

Lesson B3.1 - Jesus Was Baptized



Teacher's Pages with Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

For Lower Elementary Students and Classes

Recommended for students in Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grades 1-2.

Quick Facts for the Teacher

Lesson Summary: John 1:19-34

► Bible Characters: John the Baptist, Jesus, crowd
God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus. John lived in the wilderness and baptized people in the Jordan River. His message was one of repentance and forgiveness of sins. When Jesus came to be baptized, John knew and proclaimed that here was the Son of God, the Messiah.

Brief Bible Background

- Today's Lesson is from the New Testament
- Scripture Section: Beginnings

John the Baptist might seem like an unlikely person to point the way to Christ, living as wildly as he did. But John had an important role to play, one ordained by God from the very beginning, when he was promised to a childless couple and leaped in his mother's womb at the sight of expectant Mary.

For More Information

The primary role of a Sunday School teacher for Preschool, Kindergarten (pre-readers), and Early Elementary (new readers) is to simply tell children the stories of Scripture and introduce them to the major characters of the Bible.

Teachers who want to know more about the lessons for their own familiarity with the story are encouraged to read the information in the SEED Upper Elementary and Youth Teacher's Pages.

a. Classroom Greeting

Teachers should arrive 10 to 15 minutes before class and greet students and parents by name. Write the day's Bible Message on the white board or poster board for all the kids to see. Have kids gather on a rug or in a dedicated meeting space. Encourage the children to learn each other's names.

b. Opening Prayer Song

The words to this song are sung to the tune, "If You're Happy and You Know it, Clap Your Hands." No accompaniment is needed.

Lord, we praise you and we thank you for this day!
(Clap clap)

Lord, we praise you and we thank you for this day!
(Clap clap)

Lord, we praise you and we thank you and we're here to learn about you!

Lord, we praise you and we thank you for this day!
(Clap, clap)

c. Introduction to Today's Message

*Teacher's Script (student responses are in **bold**).*

You may or may not remember your own baptism. Chances are, your parents, grandparents, or even great grandparents were baptized as well! Did you know that even **Jesus was baptized**?

- When have you seen a baptism? (*Choose a volunteer.*)
- Were you surprised to hear that **Jesus was baptized** too? Why or why not? (*Choose a volunteer to answer.*)

In today's story, we will learn about a man named John the Baptist. When **Jesus was baptized**, it was John who did it! How did this happen? Let's hear the story and find out!

d. SEED Bible Story Video

The teacher may introduce the lesson by playing the video clip from the SEED website. This may be displayed simply on a laptop computer or tablet. If the classroom is equipped with a computer video monitor or video projector, the video can be displayed in a larger size.

e. Read the Story with Poster Pictures

The Bible Story has been divided into four parts, each with an accompanying Poster Picture. The teacher should hold up or point to the relevant Poster Picture while reading the individual part of the story, asking questions while reading. Posters may be printed on letter-sized paper, or enlarged and printed on ledger-sized paper if a bigger printer is available. Poster pictures may also be opened as a PDF on a computer screen, scrolling through each of the four pages.



Picture 1

Tell the children: John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus. His job was a big one: to tell people to turn their lives around and get ready for the Messiah to come.

Read the caption: John the Baptist lived outside. He wore animal furs and ate honey and even bugs! But a lot of people came to see him there.

- Which person is John the Baptist in this picture? What is he doing? [He is dressed in animal furs and is looking at a bee hive where there might be some honey.]
- What are the other people doing? [They have come to hear what John has to say.]



Picture 2

Tell the children: Some religious leaders wondered who John was. When they asked him if he was Elijah, John said, “No.” John knew he wasn’t a prophet and he wasn’t the Messiah. But he did have an important job to do.

Read the caption: John baptized people in the Jordan River. He told them to tell God they were sorry for their sins. Then they could be forgiven.

- What is John doing here? [Pouring water over a woman’s head to baptize her]
- Why are people in this picture lining up to be baptized by John? [They want God to forgive them for their sins. They are trying to have a fresh start.]



Picture 3

Tell the children: John explained, “I use water to baptize people. But someone much greater is coming after me. I am not good enough to untie his sandals!”

Read the caption: One day, Jesus came to see John. “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!” John said.

- Which person is Jesus in this picture? [The one wearing the red sash]
- Look at John in this picture. Do you think it bothered him that Jesus would be “much greater” than he was? [No. He is welcoming Jesus with open arms. John seems happy to play his role and grateful for what Jesus will do.]



Picture 4

Tell the children: John explained that he knew who Jesus was because he saw the Holy Spirit come down on him like a dove from heaven. God had told John that this was how he would recognize the Messiah.

Read the caption: John knew that Jesus was unlike any other person in the world. “I tell you,” John said, “this man is the Son of God!”

- Look at John’s face. What is he feeling? [He’s happy that the Messiah has come.]
- Does someone have to be in a river to be baptized? [If there is water and God’s Word, a person can be baptized. It doesn’t have to be in a river, but it can be.]

f. Bible Story Rhyme (optional)

The Bible Story Rhyme below is the same one found on the Upper Elementary Student sheet. The teacher can read the beginning of the line and see if the children can finish the last rhyming word of the phrase.

At the Jordan, John baptized.

The leaders there were all surprised.

"Who are you?" they asked of John.

"Are you the long-expected one?"

"No," said John, "I'm not that one.

Someone greater soon will come."

"Listen closely. This I say:

'We must all prepare his way.'"

When John saw Jesus in the crowd,

he said, "Here is the Lamb of God!"

John told them all so they would hear it:

"He's the one who has God's Spirit!"

g. Young Children's Activity (optional)

Simple in-class crafts or activities may be completed by the children if there is time left at the end of class. (Note: For the youngest children, simply providing crayons and letting them complete the Coloring Page may serve as the "craft" for the day.)

Game: Fill to the Brim Relay**Materials Needed:**

Water, a plastic cup, 2 buckets, masking tape, timer

Instructions:

Today's story involved water and a bit of splashing, and this relay race will be no different! To set up the game, place a piece of masking tape 1-3 inches up from the bottom on one of the buckets. Set this (Bucket #1) at the far end of playing area. Set the other bucket across from the first one, near the opposite end of the game area. Fill it (Bucket #2) with water. Using rope or masking tape, make a starting line a few feet behind Bucket #2.

Have kids stand, single file, behind the starting line. Explain that they will work as one team against a timer in this relay. Set the timer, being very generous with time. Give the first person in line a cup. When you say, "Start," that person will run to the Bucket #2, fill the cup with water, run to Bucket #1 and empty the water into it. Then, he or she will race back to the next person in line, hand off the cup to that player, and the relay will continue until the water reaches the masking tape line. If the kids can do it before the timer sounds, they win!

h. Song (optional)

This African American spiritual is often a favorite with kids. Teach them the motions below or find different ones on Youtube, Vimeo or other websites.

Standin' in the Need of Prayer

Refrain:

It's me, it's me, O Lord, (Point to self in rhythm)

Standin' in the need of prayer; (Fold hands)

It's me, it's me, O Lord, (Point to self in rhythm)

Standin' in the need of prayer. (Fold hands)

Not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me,
O Lord, (shake head "No")

Standin' in the need of prayer; (Fold hands)

Not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me,
O Lord, (shake head "No")

Standin' in the need of prayer. [Refrain]

i. Story Review: Then What Happened?

Then What Happened is a learning game that helps kids retell the story and remember the flow of events. The teacher reads the starting sentence and then chooses a student to continue the story. There are two rules: each student may only add one sentence or say one new thing, and events in the story need to be in the right order.

► **Start: God sent John the Baptist out to the wilderness. Then what happened?**

If the younger kids have trouble, cut a Take-Home Page into four pieces (with no words) and let the kids put the illustrations in order while they tell the story.

j. Closing Prayer

Send the children home with the Take-Home Page, and tell them to ask their parents to read the story to them again (or, perhaps, they can read it to their parents).

End class with this closing prayer, repeated each week for memorization.

We thank you, Lord, for all you give,

For family, friends, the lives we live.

Please bless our church, and pastors too,

And help us all to trust in you.

For those who face hard times and pain,

We pray your peace might fall like rain. Amen.