

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: MATTHEW 3:13-17



The STORY

Read the account of the baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:13-17.

Please note: The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.

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 thought that Jesus should be baptizing him.)
- Why do you think John thought Jesus should be baptizing 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.)

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CRAFT QUESTIONS

Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: Jesus and John in water with a dove. Engage the children by asking:

- This is an important story because it shows all three persons of God. Who can tell me who the three persons of God are? (God the Father, calling down from heaven to the Son; God the Son, Jesus; and God the Holy Spirit, in the form of the dove.)
- Why did Jesus need to be baptized? (Jesus said it was "to fulfill all righteousness [v. 15]." Since Jesus was baptized, He could truly say, "Follow me.")
- Do people still get baptized today? (Yes, people are baptized today as a demonstration of their faith in Jesus. When a person becomes a Christian, they are directed by scripture to be baptized, see Matthew 28:19.)

SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack, engage the children by asking:

- What animal appeared from heaven and came down to rest on Jesus? (A dove.)
- Who was the dove representing? (The dove was the Holy Spirit who took on a dove-like 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.)



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WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Jesus with His baptism instituted a new sacrament for believers. Baptism would come to replace circumcision as the mark of a true believer.

Our baptism is a symbol for 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 teaches us in Romans 6:4;

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.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

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.

