh.

“You know,” said Mother, “this picture reminds me of heaven. Birds can’t live in water. Fish can’t live in trees. And we can’t live in heaven when we have sin in our hearts.”

“How can we live in heaven, Mom?” asked Jason.

Mother explained, “Jesus came to earth to die for our sins and take them away so we could live in heaven with Him. When we believe in Jesus and ask Him into our hearts, He takes away our sins. Jesus fixes it so we can live in heaven! Now let’s fix your picture, Jenny.”
Mother cut out the bird and glued it in the tree. Jenny cut out the fish and put it in the lake.

“We fixed it, Mom!” cried out Jenny.

“Thanks!”

“And thank You, Jesus, for fixing it so we can go to heaven someday,” said Jason.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT

1. Who are the special people in your family?
2. Does Jesus want each person in your family to go to heaven someday?
The Father sent the Son...
The Father has sent His Son . . .

I love Jesus

— I John 4:14
Which Happened First?

Cubby Bear met an angry lion one day. Cubby is glad his father loves him and saved him from the lion. We can be glad, too, that God loves us and sent Jesus to save us. Trace the numbers in the pictures to show the correct order in which they happened. Then color the pictures.

FAMILY PROJECT

Dear Boys & Girls,

Find a large, smooth rock. Have someone help you paint a cross on the rock. As you work, talk about God’s love and how Jesus died on a cross for our sins. Use the cross-rock for a paperweight (to put on top of papers you have, like your take-home papers, so they won’t blow away).

MEMORY VERSE TO LEARN

I John 4:14 — “The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” (KJV)
“The Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.” (NIV)
Jesus loves me!

Large Heart Pattern
(Lessons 1-4)

Small Heart Pattern
(Lessons 1-4)

Cross

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