

Theme

John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus

Object

A bag of candy with a piece of candy for each child

Scripture

Matthew 3:1-12

Today we're going to talk about what it means to be ready. To help us out, I have a bag of candy. When I ask, "Are you ready?" the kids who can show me what it means to be ready will get a piece of candy.

What does it look like when we're ready? (Allow kids to answer.)

That's right! Being ready means that we are patient, we wait, and we watch.

Okay, are you ready to start our lesson today? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and say things like, "I see you're ready because you are waiting patiently" or "I see you're ready because you are watching me.")

Are you ready for Christmas? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

You will hear that question many times over the next several weeks. Let's find out what people mean when they ask that question.

Raise your hand if your Christmas tree is up and your house is decorated.

Raise your hand if you've finished your Christmas shopping.

Raise your hand if you've been practicing for a Christmas program.

There's another question that we should be asking ourselves today. It's more important than "Are you ready for Christmas?" The more important question is "Are you ready for the Christ of Christmas?" (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

Many years ago, a man named John the Baptist preached about what it means to be ready for Jesus. Are you ready to answer a question? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

What do you think it means to be ready for Jesus?

John the Baptist was a different kind of man. He wore clothes made of camel's hair with a belt around his waist. His diet was rather unusual as well. He ate a diet of locusts and wild honey. Do you know what a locust is? Many of us today might call it a grasshopper. I'm not sure I would want to eat grasshoppers and honey. How about you?

John the Baptist traveled throughout the wilderness of Judea. His message to the people was to get ready for Jesus. John would shout loudly, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Are you ready for Jesus? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

Many people were ready for Jesus. So they came to John the Baptist. They confessed their sins to God and were baptized by John in the Jordan River.

After John baptized the people, he told them, "I baptize you with water for repentance. But there is one coming who is more powerful than I. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Are you ready for Jesus this Christmas? (Give a few kids who are ready a piece of candy and affirm the way they're ready.)

During this special season of the year as we get ready for Christmas, you and I need to make sure we're ready for the coming of the Christ of Christmas. We need to look into our hearts and ask God to make us clean so we can walk with Jesus each day of our life. Let's ask him to do that now.

Prayer of the Day:

Dear God, we want to be ready for the Christ of Christmas. Prepare our hearts for his coming. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

John the Baptist
Coloring Page



Ready For The Christ of Christmas
Decoder

Ready for the Christ of Christmas

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."
Matthew 3:1 (NIV)

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



JOHN THE BAPTIST
Matthew 3

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 16-18-5-1-3-8 _____
- 2-1-16-20-9-26-5 _____
- 16-1-20-8-19 _____
- 4-5-19-5-18-20 _____
- 19-20-18-1-9-7-8-20 _____
- 12-15-3-21-19-20-19 _____
- 16-18-5-16-1-18-5 _____
- 8-15-14-5-25 _____

BAPTIZE	PREPARE	STRAIGHT	LOCUSTS
PATHS	HONEY	PREACH	DESERT

Sunday School Crafts Activities: "Prepare the Way" Path Activity

This craft helps kids understand **John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus** and encourages reflection on what it means to "make straight paths."



📌 Materials Needed

- 1 sheet of cardstock or construction paper (any color)
- Brown paper or crayons/markers to draw a path
- Popsicle stick
- Small paper cutout of John the Baptist (stick figure is fine)
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- Markers/crayons
- Optional: small stones or stickers labeled with words (e.g., "anger," "lying," "kindness")

📌 Instructions

1 Make the "Wilderness" Background

- On your cardstock, draw a simple desert scene:
 - Sand or dirt ground
 - Some bushes or rocks
 - The sky

This represents the **wilderness where John preached.**

2 Create the Path

- Draw a wide, wavy path going across the page.
- Color it brown so it looks like a dusty road.

Idea: Make it bumpy or crooked at first.

3 Add "Obstacles" on the Path

Write or add small stones/stickers along the path representing things people may need to "repent" from, like:

- "selfishness"
- "anger"
- "lying"
- "unkindness"
- "disobedience"

These represent the **crooked or rough places** that John said must be made straight.

4 Straighten the Path Together (Interactive Part!)

Have the children do this:

- Remove stones one by one (or turn them into good actions by flipping or replacing them with words like "kindness," "truth," "sharing").
- Draw over the path to make it *straight and smooth*.

Teaching moment:

John the Baptist told the people to prepare their hearts by removing sinful behaviors.

5 Make "John the Baptist on a Stick"

- Draw a simple figure of John the Baptist wearing camel hair and a belt.
- Cut him out and glue him to a popsicle stick.

Now he becomes a **puppet**!

6 Move John Along the Path

Kids can use the stick to move John along the path as they "prepare" it.

As he moves, they can say:

- “Repent!”
- “Prepare the way for the Lord!”

This makes the craft fun and interactive.

Optional Add-Ons

- Add a small paper “fire” for verse 11–12 about the Holy Spirit and fire.
- Add a small blue “water” circle for his baptisms in the Jordan River.
- Place a small picture of Jesus at the end of the path to show who John was preparing the way for.

Lesson from the crafts activity:

- Who John the Baptist was
- What “repent” means
- What it means to prepare our hearts
- Visualizes “making straight paths”
- Helps kids reflect on behavior changes