

JESUS WAS BAPTIZED | Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3; John 1

Bible Story: Jesus was Baptized by John.

Memory Verse: ¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He 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 follow Jesus because He is God.

Christ Connection: *Jesus never sinned, but He obeyed God and was baptized like sinners are baptized. Baptism reminds us of Jesus' death and resurrection. It reminds us that when we believe in Jesus, we start a new life—a life lived for Jesus.*

10 Minutes SOCIAL: SETTING THE TONE OF THE EXPERIENCE

Sequences Dice Game

What You Need: 6 dice (per group), score chart, pencils

What You Do:

- Everyone rolls one die. Highest roll starts the game, play moves clockwise.
- First player rolls all 6 dice. If he rolls a number sequence that begins with “1”, he scores. If he does not roll a sequence that begins with 1 he does not score.
- Play continues to the next player.
- The first player to 100 points wins.
- Game scoring: If you roll
 - 1 = 5 points
 - 1-2 = 10 points
 - 1-2-3 = 15 points
 - 1-2-3-4 = 20 points
 - 1-2-3-4-5 = 25 points
 - 1-2-3-4-5-6 = 30 points

Example rolls: 1-2-4-5-6 = 10 points, 1-2-3-1-2 = 15 points, 3-4-2-5-4 = 0 points, 1-4-1-5-1 = 5 points

Only one sequence per roll is allowed.

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

Zechariah’s son, John, grew up in the wilderness. His ministry began when God’s word came to him, and he began preaching near the Jordan River. John worked to get people ready for the coming of Jesus, fulfilling the Old Testament prophecy, “A voice of one crying out: Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness” (Isa. 40:3a).

John called people to repent of their sins, and he baptized them in the Jordan River. John also instructed people on right living. (See Luke 3:10-14.) Some of the people suspected that John might be the Messiah, but John insisted, “One who is more powerful than I am is coming” (Luke 3:16).

Before His ministry began, Jesus came from Galilee to be baptized by John at the Jordan River. But John was calling people to a baptism of repentance. Jesus never sinned (see Heb. 4:15; 2 Cor. 5:21), so why did

Jesus come to be baptized? John recognized this when he said, “I need to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?” (Matt. 3:14).

Commentators’ ideas vary about why exactly Jesus was baptized. Perhaps He was affirming John’s work. Maybe He was identifying with sinners or showing them how they would be saved—through His death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus answered John, “Allow it for now, because this is the way for us to fulfill all righteousness” (Matt. 3:15). Jesus completely obeyed God, and God audibly confirmed His sonship.

As you teach, allow time for kids to ask questions about salvation and baptism. Emphasize that baptism is not what saves us; baptism is a way we show that we have been saved. Baptism reminds us that when we believe in Jesus, we die to sin and come into a new way of life—a life lived for Him. (See Rom. 6:3-4.)

TEACHING FOCUS (Jesus’ Baptism)

As we teach kids about Jesus, lead them to see that Jesus was baptized so that the world would know that He was God’s Son and so that we could follow Jesus by doing what He did. When Jesus was dipped back and raised out of the water by John, He set an example for us to follow. We are baptized to show our relationship with Jesus just like Jesus was baptized to show His relationship with God.

Christ Connection: *Jesus never sinned, but He obeyed God and was baptized like sinners are baptized. Baptism reminds us of Jesus’ death and resurrection. It reminds us that when we believe in Jesus, we start a new life—a life lived for Jesus.*

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

Today’s Takeaways:

- John the Baptist told people to repent and be ready for the kingdom of God.
- Jesus asked John to baptize Him.
- At first, John did not think it was right for him to baptize Jesus.
- Jesus obeyed God by being baptized.
- We follow Jesus when we obey Him.
- **Bottom Line:** We follow 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:

- **Why was Jesus baptized?** *Matthew 3:15 To obey God and show people He was the Messiah John was preparing people for.*
- **Does baptism save us?** *Guide the kids to understand that baptism is important, but it is only a symbol of what Jesus has done for us. A person is baptized because she is saved, not in order to be saved. Suggest an analogy, such as dressing like a doctor versus being*

a doctor. Dressing the part can suggest you are a doctor but cannot make you a doctor if you are not one.

- **Why is baptism important?** Help kids understand that God has commanded believers to be baptized, and Jesus provided an example of baptism for us to follow. We do not obey God to earn our salvation, but we want to obey Him out of love and worship. Baptism is a beautiful picture of our sinful lives dying with Jesus and our new life beginning when we are “raised” from the water. It shows the world we trust Jesus and identify with Him. Talk about your baptism story and what it meant to you and ask other kids to share theirs as well.
- **When should someone be baptized?** After believing in Jesus for life. Remind kids that baptism is a way to show they have trusted Christ; anyone who has not trusted Christ should not be baptized. Direct kids to continue the discussion with their parents to decide if or when they should be baptized, use the included discussion guide to help kids discuss this with their families. Baptism should be a family decision.

Activity: Prepare the Way

What You Need small toy cars, taped off track on cardboard, small obstacles (paper wads, cotton balls, etc.), wooden blocks to build incline for track

What You Do:

- Use the wood blocks to form a slight incline for the track.
- Place small objects like paper wads, cotton balls, and so forth on the track.
- Let kids predict how long the car will take to reach the bottom.
- Then allow a kid to remove the obstacles before sending the car down the track again.

What You Say “The toy car was able to make it to the bottom much more easily when the obstacles were removed. When we “prepared the way” it rolled down better. In a similar way, John’s job was to prepare people for Jesus by telling people the Messiah was coming and by preaching repentance and God’s kingdom. When Jesus obeyed God by being baptized, God proclaimed that Jesus was His Son, and The Holy Spirit rested on Jesus like a dove. The people could remember what John had said and see that Jesus was the Messiah that God had promised long ago. When we show people love and teach them about the gospel, we are preparing the way for the Holy Spirit to change their hearts to love and worship Jesus. Are you trying to figure out how to have that conversation? Consider using these questions as ways to talk to friends and family. Do you have a faith? (Use this as an opportunity to share why you believe) On a scale of 1 to 10 how certain are you that you would go to heaven if you died right now? (This question could help you see what is most important to them or who/what they are trusting.) Challenge: Anything less than 10 is practically a 0 because with faith in Jesus we can be certain that we are His and that heaven is our home. So ask again or ask if you can pray for them to get to a 10.

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:

“Thank You God for sending Jesus to save us. Thank You that He perfectly obeyed You in all things, from baptism even to death on the cross. Help us obey You through our love for You. 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.**