

LESSON 5

The Baptism of Jesus

MATTHEW 3



BIBLE TRUTH

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

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 3 from the Scriptures or read story 83, “The Baptism of Jesus,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Dress Up Like John

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ piece of brown fake fur or burlap with a hole cut in to form a costume (You can purchase fake fur [the kind for making stuffed animals] at a fabric store.)
- ✓ rope for a belt
- ✓ pieces of black licorice to represent locusts

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

The Lamb of God

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ picture or drawing of a lamb cut out so you can hold it up for the class

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 20 MIN

The Trinity Dove

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper; pencils, markers, and/or crayons

Draw a picture of Jesus’ baptism. Illustrate the Trinity in your picture by drawing the dove above Jesus’ head and the words “This is my Son” at the top of the page to indicate God the Father’s commendation of Jesus. Then have the children color their drawings. Talk as a class about how God is one God in three persons.

LESSON SNAPSHOT

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 20 MIN

Herod Killed John

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ piece of brown fake fur or burlap with a hole cut in to form a costume (purchase fake fur [for making stuffed animals] at a fabric store.)
- ✓ rope for a belt
- ✓ old towels and sheets for other costumes
- ✓ plastic swords for the guards (paint stirring sticks work well for swords)

TOTAL 95 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Jesus was baptized—Jesus had no need of baptism because he had no sin. He humbled himself for our sake and was baptized by John. Jesus identified with us. Jesus was a man. He walked with man, ate with man, and was baptized by a man. At first, John refused to baptize Jesus. He knew that he was the sinner, not Jesus. Jesus, however, insisted that he must be baptized to fulfill all righteousness. Paul tells us that though Jesus had no sin, God made him to be sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus' baptism was not for his sake but for ours.

God revealed himself in the Trinity at Jesus' baptism—Each person in the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) made his presence known at the baptism of Jesus. The doctrine of the Trinity teaches what is evident in Scripture: God is three persons in one God. This is a concept we cannot fully comprehend. We know that God is one (Malachi 2:10), and yet we know that the Godhead has three persons. All three persons of the Trinity made themselves known at Jesus' baptism—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist dedicated his life to truth—God called John to a ministry of truth. John's words set the stage for men to realize they needed a Savior. His ministry paved the way for Jesus. John spoke against Herod's sinful marriage to Herodias. (Herod had stolen his brother's wife.) Though Herod was attracted to the message of John, to please Herodias he threw John in prison. Then, manipulated again by his wife, Herod executed John by beheading him (Matthew 14:10).

John the Baptist, the prophet who announced the ministry of our Savior, paid the ultimate price for proclaiming the truth. Yet, John went straight to heaven rejoicing because his ministry was complete. John's life pointed forward to Jesus, the greater prophet, who would in a few short years also be killed for what he proclaimed. But unlike John, Jesus, the Son of God, would conquer death and rise again!

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.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 3 from the Scriptures or read story 83, "The Baptism of Jesus," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Dress Up Like John

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ piece of brown fake fur or burlap with a hole cut in to form a costume (You can purchase fake fur [the kind for making stuffed animals] at a fabric store.)
- ✓ rope for a belt
- ✓ pieces of black licorice to represent locusts

Dress up like John the Baptist and using Matthew 3 as your script talk to the children (the crowd) as John the Baptist might have, calling them to repent. For fun invite the class to join you in a snack of “locusts” (black licorice).

After a little while, pretend to see Jesus and act out the scene of baptizing Jesus. Mime Jesus’ baptism. Then tell the children that Jesus is the Lamb of God who would be killed to forgive our sins.

Finally ask the class if any of them have any questions about today’s story.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESON 2 10 MIN

The Lamb of God

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ picture or drawing of a lamb cut out so you can hold it up for the class

Read aloud the account of Jesus’ baptism in John 1:26–34. Show the class the lamb and ask them where the lamb shows up in the story. (John calls Jesus the Lamb of God in John 1:29).

Ask the children what John means by calling Jesus the Lamb of God. (Jesus is the perfect sacrifice for our sin.)

Ask the children if they can think of any other places where a lamb was used as a substitute for a person’s sin. (The best illustration of a lamb used as a substitute comes from the story of the

Passover in Exodus 12). After the Passover, every firstborn son was to be redeemed by killing a lamb (Exodus 13:13). Also, God told his people to sacrifice lambs for their sin (Leviticus 4:32–33).

Explain that all the lambs sacrificed throughout the Old Testament were meant to point to the day when Jesus, the Lamb of God, would be slain as a substitute for our sins.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 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 worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 20 MIN

The Trinity Dove

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper; pencils, markers, and/or crayons

Have the children draw a picture of Jesus' baptism. They can illustrate the Trinity by drawing Jesus, the dove above his head, and the words "This is my Son" at the top of the page to indicate God the Father's commendation of Jesus. Talk as a class about how God is one God in three persons.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 20 MIN

Herod Killed John

SUPPLIES:

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(purchase fake fur [for making stuffed animals] at a fabric store.)
- ✓ rope for a belt
- ✓ old towels and sheets for other costumes
- ✓ plastic swords for the guards (paint stirring sticks work well for swords)

Read aloud Matthew 14:1–12 and tell the class that you are going to act out the different scenes. Assign parts (Herod, John the Baptist, a few soldiers, Herodius, Herodius's daughter, the disciples, Jesus). Start by having two soldiers arrest John the Baptist and throw him in prison. Then act out the scene where Herod gives Herodius's daughter a gift and she consults her mother and asks for John the Baptist's head on a platter. Pantomime John's execution and burial.

After your play talk to the class about what it means to be a martyr for your faith. Then look up the following verses and ask the class to tell you how they relate to this story.

■ **Mark 8:35**

(If we lose our life for the gospel we have the promise of eternal life in heaven.)

■ **Matthew 10:32–33**

(If we proclaim the gospel and our faith in Jesus, we will be remembered in heaven.)

■ **John 15:20**

(Those who follow Jesus should expect to be persecuted. John was the first example of a man who was persecuted for believing in Jesus and speaking the truth. He was arrested and killed. If we believe in Jesus we will also be persecuted. Although we may not face death, we will face people who make fun of what we believe.)

LESSON 5 - THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

