

LESSON 5

# The Baptism of Jesus

MATTHEW 3:13-17



**BIBLE TRUTH**

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS MARKS THE BEGINNING OF HIS ROAD TO THE CROSS

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION . . . . . 5 MIN

2. BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN

**SUPPLIES:** *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 83)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION . . . . . 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

**SUPPLIES:** Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS . . . . . 10 MIN

**SUPPLIES:** snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) . . . . . 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

**SUPPLIES:** coloring page for NT Lesson 5—one for each child; markers or crayons

The Heavens Open

**SUPPLIES:** flat white sheet

The Trinity Bible Story Activity

**SUPPLIES:** large paper letters—“J” cut out from red construction paper, “G” cut out from yellow construction paper, and “H” cut out from white construction paper

7. CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN

**TOTAL 60–75 MIN**

**THE LESSON**

**OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION . . . . . 5 MIN**

In today's lesson the children will learn about Jesus' baptism.

Bring to class a bucket or basin of water, a towel, and a small object like a block. Place the water-filled container on the towel in full view of the class and ask the following questions:

- **What do I have in the bucket?**  
*(water)*
  
- **How do we use water?**  
*(We drink it, we wash with it, etc.)*
  
- **What special thing do we do with water at church?**  
*(Try to steer them to remember that water is used in baptisms.)*

For a short interactive break, invite the children to touch the water if they wish. Then continue by explaining that today we are going to learn more about a man who used water to baptize. Ask if they remember his name, and then ask them to guess who he is going to baptize. (His name was John and he was going to baptize Jesus.)

Say, "Using this block (hold up the block or other small item) can anyone show me what John was going to do with Jesus?" (Pick a child to demonstrate that Jesus was going to wade into the river where John was going to dunk him!)

As you clean up and dry off hands with the towel, let the children know that something special happened after Jesus was baptized, and that it involved a bird. Ask the children to listen very carefully to the story.

Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

**BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN**

Read story 83, "The Baptism of Jesus," from *The Gospel Story Bible*

**BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION . . . . . 5 MIN**

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **What happened in our story today?**  
*(Help the children retell each part of the story.)*
  
- **What did John say to Jesus?**  
*(John said he shouldn't baptize Jesus, but that Jesus should baptize him.)*
  
- **Why do you think John thought Jesus should baptize him?**  
*(John was a prophet and God had told him that Jesus was the promised Messiah. John had said someone would come after him who would be more powerful.)*

**Where Is the Gospel? \_\_\_\_\_**

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

At some point when John saw Jesus, he realized that Jesus was the promised Messiah. John proclaimed that Jesus is the Lamb of God, the one who will take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Long before John's ministry, Abraham told his son Isaac that God himself would provide a lamb for the sacrifice. That day, God did not allow Abraham to sacrifice his son but provided a ram. Here John tells us God has provided a sacrifice for sins—Jesus, the Lamb of God. Abraham's ram was a foreshadowing of Jesus, the Lamb of God.

By his baptism, Jesus instituted a new sacrament for believers. Our baptism is a symbol of Christ's burial in the tomb (when we go under the water) and a symbol of the resurrection (when we come up out of the water).

Paul writes, "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4).

Jesus identified with sinful man when he was baptized. That is why he said, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15, see also 2 Corinthians 5:21). Now today when we are baptized, we identify with Jesus' death and resurrection.

**SNACK QUESTIONS . . . . . 10 MIN**

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

- What bird appeared from heaven and came down to rest on Jesus?  
*(a dove)*
  
- Who did the dove represent?  
*(The dove was the Holy Spirit who took on a dovelike form. Whether it was a real dove or just appeared like a dove we don't know for sure, but the Bible uses the words "like a dove." This could indicate it was not a real live dove but that the Holy Spirit looked like a dove.)*
  
- Who spoke to Jesus?  
*(God the Father spoke from heaven.)*

**SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5-10 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

**ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. . . . . 20-30 MIN**

**Coloring Activity**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 5—one copy for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- Describe what Jesus is doing.  
*(He is being baptized by John.)*
  
- Let's review: who does the dove represent?  
*(the Holy Spirit)*
  
- Who spoke to Jesus and what did he say?  
*(God the Father spoke from heaven and he said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.)*

### The Heavens Open

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ flat white sheet

Pick one child to play Jesus, one to play John, and one to play the Holy Spirit. Wrap the sheet around the child playing the Holy Spirit, draping it over his arms.

Have the remainder of the children play the role of the heavens by forming a tight circle with the Holy Spirit hidden in the center. Act out the scene, and at the point where the heavens open, have the children break open the circle with the Holy Spirit bursting forth, imitating a dove hovering near Jesus. One of the adults can speak out the part of God the Father.

### The Trinity Bible Story Activity

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ large paper letters—“J” cut out from red construction paper, “G” cut out from yellow construction paper, and “H” cut out from white construction paper

Before class, prepare the letters as directed.

In class, tell the children that God is three persons in one. Hold up the “G” and say, “there is God the Father.” Hold up the “J” and say, “there is Jesus who is God the Son.” Hold up the “H” and say, “there is God the Holy Spirit.” It is OK if the children don’t know how to connect the letters to the names; they will simply memorize what you teach them.

Hold the letters up and quiz them until they know what each letter represents. Then read the story from *The Gospel Story Bible*. When you are through ask them if they can tell you who in the story was God the Son? Hold up the “J” and when they say Jesus, congratulate them. Do the same for God the Father and the Holy Spirit, giving them clues as needed.

### CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today’s lesson.

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