

the life of  
**Jesus**

**Date: 1.19.25 | Title: John's Testimony and Jesus' Baptism |  
Scripture: Matthew 3:1-17, Mark 1:1-11; Luke 3:1-22 and John 1:19-34**

## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

### Middle School Students:

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.  
God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.  
God wants us to live for His glory.  
God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.  
The Gospels tell us about the life and ministry of Jesus

### High School Students:

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.  
God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.  
God wants us to live for His glory.  
God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.  
Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies and promises.  
Jesus gave His life for us on the cross and He is the only way for salvation.  
The Gospels tell us about the life and ministry of Jesus



### MEMORY VERSE

"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."

1 John 4:9



## INTRODUCTION TO THE LESSON

**Ask the students in your group to brainstorm a list of some of the greatest people in history. These can be sports stars, presidents, inventors, YouTubers or anyone who stands out as having done something amazing in their eyes. Lead the group to come up with as many people as they can think of explaining why each person should be considered for the list.**

**Tell the students that although these people are pretty remarkable, there is someone greater than anyone else on the list. In our Bible story today, we will learn that some people thought John the Baptist was pretty great, yet he reminded the people that there is only One who is truly the greatest- Jesus!**



## BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

The long-awaited Savior had finally come! Jesus, the promised Messiah, was born to Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Last week we learned that during Jesus' childhood, Mary and Joseph were obedient to God, faithful to the law and committed to faith as God prepared Jesus for his earthly ministry. After Jesus' time in the temple at 12 years old, we don't learn anything else about His upbringing or time on earth until now. Many years have passed, and Jesus has grown into a man, now ready to begin his public ministry.

\*John the Baptist was born to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age. Read through Luke 1:5-25, 38-80 to remember the beginning of his story.

\*Isaiah 40:3 is quoted in all four Gospels referencing John the Baptist as fulfilling OT prophesy. John prepares the way by calling people to repentance, preceding baptism. Baptism does not bring forgiveness of sin, but symbolizes internal salvation.

\*In Luke 3:2, "the word of God came to John". This is the same verbiage used for the prophets in the OT. God had not spoken through the prophets since Malachi, over 450 years prior. John the Baptist was different from the OT prophets in that he was the first preacher of the good news of the kingdom of God. (Luke 16:16)

\*John the Baptist knew he was "not the Christ" (John 1:8, 15; 3:28). He also was not Elijah who was expected to return (Malachi 4:5) or the Prophet predicted by Moses and expected in Jesus' day (Deut. 18:15,18).

\*Jesus needed no repentance or cleansing, but He identified with the sinful people He came to save. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

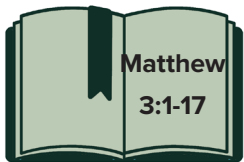
\*In all four teachings on Jesus' baptism, Jesus is addressed as "God's beloved Son". Jesus' baptism is the beginning of His public ministry.

\*In Mark 1:9-11, all three persons of God are represented. Jesus came to be baptized, the Holy Spirit descended on Him, and God the Father spoke from heaven.

\*After His baptism, Jesus is anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit for His ministry. This will continue to be an important theme. Prior to this, in the OT the Holy Spirit fell upon people for a time during a certain mission or appointment, not permanently.

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## LOCATE THE SCRIPTURE & TELL THE STORY



Locate the scripture in the Bible: Matthew 3:1-17; Mark 1:1-11; Luke 3:1-22 and John 1:19-34

Remind your group that we are now studying the New Testament. The first four books, the gospels, tell the story of Jesus' time as a man on earth from the voice of different authors. Our story today is covered in all four of the gospels.

TELL  
THE  
STORY



Has anyone ever seen someone baptized? Maybe you have been baptized, or you have seen a family member or friend be baptized. Baptism is an important act of obedience for Christians because we are following the example of Jesus and showing others that we have placed our faith in Him as our savior. Baptism is also a symbol of how we have died to sin and how we have been raised to new life in Christ Jesus. Today we will learn that Jesus perfectly obeyed God in baptism.

Read directly from Scripture, use The Jesus Storybook Bible, The Biggest Story Bible, or the summary provided in the lesson

John the Baptist lived in the wilderness. His clothes were made out of camel's hair and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. John began telling people, "Repent and be baptized because God's kingdom is almost here."

Long before John was born, the prophet Isaiah said, "Someone is shouting in the wilderness. He says, 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight!'" Isaiah was talking about John. John had very important job. He was supposed to get people ready for Jesus- God's promised Messiah.

People started to repent; they turned away from their sins and turned to God for forgiveness. Then John baptized them in the Jordan River. Baptism was a picture that the people's sin had been washed away.



Put the events in order, draw a comic strip, build it with blocks or playdough, act it out, etc...

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**John preached, “Someone greater than me is coming. I am not worthy to remove His sandals. I baptize you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” John was talking about Jesus.**

**By this time, Jesus was an adult. He went to see John the Baptist at the Jordan River. When John saw Jesus, he said, “Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**

**Jesus told John that He wanted to be baptized. But John didn’t think he should baptize Jesus. “I need You to baptize me,” John said. “Why do You want me to baptize You?” John was confused. He baptized people who confessed their sins; Jesus never sinned! Jesus said, “Allow Me to be baptized. God says this is right.” So John agreed, and he baptized Jesus.**

**Jesus immediately came up out of the water. Suddenly, the heavens opened, and Jesus saw the Holy Spirit coming down on Him like a dove. God’s voice came from heaven. “This is My Son,” the voice said. “I love Him, and I am very pleased with Him!”**

**Re-tell the Bible Story: Have the students re-tell the stories as best they can.**

**Share the GOSPEL: 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 put our faith in Jesus, we turn from sin and start a new life- a life following Christ.**



## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

**ATTENTIVE** - God hears and responds to the needs of his children.

**COMPASSIONATE** - God cares for his children and acts on their behalf.

**CREATOR** - God made everything. He is uncreated.

**DELIVERER** - God rescues and saves his children.

**ETERNAL** - God is not limited by time. He exists outside of time.

**FAITHFUL** - God always keeps his promises.

**GENEROUS** - God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

**GLORIOUS** - God displays His greatness and worth.

**GOOD** - God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

**HOLY** - God is perfect, pure, and without sin.

**IMMUTABLE/UNCHANGING** - God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

**INCOMPREHENSIBLE** - God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

**INFINITE** - God has not limits in His person or on His power.

**JEALOUS** - God will not share his glory with another. all glory rightfully belongs to him.

**JUST** - god is fair in all his actions and judgements. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

**LOVING** - God feels and displays infinite, unconditional affection toward his children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response, or merit.

**MERCIFUL** - God does not give his children the punishment they deserve.

**OMNIPOTENT/ALMIGHTY** - God holds all power. nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.



## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

**OMNIPRESENT** - God is fully present everywhere.

**OMNISCIENT** - God knows everything, past, present, and future - all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.

**PATIENT/LONG-SUFFERING** - God is untiring and bears with His children.

**PROVIDER** - God meets the needs of his children.

**REFUGE** - God is a place of safety and protection for his children.

**RIGHTEOUS** - God is always good and right.

**SELF-EXISTENT** - God depends on nothing and no one to give him life or existence.

**SELF-SUFFICIENT** - God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

**SOVEREIGN** - God does everything according to His plan and pleasure.

**TRANSCENDENT** - God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

**TRUTHFUL** - Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

**WISE** - God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

**WORTHY** - God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

**WRATHFUL** - God hates all unrighteousness.



## QUESTIONS TO REBUILD THE STORY

**“Storying” Questions:** As you ask these questions, have your students find the answers in the actual verses of scripture instead of recalling them from your re-telling of the story. We always want to encourage all of our students to go directly to God’s Word over a commentary on or summary of scripture. Use the Bible Study Bookmark Questions as well as these questions to help students understand the text:

- 1. God had called John before he was even born to prepare the way for Jesus. John was obedient to this calling and began to preach about the need for people to repent of their sins. What did John do when people repented of their sin? *He baptized them.***
- 2. What does it mean to repent? *A change in attitude and direction. Turning from thinking or acting one way to another. Repenting often involves prayers of remorse, confession, and renouncing sin. Repenting impacts ones actions and life choices.***
- 3. What is baptism? *Baptism is an outward act demonstrating the salvation God has already done in us. Baptism means to plunge, dip, or immerse in water. Going down into the water is a picture of dying to your sinful self and raising up into the new life God has given us in Christ. In Matthew 28:18-20, Christ commands that believers are to be baptized as one of their first acts of obedience. Why do you think is baptism an act of obedience?***
- 4. John knew that Jesus was not just another person coming to be baptized, but that He was the Son of God and the promised Messiah. How does John respond when he sees Jesus? *John responds in awe, claiming that he is not even worthy of untying Jesus’ sandals.***
- 5. When John saw Jesus face to face, he recognized Jesus as the Lamb of God. What did John say the Lamb of God would do? How did John know that Jesus would do this? *John said that Jesus would take away the sin of the world. John knew the Old Testament prophecies about Jesus, and knew that he was to be the forerunner of Jesus’ ministry.***
- 6. John told the people that Jesus would offer a better baptism. What makes Jesus’ baptism better? *John led people to repent of their sin and be baptized in the water, but Jesus would provide forgiveness of sins through His death and resurrection. Not only that, but Jesus would also baptize believers with the Holy Spirit to help us live a life glorifying to Christ.***
- 7. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?**
- 8. What does the story teach me about myself?**
- 9. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?**
- 10. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?**
- 11. How does this story help me live on mission?**





## PRAYER PROMPTS

God, thank you for sending Your perfect Son, Jesus- the Lamb of God, as the sacrifice for our sins. We know that You had a perfect plan for our salvation from the beginning of time. Thank you for the model that Jesus was in his baptism. Help us to honor and follow you as Jesus did. Amen

## IF TIME ALLOWS:

Play a game of Bible drill using the gospels.

## MISSIONS EMPHASIS:

We will take the month of January off from mission projects. Please make plans to attend a special missions emphasis training for all leadership on the afternoon of January 26th.

## REVIEW UNIT VERSE:

Spend time reviewing memory verse with students.

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## Application Questions

### LOOK UPWARD

- How does this story apply to your relationship with God?
- What does it teach you about Him- His will and His heart?
- What aspect of His character is He inviting you to experience and enjoy?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your relationship with God?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in your relationship with God?

### LOOK INWARD

- How does this story apply to your heart and your own spiritual growth?
- What does it teach you about yourself, your needs, or your goals in life?
- In what aspects of your personal life is God inviting you to grow and mature?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story inwardly?
- How will those around you benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to allow these truths to help you grow spiritually?

### LOOK AROUND

- How does this story apply to your relationship with others?
- What does it teach you about how to see others and relate to them?
- What is god inviting you to do differently in your relationships?

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## Application Questions

### LOOK OUTWARD

- How does this story apply to your ministry and mission in life- to your role in God's kingdom, in society, and in the world?
- What does it teach you about God's purposes for the world?
- What part of His mission is He inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your ministry?
- How will the world benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in the world?

### LOOK FORWARD

- How does this story apply to your future, both in this age and in eternity?
- What does it teach you about God's plan for your life, now and forever?
- What aspects of eternity is God inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit in the future by applying these truths now?
- How will God's kingdom benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to impact eternity now with these truths?