

Jesus Was Baptized

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:1-11; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:19-34

MAIN POINT: Jesus obeyed God by being baptized.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 1:15

“This saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”—and I am the worst of them.” (CSB)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What makes Jesus different? Jesus is fully God and fully man.

1st – 3rd Grade Small Group

Leader BIBLE STUDY

Zechariah’s son, John, grew up in the wilderness. John’s ministry began when God’s word came to him, and he began preaching near the Jordan River. John worked to get the 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. 40:3).

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

Jesus came from Galilee to be baptized by John at the Jordan River. Wait a second. John was calling people to a baptism of repentance. We know Jesus never sinned (see Heb. 4:15; 2 Cor. 5:21), so why did Jesus come to be baptized? John was right when he said, “I need to be baptized by You, and yet You come to me?” (Matt. 3:14).

Commentators’ ideas vary about why 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).

As you teach, allow time for kids to ask questions. 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 trust in Jesus, we die to sin and come into a new way of life—a life lived for Jesus. (See Rom. 6:3-4.)

INTRODUCE THE STORY

Welcome

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Ask kids to share things their parents might ask them to do.

SAY Why do you choose to obey your parents? How do you feel when you obey? How do you think your parents feel?

Activity page

Invite kids to complete the “Baptism Dot-to-Dot” on the activity page. Encourage kids to fill in the blank to complete the sentence. (Jesus obeyed God by being baptized by John.)

SAY I wonder why Jesus was baptized by John. Do you know? We are going to find out when we hear today’s Bible story.

Uses for Water

Display a pitcher of water and ask kids to list as many uses for water as they can think of. Write the list down on a white board. *Sample answers: drinking, preparing food, bathing, washing clothes and dishes, brushing teeth, watering yards and gardens, washing pets or cars, and so forth.*

SAY • Baptism is a very special use for water and baptism is very a special event in the life of a believer.

Today we will learn about a baptism that was different from all other baptisms. Who do you think might have an extra special baptism?

TRANSITION TO LARGE GROUP

Walk across hall and sit as a group on risers.

EXPERIENCE THE STORY

Jesus Baptism Craft

Pass out a paper plate, blue paper semi-circle, and John and Jesus. Glue or tape the rounded edge of blue semi-circle to the edge of the paper plate, forming a pocket. Tuck the John cutout behind the blue paper and tape it to the plate so that it appears he is standing in the water. Do the same with the Jesus cutout, but use a brass fastener instead of tape so that He can rotate to be dunked below the surface of the water.

SAY • We use water to make things clean. When people turn from sin and trust in Jesus, we say Jesus has cleansed them from their sin. That does not mean that Jesus washed them with water on the outside, but that Jesus has forgiven their sin on the inside. Baptism shows on the outside what Jesus has done on the inside. John baptized Jesus even though He never sinned. Baptism reminds us that Jesus died and came back to life.

Pray

Take prayer requests. Pray, thanking God for baptism and asking Him to bring your group to faith. Ask Him to help them treasure baptism as a special symbol of what Jesus did on the cross to pay for sin.

JOIN WORSHIP IN SANCTUARY

When prompted wrap up and line up in to get ready to enter the sanctuary.