



UNIT 19 | SESSION 3

JESUS WAS BAPTIZED

MATTHEW 3; MARK 1

KEY PASSAGE:

John 1:29

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus never sinned, but He obeyed God and was baptized like sinners are baptized. Baptism reminds us of Jesus' death and resurrection. It reminds us that when we trust in Jesus, we turn from sin and start a new life—a life lived for Jesus.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

What gives you hope? It seems like a simple question, and most of us who regularly attend church likely know the “right” answer to the question. However, it’s the most important question for every person who has ever lived because your answer will determine your security and eternity. Unlike the hope the world has to offer, we can have a sure and steadfast hope that will never fail.

In the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ baptism, we see John the Baptist offer words of warning that lead us back to the question, what gives you hope?

John warned the Pharisees sternly that no family, tradition, or outward practice is sufficient to save people from the wrath of God due to them for their sin. People are saved only by the grace of God received through faith and repentance.

The same is true today. Though we may be tempted to find our hope in the faith journey of our parents, grandparents, or even children, those experiences are not sufficient to save. Though it is a gift to have family members who have placed their faith in Christ, our hope does not come from them.

Similarly, no tradition is sufficient to save either. Though we may uphold the traditions and practices—baptism, the Lord’s Supper, prayer, and so forth—those practices alone

are not able to save from sin and secure eternity with God.

John the Baptist made it clear that the faith that leads to repentance brings the certainty of salvation. The larger context of the New Testament reminds us that this repentance is always paired with genuine faith. When these are present, the believer will bear the fruit of the Spirit.

What gives you hope? The only true answer is that we must put our hope in Jesus. Only faith in His finished work on the cross rescues us from sin and death, empowers us to live for Him, and promises us life with God forever.

TERMS TO KNOW

Baptism: the rite in which Christians are immersed in water as a public confession of their faith in Jesus, the Savior.



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Have you ever prepared for someone to visit you? What did you do to prepare? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Puzzle Grid” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ Nice work identifying the coordinates on the puzzle grid! Today, we will learn about a man who saw Jesus and identified Him as the Lamb of God. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: SOMEONE GREATER

Form kids into groups of three or four and provide each group with a paper and pencil. Ask each group to think of some of the greatest people in history. Tell kids that these people could be great sports stars or leaders or inventors, anyone who stands out as having done something amazing. Lead each group to come up with as many people as they can think of and write down their names.

Ask each group to share the total number of names they wrote down. Then ask each group to share the people they thought of and discuss any similarities in the list of names and reasons why they chose these particular people.

| **SAY** “ There are a lot of people that we might call ‘great.’ Some people are recognized for their amazing athletic ability. Others are known for their great contributions to society. But there is someone greater than everyone on your lists. In our Bible story, we will learn that some people thought John the Baptist was pretty great. Yet, he reminded the people that there is only One who is truly the greatest—Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: FOLLOW THE PATTERN



Lead kids to sit in a large circle. Explain that you will start a pattern using motions and they must copy it. Tell kids that they will perform the motions one at a time, going around the circle clockwise. Explain that if they perform the pattern incorrectly, they are out.

Choose a pattern to start. Consider using the following or make up your own:

- Clap, clap, snap, snap, clap
- Tap your head, clap, stomp, clap, clap
- Rub your belly, tap your head, snap, clap
- Stomp, stomp, jump, clap, snap, clap
- Clap, snap, snap, clap, clap, stomp, tap your head, clap

| **SAY** “ It was challenging to completely follow the pattern. Sometimes we messed up and failed to perfectly follow it. This is true in life as well. We don’t always perfectly obey God. Thankfully, Jesus perfectly obeyed God for us. In today’s Bible story, we will learn that even though Jesus never sinned, He obeyed God and was baptized. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hi, kids! I am so glad you are here! My name is [your name], and I am excited to study a story from the Bible with you. If you have your Bible, will you take it out and place it in your lap? [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]

Has anyone ever seen someone baptized? [Allow responses.] Maybe you have been baptized or you have seen a family member baptized. Baptism is an important act of obedience for Christians because we are following the example of Jesus and showing others that we have placed our faith in Him as our Savior. Baptism is also a symbol of how we have died to sin and how we have been raised to new life in Christ Jesus. Today, we will learn about the baptism of Jesus. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

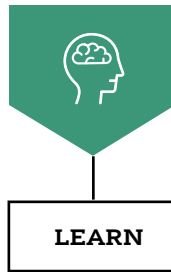
SAY “ Does anyone remember our big picture question and answer? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question and answer is, **What did Jesus do to save us? Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.**

It's important that Jesus lived a sinless life because we cannot live a sinless life. When we place faith in Jesus, His perfect righteousness is credited to us. This means that Jesus took our sin on Himself and gave us His righteousness. If Jesus sinned, He would not have been the perfect sacrifice our sin requires. Today's Bible story teaches us that one way Jesus perfectly obeyed God was by being baptized. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ The long awaited Savior had finally come. A couple of weeks ago, we learned that Jesus, the promised Savior, was born in Bethlehem. Last week, we learned that Mary and Joseph obeyed God by taking Jesus to the temple to be dedicated. While they were there, Anna and Simeon rejoiced as they were able to see the Savior with their own eyes. Many years passed and Jesus grew into a man. He was now ready to begin His public ministry. In our story today, we will see how Jesus was obedient to God the Father by being baptized. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 3; Mark 1. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Was Baptized.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS WAS BAPTIZED

“**John the Baptist lived in the wilderness.** His clothes were made out of camel’s hair and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. **John began telling people, “Repent and be baptized because God’s kingdom is almost here.”**”

Long before John was born, the prophet Isaiah said, “Someone is shouting in the wilderness. He says, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord; make His paths straight!’” Isaiah was talking about John. John had a very important job. He was supposed to get people ready for Jesus—God’s promised Messiah.

People started to repent; they turned away from their sins and turned to God for forgiveness. Then John baptized them in the Jordan River. Baptism was a picture that the people’s sins had been washed away.

John preached, “Someone greater than me is coming. I am not worthy to remove His sandals. I baptize you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” John was talking about Jesus.

By this time, Jesus was an adult. He went to see John the Baptist at the Jordan River. **When John saw Jesus, he said, “Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”**

Jesus told John that He wanted to be baptized. But John didn’t think he should baptize Jesus. “I need You to baptize me,” John said. “Why do You want me to baptize You?” **John was confused. He baptized people who confessed their sins; Jesus never sinned!**

Jesus said, “Allow Me to be baptized. God says this is right.” So John agreed, and he baptized Jesus.

Jesus immediately came up out of the water. Suddenly, the heavens opened and Jesus saw the Holy Spirit coming down on Him like a dove. **God’s voice came from heaven. “This is My Son,” the voice said. “I love Him, and I am very pleased with Him!”**

Christ Connection: Jesus never sinned, but He obeyed God and was baptized like sinners are baptized. Baptism reminds us of Jesus’ death and resurrection. It reminds us that when we trust in Jesus, we turn from sin and start a new life—a life lived for Jesus. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Display a map: Show the New Testament Israel Map and point to the Jordan River (F6) when you teach about John baptizing people and Jesus.

Draw pictures: Draw pictures of different elements in the story such as locusts, honey, sandals, lamb, and dove. Point to the pictures when you mention them in the story. Remind kids that baptism is a picture of how we die to sin and are raised to new life through faith in Jesus.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ God had called John before he was even born to prepare the way for Jesus. John was obedient to this calling and began to preach about the need for people to repent of their sins. What did John do when people repented of their sin? [Allow responses.] John baptized people who confessed their sin and turned to God for forgiveness.

When John saw Jesus face to face, he recognized Jesus as the Lamb of God. What did John say the Lamb of God would do? [Allow responses.] John said that Jesus would take away the sin of the world. Everyone who believes in Jesus will have their sins forgiven once and for all. John recognized that Jesus was so great because not only could He save anyone who believes in Him, but He would also give them the Holy Spirit.

Why did Jesus want to be baptized? Look at Mark 1:11. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Mark 1:11.] Jesus never sinned, but asked John to baptize Him. He did not need forgiveness of sins because He is sinless. Jesus wanted to be baptized to obey the Father and fulfill all righteousness. Jesus perfectly obeyed God for us. God the Father was pleased with Jesus’ act of obedience and announced His love for His Son.

We can choose to follow the example of Jesus and obey God’s command to be baptized after we place faith in Jesus. Baptism does not save us, but is a picture that shows we have died to our sins and have been raised to new life in Jesus. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus never sinned, but He obeyed God and was baptized like sinners are baptized. Baptism reminds us of Jesus’ death and resurrection. It reminds us that when we trust in Jesus, we turn from sin and start a new life—a life lived for Jesus. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 19, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How does Jesus baptize people with the Holy Spirit?
2. Why is baptism an act of obedience for Christians?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Tell kids that Itamar (EE tah mahr) Elizalde (el ee SAL day) is the Send Relief Ministry Coordinator in Puerto Rico. Explain that it is her job to lead local churches and volunteer teams to help meet the needs of people living in Puerto Rico. Tell kids that Itamar says the Lord has used the tragedies in Puerto Rico to help many of the people who live on the island see they should not put their hope in money, health, or having a stable way of life. Instead,



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

they should put their hope and trust in Jesus. Help kids understand that many Puerto Ricans need help because their family members have moved away, and they now live alone.

SAY “ Itamar finds ways to help the people and get them the things they need. Itamar serves the people of Puerto Rico to show her gratitude to God for what He did for us by sending His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. Churches can partner with Itamar and serve the people of Puerto Rico too. When Christians give money to missions, they help missionaries meet the needs of the people, preach the good news about Jesus, start new churches, and send more missionaries. ”

Pray for the Puerto Ricans to continue being open to hearing about Jesus. Pray that more missionaries will join the work to help the Puerto Rican people know more about God and His Son, Jesus.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write one word from the key passage on each piece of construction paper. Be sure to include the reference. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 1:29 together.

SAY “ In our key passage, John called Jesus the ‘Lamb of God.’ A lamb was an animal used as a sacrifice for sin. Jesus is the Lamb of God because He came to be the sacrifice for our sin. ”

Distribute one paper to each kid and challenge them to work together to organize the papers in the correct order of the key passage. Play again by assigning kids a new paper. Repeat the activity as time allows.

Lead kids to sing “John Saw Jesus (John 1:29).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Thank You, God, for sending Jesus to be the sacrifice for sins. Help us share Jesus with those around us so they can experience forgiveness and hope in You. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**

