

## JOHN POINTED TO JESUS | Matthew 3; John 1; 3

**Bible Story:** John the Baptist told people to follow Jesus.

**Memory Verse:** <sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. **John 1:1-2**

**Big Picture Question:** Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.

**Bottom Line:** *We share Jesus because He is God.*

**Christ Connection:** *John the Baptist told people to get ready for Jesus, the promised Messiah. Now that Jesus was on earth, John's mission was complete. Jesus was greater than John, and John joyfully stepped aside as Jesus began His earthly ministry.*

### 10 Minutes SOCIAL: SETTING THE TONE OF THE EXPERIENCE

Aces in the Pot /LCR Dice Game

**What You Need:** 2 dice (per group), 2 tokens per player, a "pot"/bowl

**What You Do:**

- Each player starts with 2 tokens.
- Decide who goes first.
- Players take turns in a clockwise fashion. A player rolls the dice and loses tokens according to the following rules.
  - If one of the dice show a "1", he puts one of his tokens in the pot.
  - If he rolls double "1s", he puts two tokens (or one if that is all he has) in the pot.
  - If he rolls one "6" (the number 6, not a combination that adds to six) he must pass one token to the player on his left.
  - If he rolls a double "6", he passes two tokens (or one, if that is all he has) to the player on his left.
  - If he rolls neither a "1" nor a "6", he takes no action and passes the dice.
  - If a player has no tokens, he is out of the game and can still receive tokens! He is unable to roll the dice, and passes his turn until such time as he has gained on or more tokens.
  - Play continues until all tokens are in the pot except for one. The player with the last remaining token rolls the dice three times in a row. If he does not roll a "6" he wins. If he rolls a "6", he passes the dice to the next player who rolls the dice three times, and so forth. The first player to roll the dice three times without rolling a "6" wins.

**What You Say** "That was a fun game. I love playing games with you guys. It helps me learn more about you. Like today I learned ... Let's clean up and get ready to hear about how we can Follow the Leader today.

### 10 Minutes Worship: CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING

SONGS, OFFERING AND PRAYER

### 15 Minutes LARGE GROUP: COMMUNICATING GOD'S TRUTH IN ENGAGING WAYS

CONTEXT

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, the prophets had spoken of a forerunner—someone who would get people ready for Jesus. (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1) At just the right time, "John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1:4).

These baptisms were an outward sign of cleansing for people who had repented of their sins. John's followers were concerned when they saw Jesus and His disciples, who were baptizing people too.

They came to John, who pointed out several things about himself and about Jesus. Consider these comparisons as John explained that Jesus was greater than John. First, who were they? John was clear: "I am not the Messiah" (John 3:28). John was not the bridegroom, but the groom's friend. Jesus is the bridegroom. (John 3:29) Where did they come from? John was from the earth, and he belonged to the

earth. Jesus comes from above and is above all. (John 3:31) What did they do? John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." John was a witness to the Light. (John 1:7-8) He was a voice in the wilderness, and Jesus is the Word. (John 1:14,23)

John the Baptist told people to get ready for the Messiah. He baptized with water, but Jesus baptized with the Spirit. (John 1:33) Finally, why were they here? John went before Jesus and rejoiced with Him. (John 3:28-29) Jesus came to give eternal life. (John 3:36) John described his joy as being complete. (John 3:29) The One for whom he had prepared the people was here. The time had come for John to step aside and let Jesus take the spotlight. John's mission was complete.

## TEACHING FOCUS (John Points to Jesus)

As we teach kids about Jesus, lead them to see the relationship that John had with Jesus. John spoke about a wedding. If you go to a wedding, you celebrate the man and woman getting married. In a way, it's also like a birthday party. When you go to a friend's party, you know that people are celebrating the birthday girl, not you. John knew that it was time for Jesus to be celebrated and John was ready to step aside so Jesus could get the glory He deserves. John wanted people to know and obey Jesus. Because we, too, have a relationship with Jesus, we can point people to Jesus like John did. We tell people about Jesus because He is God.

**Christ Connection:** *John the Baptist told people to get ready for Jesus, the promised Messiah. Now that Jesus was on earth, John's mission was complete. Jesus was greater than John, and John joyfully stepped aside as Jesus began His earthly ministry.*

**Bottom Line:** *We share Jesus because He is God.*

### Today's Takeaways:

- John's disciples were concerned about people following Jesus instead of John
- John said that Jesus is more important than anyone, including John himself.
- John the Baptist told people to follow Jesus.
- We can tell others about Jesus, too.
- **Bottom Line:** We tell others about Jesus because He is God.

## PRAYER AND TIME OF COMMITMENT

Give kids a chance to believe in Jesus for the first time. Remind them that God loves them so much that He sent Jesus to earth to pay for their sins. Lead them to pray as you pray. Pray that believers will submit their lives to the Holy Spirit, follow Jesus, and tell others about Him.

### 25 Minutes SMALL GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

#### Discussion Questions:

- **What did John want to happen?** *(John wanted Jesus to get the glory as Messiah; John 3:30-31,35)*
- **Why is it good to glorify Jesus?** *Guide kids to understand that people were created by God to glorify God. Jesus is God the Son. When we glorify Him in our lives, we are fulfilling our purpose, and it is good for us. Everything God does is for His glory and our good, including creating us to worship Him.*

- **When is it hard to glorify Jesus?** *Discuss situations kids may face that can fill them with pride or arrogance. Explain that sinful pride makes it impossible to glorify Jesus. Remind them that our gifts and talents were given by God as a way to glorify God. When we do well, we can thank God and remind other people about His goodness to bless us with talents or skills.*
- **How can we learn to show humility?** *Explain that the first step toward humility is understanding who Jesus is. He is God's beloved Son. He is the Messiah. The story of our lives is ultimately about Him, not any of us. Help kids consider that all people are equally valuable to God as all people are made in His image. None of us are better. All of us are His creations.*

**Activity:** Mission Complete

**What You Need** paper, marker

**What You Do:**

- List on a piece of paper 5 to 10 tasks kids can complete in the classroom.
- Make 2 copies of the task list.
- Sample:
  - Count how many steps it takes to walk from one side of the room to the other.
  - Tell your leader your favorite movie.
  - Sing the alphabet song.
  - Do 20 jumping jacks.
  - Recite the memory verse.
  - Answer the big picture question: Is Jesus God or a human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.
  - High five 3 other people.
- Form two teams.
- Provide each team with a prepared task list.
- Signal teams to begin.
- Kids should work together to complete the tasks.
- When a team finishes, its players should sit down and shout, Mission Complete!

**What You Say** “Finishing something you worked hard at feels great. John the Baptist told people to follow Jesus. Now that Jesus was there, John’s mission was complete. Jesus was greater than John, and John joyfully stepped aside as Jesus began His earthly ministry. Because we know that Jesus is good, we can find joy in pointing others to Jesus. We don’t need fame or recognition for the things we accomplish. God gives us talents to point people to Him. We give glory to Jesus because He gave His life to rescue us. How can you use John’s example to point people to Jesus this week?”

**Activity: Memory Verse Activity**

**What You Need:** Memory Verse Poster, Bible Memory Verse Grid Poster laminated or put in page protector, sticky notes, dry erase markers

**What You Do:**

- Show kids the Memory Verse Grid and have them say the verse with you 3 times.
- Then cover all the words with sticky notes.
- Split the group into 2 teams and give each team a different color dry erase marker.
- Get teams to take turns in choosing a space and saying which word should be under the post it note.

- If they are correct, they can circle the word in their team color. They can discuss answers in their team but a different person must speak each time.
- The first team with 3 words in a row/across is the winner.

**What You Say** ” Jesus life as a human started when Mary became pregnant, but God the Son existed long before that. In fact, He has no beginning and no end. He has always existed and will always exist. That what our memory verse teaches. Jesus was with God the Father and the Holy Spirit at the start of creation, and He is God the Son.”

**Pray and Dismiss:**

**What You Need:** no supplies needed

**What You Say:**

““Father, help us show the same humility that John showed. Help us understand that Jesus is the only One who deserves glory. Give us opportunities to celebrate and obey Him. We ask You to decrease our pride and increase Jesus’ glory through our lives. Amen.

**5 Minutes HOME:** PROMPTING ACTION BEYOND THE EXPERIENCE

As adults arrive to pick up, encourage your kids to tell their parents about our Big Picture Question: **Is Jesus God or human? As the Son of God, Jesus is both fully God and fully human.** Encourage families to pick up the Family Study Guide online or on the slat wall.