

14



JOHN THE BAPTIST

The Baptism of Jesus

Year 1 – THE KINGDOM STORY

1 | Teacher's Notes

Scripture Matthew 3: 1 – 17

Objectives To explain that

- Our lessons are all a part of a bigger story which is the story of the Forever Kingdom. This big story is found in the Bible.
- God used John the Baptist as a prophet, to tell people they should repent and follow his Son, Jesus.
- John baptized Jesus and told the people that Jesus was the Promised King who would take away their sin.
- In the baptism of Jesus we see all three Persons of the Trinity present.
- Now, through baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God joins us to the church in a special way and makes us alive in Jesus.

Memory Verse “Long ago Isaiah the prophet wrote, ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare your way.’” (Mark 1:2 - NIRV)

ACNA

Catechism Connection

The following Catechism questions are linked to today's story:

Q 38 Who is God? God is one divine being eternally existing in three divine persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the Holy Trinity.

Q 11 How should you respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ? I should repent of my sins and put faith in Jesus Christ as my Savior and my Lord.

Q 12 What does it mean for you to repent? To repent means that I have a change of heart, turning away from sin...and follow Jesus.

Q 85 How do you receive the Holy Spirit? ...through repenting and being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, I am forgiven my sins, indwelt from then on by the Holy Spirit...

**Suggested
Materials,
Props, and
Costumes****Big story props:**

- Crown - or picture of a crown
- Large Bible.

(These props relate to the bigger story of the Forever Kingdom, and will be used for every lesson. The crown will be referred to as the Kingdom Crown.)

Lesson props:

- Blue plastic tablecloth and small squares of blue tissue paper to represent water
- Dove
- Toy microphone (optional)
- Cue cards are encouraged if a child reads the part

Costumes:

- Jesus – use a blue sash for Jesus – this blue sash is significant throughout most of the remaining stories
- John the Baptist – dressed in a rough brown cloak, that looks like a camel hair's cloak
- God (voice only) – using toy microphone
- Two children to be people that came to John to be baptized

Memory Verse: “Long ago Isaiah the prophet wrote, ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare your way.’” (Mark 1:2 - NIRV)

(Found on the last page of this lesson plan.) Printed out and placed inside the large Bible.

2 | Lesson Outline

Welcome	As the children arrive ensure each one is personally welcomed and everyone knows each other's name.
Greeting & Collect for Purity	Light the candles Say the Greeting and Collect for Purity (see Resource Section)
Prayer of Confession	Say the Prayer of Confession (see Resource Section) Extinguish the candles
Music	Books of the Bible - New Testament Also choose another song from the Resource Section
Review of foundations	Choose from the following as appropriate: The Lord's Prayer, The Apostles Creed, The Ten Commandments or The Greatest Commandment <i>For more information on how to teach these, see Resource Section</i>
Reading	Memory verse (Printed out and placed in large Bible – invite older child to read)
Poster Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss this week's poster. • Ask "I wonder questions" – these will be answered during the story. <p><i>Poster discussion is found in Section 3 and on the back of the poster</i></p>
Props/Costumes	Take a few moments to arrange the narrator and actors. (Props should already be set up prior to the start of the class.) Big story props: Kingdom Crown, Large Bible
Bible Story	<i>Proceed with story and life application found in Section 4.</i>
Related activities	<i>After the story, proceed with related activities found in Section 5.</i>
Preparation for Communion & leaving class	As children clean up and line up at the exit door, gather together for the Preparation for Communion prayer that has been posted by the exit door. <i>See Resource Section.</i>

3 | Poster Discussion

Poster

(During the poster discussion, explain any difficult words in the story.)

What do you see in this picture? (Two men in the water, a dove etc.)

Is there anything you wonder about?

I wonder who these two men are.

I wonder what they are doing in the water.

I wonder why the dove is there.

I wonder whose voice is coming down from Heaven.

Let's find out more in our story...



4 | Story and Life Application

CROWN: *Point to the crown and say: 'Today we are continuing our big story of God's Forever Kingdom.'*

BIBLE: *Hold up the Bible and say: 'Our story today is from the Gospel of Matthew, in the New Testament. We know that it is a true story because it comes from the Bible and the Bible is God's Word.'*

LESSON SUMMARY: *The teacher reads the lesson summary from back of poster:*

*Our story today takes place at the Jordan River where we meet John the Baptist. John the Baptist was a prophet. He was God's messenger, sent to tell the people to repent, turn away from their sins and to follow God's ways. John was sent to tell the Israelites to repent and follow the Forever King. Many people came to listen to John preach. They wanted to follow God and be baptized. One day, something very special happened at the Jordan River. Jesus came and told John to baptize him. Even though Jesus had NEVER done anything wrong and was without sin, he wanted to be baptized because he was going to take **our** sin upon himself on the cross. He wanted to do everything perfectly, to fulfill all righteousness, in obedience to God the Father. When John baptized Jesus, the Holy Spirit came down from heaven like a dove and God the Father's voice from Heaven said, "This is my Son, with whom I am well pleased." In Jesus' baptism we see the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Today, when people are baptized, it is because they want to follow Jesus and have their sins taken away. In baptism, God joins us to himself and the church in a special way and makes us alive in Jesus. Our sins are washed away, and we receive new life in Jesus.*

STORY:

TEACHER: In our story today thirty years have passed since Jesus was born, and now he is a man. Until this time, Jesus was at home with his parents.

So far, no one had become a follower of Jesus.

God needed someone to tell the people that they should follow his Son, Jesus. God used a man named John the Baptist to tell people about Jesus.

ACTION: *John the Baptist walks onto the stage, calling out:*

JOHN: "Turn away from your sins and follow God!"

TEACHER: John the Baptist was already teaching people about God's kingdom. He was an interesting man who lived in the desert. Look at the way that he is

dressed. He is wearing a cloak of camel's hair. He was different – he did not eat or dress like most of the people.

But, people came from all over to listen to him.

ACTION: *2 people enter onto the stage.*

TEACHER: John was baptizing people in the river Jordan and telling them about the coming of the kingdom of God. He was telling people to repent, to turn away from their old life of sin and follow God. These two people who have arrived want to be baptized.

ACTION: *Have a blue plastic table cloth on the floor to represent the river, and a handful of small bits of blue tissue paper to represent the water.*

John the Baptist pours a small amount of tissue paper on their heads in the river.

TEACHER: We still baptize today, but we baptize in the name of the Father, the Son (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit. Why is this “act of baptism” so important?

In baptism God joins us to himself and the church in a special way and makes us alive in Jesus.

Well, back to our story. People came from all over to hear John the Baptist. There were so many people who came to John that some people started to ask, “Could John be the Promised One?”

PEOPLE (student) asks John: “Are you the One – the Forever King that was promised to us through the prophets?”

JOHN: No, I am not. I have been sent to prepare the way for the Forever King.

TEACHER: Yes, that means calling people to repent of their sins and follow Jesus. One day as John was baptizing people in the Jordan River, Jesus came to him.

ACTION: *Jesus walks onto the stage (wearing the blue sash) and tells John:*

JESUS (says to John): I want you to baptize me.

TEACHER: At first, John didn't feel worthy to baptize Jesus. John knew that Jesus was the Promised One, the Forever King. However, Jesus told John to baptize him, because even though he had never sinned, Jesus was going to take **our** sin upon himself on the cross. He wanted to do everything perfectly, to fulfill all righteousness, in obedience to God the Father.

Then John obeyed Jesus and baptized him. When John baptized Jesus, something very beautiful happened.

ACTION: *John baptizes Jesus. Let the dove fly down and hover over Jesus' head.*

TEACHER: The Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove and rested on Jesus. Then the Father's voice from heaven said:

GOD (student): "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

TEACHER: Here we see the three persons of the Trinity together: the voice of the Father, the Son (Jesus) being baptized, and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.

John then told everyone to follow Jesus, as he was God's promised King.

People started to listen to Jesus preach about the Kingdom of God. Jesus told the people to "follow him". This was the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

- **What does this story tell us about God?** (God is a Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus was obedient to the Father. Jesus is without sin. He was and is always perfect.)
- What was the name of the river that John was baptizing in? (the Jordan)
- What was John the Baptist's most important role (job)? (God's messenger to prepare people's hearts to turn back to God, to repent, he pointed to Jesus)
- Why did Jesus want to be baptized? (Because even though he had never sinned, Jesus was going to take **our** sin upon himself on the cross. He wanted to do everything perfectly, to fulfill all righteousness, in obedience to God the Father.)
- Who came down from heaven when Jesus was baptized? (the Holy Spirit like a dove)
- What did God the Father say when Jesus was baptized? (this is my Son, in whom I am well pleased)
- Why are people baptized even today? (In baptism God joins us to himself and the church in a special way and makes us alive in Jesus.)
- What does God do when we are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? (he joins us to Himself (the Trinity) and to the church, the body of Christ, he washes us clean of our sins)

Life Application (this discussion can also take place during craft/activity time):

John the Baptist called people to follow Jesus and Jesus is *still* calling people to follow him today. What do you think it means to follow Jesus?

(It means that we will ask Jesus to be king in our lives. This means obeying him, being baptized, praying (which means talking to Jesus), repenting (turning away from our sins) worshipping Jesus through singing, and reading God's love letter to us, which is the Bible.) Explain and discuss concepts such as prayer and repentance.

Can you think of any other ways that we follow Jesus? (Love God with all our heart, forgive others as he has forgiven us, help the poor and lonely)

5 | Response Activities

Kingdom News handout and colouring supplement

- Have the children complete the activities in the Kingdom News handout and colouring supplement.

Optional activities

- Different learning stations, such as: a book table, modelling clay, colouring papers.



John the Baptist baptizes Jesus in the River Jordan

"Long ago Isaiah the prophet wrote, 'I will send my messenger ahead of you. He will prepare your way.'"

(Mark 1:2)