



February 12, 2023

Jesus' Baptism

Scripture: Matthew 3:13-17

Supplies: Announcement microphone

Opening:

Say: Hello, everyone! Our Bible story today is an amazing one, and it comes from the Book of John. (*Hold up Bible.*) John is one of the four books at the beginning of the New Testament that we call the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Together, these books help us understand all that Jesus did and said while He was living on Earth.

Last week we talked about a time when Jesus was a boy. He stayed behind after the Passover celebration to talk about God with the leaders of the temple. Jesus wanted to learn all He could about God, so He asked a ton of questions to gain more knowledge.

This week, we're talking about another man who was seeking after God . . . and it just so happens that this man was Jesus' cousin. His name was John. Not the John who wrote the Book of John, but another John, known as John the Baptist

Skit:

Host: And it's time to tune in for a special report . . . from the Saanich Kids Morning News!

Ladies and gentlemen, good day to you, and welcome to the Saanich Kids Morning News. I'm your anchor, Ollie Oxenfree. Our top story tonight? A VISIT from an ANGEL with some NEWS. (*Change slide*)

Our field correspondent, Benderscoop Cragglethatch, is on location with the happy couple. Benderscoop, what can you tell us about this divine visitation?

Volunteer #1: "Well, Ollie, I just spoke to the couple . . . and what I can tell you is that they are equal parts excited and terrified. It's not every day that an actual angel comes a-calling."

Host: You spoke with Zechariah and Elizabeth?

Volunteer #1: Well, kind of. Zechariah was having a bit of a hard time talking. But Elizabeth filled me in. It seems the two of them have been wanting a child for, like, forever! But they're super old, and they can't have any kids. However, the angel Gabriel paid Zechariah a visit. The angel said that God had other plans for Elizabeth—at least for the next nine months or so.

"The angel said—and I quote:

"Do not be afraid, Zechariah. Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will have a child. It will be a boy, and you must call him John" (Luke 1:13 NIV).

Host: "Wow. Just . . . wow."

Volunteer #1: "Yep. It seems God's always got some kind of plan, doesn't He?"

Host: "So how did Gabriel leave it with the two soon-to-be parents?"

Volunteer #1: “I’m glad you asked. Gabriel said this about their baby John:

“He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will prepare the way for the Lord (Luke 1:15-17 NIV).”

“Sounds like after talkin’ with the Lord . . . there’s a baby on board! Reporting live from Judea, this is Benderscoop Cragglethatch.”

Host: And now, another special report from the [name of your environment] Morning News. Our top story? A MAN in hot WATER fielding some tough QUESTIONS. (*Change slide*)

Our field correspondent Bentobox Cucumberpatch is on location near the Jordan River. Bentobox? Are you there? What can you tell us?

Volunteer #2: Ollie, it’s been quite the scene down here at the Jordan River. People asking questions . . . John baptizing people left and right . . . it’s mayhem—pure mayhem.”

Host: “I see. So who is asking these questions?”

Volunteer #2: “Well, it seems that the religious leaders sent some priests and teachers to question John. After all, John is clearly a special guy. He’s baptizing all these people. The leaders wanted to know if HE is the Savior—the One God has promised to His people. But John told them that he is not the Messiah. He simply said . . . and I quote:

“I am not the Messiah” (John 1:20, NIV).

Host: “Wow. Just . . . wow.”

Volunteer #2: “The priests and teachers then peppered him with questions. They were like: Are you Elijah? and *ARE you the Prophet we’ve been expecting?*” (*John 1:21, NIV*) ‘Who ARE you, anyway?’ Get this. John simply said that he’s a messenger sent to prepare the way for Someone else.

“What was it he said next? Ah, yes.

“I baptize people with water,” John replied. “But someone is standing among you whom you do not know. He is the one who comes after me. I am not good enough to untie his sandals” (John 1:26-27, NIV).

“This is Bentobox Cucumberpatch, reporting live from the Jordan River.”

Host: Whoa, what new-tastic morning! Let’s thank our volunteers.

Even from a young age, John knew that his whole purpose was to prepare the way for Jesus. When Jesus finally came, John couldn’t have been more excited! He knew he had to get out of the way so that Jesus could take the lead. He knew that Jesus was the Savior, and that there was nothing more important than getting to know and follow Him.

If we want to know God, we need to start with Jesus. That’s what John did. He had spent his whole life praying, seeking, and listening to God. John told people that if they REALLY wanted to know God better, knowing Jesus was a great place to start.



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If you want to learn more about Jesus, you can go right to the Bible. (Hold up Bible.) If you read the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John at the beginning of the New Testament, you can read about how Jesus lived, how He died for the sins of the world, and how He rose from the dead.

Think of Jesus like a key. When you investigate what Jesus said and what He did, you can unlock knowledge about God that will absolutely change your life! Let's talk about that some more in activity time."

K/1

Video: <https://youtu.be/7NMHOLPWeTM>

Retell:

Like a Dove

What You Need: “Dove Template”, crayons, clear tape, paperclips

What You Do:

- Set out the crayons and give each child a “Dove Template.”
- Encourage kids to color their birds as they choose.
- As they work, ask questions to help them remember the key points of the story and internalize its truths.
 - What was John doing at the Jordan River? (*Baptizing people in the river*)
 - What happened after John baptized Jesus? (*God sent His Holy Spirit to come down on Jesus like a dove; God said, “This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him.”*)
 - What do you think it would’ve been like to see God’s Spirit rest on Jesus? (*Pause.*) How do you think you would’ve felt if you were there to see it happen? (*Pause.*)
 - When people started following Jesus instead of John, what did John say? (*“I am not the Messiah. He must become more important.”*)
- When kids finish coloring, give each child two paperclips and lead them to tape the paperclips at the tips of the dove’s wings.
- Show kids how to balance their doves on their fingers.
- Encourage kids to take their doves home as reminders that God said: *This is my Son, and I love him. I am very pleased with him (Matthew 3:17 NIV).*

What You Say: John had spent his whole life listening to God—so when he saw Jesus, he knew who Jesus was. He knew that Jesus was God’s Son, and he knew that Jesus had come to take away our sins. And since John knew Who Jesus was, he told everyone that JESUS was the One to follow. Knowing Jesus changed John’s life, and it also changed the lives of everyone who followed Him. It changed what they did, how they thought, how they talked, and how they lived. Knowing Jesus can change your life, too. How do you think knowing Jesus can change your life? (*This question may be challenging for some—if not all—of your kids. That’s okay. Give them a minute to think, and then continue.*) [*Make It Personal*] (*Tell kids how knowing Jesus has changed your life.*) So, remember: if you want to know God, start with Jesus.”

Activity:

This I Know

What You Need: “Jesus” Activity Page; sticky notes; markers

What You Do:

- Post the “Jesus” Activity Page on a focal wall or similar.
- **Ask:** “What are some things that you know about Jesus?”
 - Kids can literally name ANYTHING they know about Jesus: that He was born in a stable, that He’s God’s Son, that He healed people, that He was kind, that He was a good teacher, etc.
- Set out the sticky notes and guide kids to write or draw what they know about Jesus—one idea per note.
- Kids can write/draw as many as they wish.
- **[Make It Personal] Write or draw things that you know about Jesus, too.**
- Collect the notes.
- Read/describe each one and post it around the “Jesus” Activity Page (or let kids post them).
- *HINT: This activity is a great way to assess kids’ knowledge about Jesus. You can also use this as an opportunity to “fill in the blanks” with any essential truths about Him that kids may have missed.*

What You Say: “Wow! Jesus is amazing! No wonder we say that if you want to know God, start with Jesus. He is *(name some truths the kids identified)*. Of everything you know about Jesus, what’s your favorite thing about Him? *(He loves me; He came to be my Savior; He did cool stuff like healing people; etc.)* **[Make It Personal]** I think my favorite thing about Jesus is _____ *(tell kids your favorite thing)*.”

Since it’s important to know Jesus, how can you learn more about Him? *(I can read my Bible; I can hear stories about Him; I can ask questions about Him; I can pray; etc.)* Good thinking! I like your ideas. So remember, if you want to know God, start with Jesus.”

Grade 2-3

Classroom Management Activity:

Guidelines:

Supplies: Butcher paper, markers

- Work with your students to create classroom guidelines so that all can learn, be safe and have fun.
- Guide them to rules like: Be respectful of others, Listen and follow direction, Be ready to learn, Ask questions, Keep objects, hands and feet to ourselves, and Always try our best.

Peter the Poro

- Introduce Peter the Poro. Peter likes to see kids work together, respect others and learn about Jesus! He also likes to give out fun treats like class fidget privileges, candy and time to play games in the big room when the lesson is over.
- Peter can only give out these treats when we all work together to respect our Class Guidelines

Read: Matthew 3:13-17

Retell:

Unscramble This!

What You Need: Paper, pencils, white board, dry-erase marker

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. Instruct the kids to tear their papers into six pieces.
- Write the following scrambled word on the white board: H J N O.
- Encourage the kids to unscramble the word and write their answer on one of the strips of paper.
- Tell kids to hold up their papers as they finish.
- Repeat the steps above with the following scrambled words:
 - L J H E I A - *Elijah*
 - H P R P O E T - *Prophet*
 - S U E J S - *Jesus*
 - A T P I B M S - *Baptism*
 - N E R W D A - *Andrew*
- Once all answers have been revealed, erase or cross out all the scrambled words and write them correctly on the board (*John, Elijah, prophet, Jesus, baptism, Andrew*).
- Then review the Bible story using the key points below, pointing to the words on the board and having the kids hold up the names/words as they come up.
- As you review the story, try to let kids say what they remember from the story about each name. then use the info below to fill in any gaps.
- **Key Points:**

- John: Jesus' cousin, sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus; many people gathered to hear him teach and be baptized; a lot of people asked John, "Who are you?"
- Elijah: The people asked John, "Are you Elijah?" John answered, "I am not"; he was a prophet from the Old Testament and the people thought maybe God had sent him back with a special message
- Prophet: Others asked John, "Are you the prophet sent from God?" John again answered, "I am not"; when they asked John again who he was, he said, "I'm the messenger, calling out in the desert, 'Make way for the Lord'"; John was the one preparing the people for Jesus
- Jesus: When Jesus arrived, John said, "Behold, the lamb of God!"; John continued to point people to Jesus, the true Messiah, the one sent by God.
- Baptism: Jesus asked John to baptize him; John tried to stop him, saying Jesus should baptize him but Jesus insisted; John baptized Jesus
- Andrew: Andrew heard John say that Jesus was the Messiah; he also told his brother Simon Peter, and both men believed and followed Jesus; John continued to tell people that Jesus was the Messiah, NOT him; some believed him, others did not.

What You Say: "Why do you think the people kept asking John who he was? (*Because he was preaching and teaching*) John recognized that Jesus was the one they'd been waiting for, the lamb of God who had come to make a way for us to have a relationship with God. John understood that in order to truly know God, you had to start with Jesus. John wasn't the Messiah, and he was careful to always point people to the real Savior, who was sent by God. Jesus, God's only Son, was the only one who could make a way for our sins to be forgiven and for us to have a relationship with God. That's why if you want to know God, start with Jesus."

Activity

Look to Jesus

What You Need: "What Jesus Said / Did" Activity Pages, Bibles, whiteboard, dry-erase marker

What You Do:

- Divide kids into four groups. Give each group a Bible.
- Ask a volunteer to look up John 14:6-7 and read it to the group. Explain that Jesus came to show us who God is.
- Give each group one of the Activity Pages.

- Instruct the groups to look at the picture on their Activity Page and look up the verse listed on the page.
- As they look up the verse, ask them to think about the following questions:
 - What did Jesus do or say in these verses?
 - What does that tell me about God?
 - Write these two questions on the whiteboard for reference.
- Encourage groups to write their answers on the Activity Page and then share them with the rest of the group.

What You Say: If you want to know God, start with Jesus. We can know who God is and what is important to Him when we look to Jesus. How did Jesus serve? (*Pause for answers.*) Yes! He showed the importance of putting others first when He got down on His hands and knees and washed His friends' stinky feet! Why did Jesus take care of dinner? (*Pause.*) That's right. Jesus fed a huge crowd with one small lunch to show how much He cared. What did Jesus say is the most important thing we could do? (*Pause for answers.*) Yes, to love! First to love God and then to love everyone around us. And finally, what did Jesus say about how we should talk to God? (*Pause.*) Exactly! Jesus said we don't need to worry about using big words; we can just talk to God like He's standing right in front of us. And Jesus said that we should pray on our own—not worrying about putting on a show for others but simply talking to God.

Jesus taught us how to treat others. He taught us how to love and serve and pray. God sent Jesus to show us who He is and to make a way for us to have a relationship with Him now and forever. [If you want to know God, start with Jesus.

Grades 4-5

Read: Matthew 3:13-17

Retell:

Ask:

- What do you know about Jesus?
- How has knowing who Jesus is changed your life?
- How does knowing Jesus change how you treat people?
- How does knowing Jesus show you how much God loves you?

Activity:

Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Butcher paper, markers, index cards

What You Do:

- **Lay** out a large piece of butcher paper on the floor or hard surface and **set** out several markers.
- **Gather** kids around the paper.
- **Ask:** What are some things Jesus did?
 - **Encourage** kids to think of the stories they've read in the Bible about Jesus or stories they have heard at church.
- **Tell** kids to write their answers on the butcher paper.
 - Examples could include: *died on a cross, healed people, was baptized, obeyed God, preached the Good News, taught people, calmed the storms, walked on water, loved people, forgave Peter, ate with sinners, washed disciples' feet, etc.*

Note: This activity provides a way for you to evaluate what the kids in your group know about Jesus and His life.

- **Ask:** What do the things Jesus did tell us about who He is? What was important to Him? What adjectives would describe Jesus?
- **Tell** kids to write their answers on an index card, one answer per card

Bible Story Extension

What You Need: Masking tape, coloured paper, bean bag, Bibles, index cards from the "Take a Snapshot" Activity

What You Do:

- **Divide** the group into two teams.
- **Create** a three-foot by three-foot grid on the floor (or table) using masking tape.
- **Tell** kids they are going to review the Bible story by playing Tic-Tac-Toe.
- To play:

- **Assign** each team a color and give them paper matching the color you assigned them. The colored paper is the team's "markers."
- Teams take turns tossing a beanbag into one of the squares on the grid.
- Once the bag lands in the square, the team must answer a review question correctly before they can place their "marker" the square.
- The first team to get three "markers" in a row wins.
- For Round 1, the team gives a fact about John the Baptist.
- For Round 2, do the following:
 - **Lay** out all the index cards describing Jesus.
 - **Read** a scenario below. *Note: You can use a scenario more than once. Just **direct** kids to pick a different index card to complete the sentence.*
 - After a team throws the beanbag, **direct** them to select an index card to complete the sentence and then answer the question before putting a "marker" in a square.
 - When dealing with an annoying kid in class, how does it help you knowing Jesus is *[fill in with one of the index cards]*?
 - When your soccer team wins the championship game, how does it help you knowing Jesus is *[fill in with one of the index cards]*?
 - When you are afraid, how does it help you knowing Jesus is *[fill in with one of the index cards]*?
 - When you have to finish something you don't want to do, how does it help you knowing Jesus is *[fill in with one of the index cards]*?
 - When someone is being mean to you, how does it help you knowing Jesus is *[fill in with one of the index cards]*?
 - When your friend is sad, how does it help you knowing Jesus is *[fill in with one of the index cards]*?
 - When your feelings are hurt, how does it help you knowing Jesus is *[fill in with one of the index cards]*?