

Jesus is Baptized

Luke 3

PPT Title

Jesus is Baptized

Main Point: God wants everyone to know that Jesus is His Son and to believe in Him!

Key Verse: *He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.* - John 3:30 (NLT)

Prop: A Wedding Ring

BACKGROUND/REVIEW:

The very last words of the last book of the Old Testament read:

"I will send you the prophet Elijah. He will come before the day of the Lord arrives. It will be a great and terrifying day. Elijah will teach parents how to love their children. He will also teach children how to honor their parents. If that does not happen, I will come. And I will put a curse on the land." - Malachai 4:5-6

Say: There were 400 years of silence in which no one heard from the Lord. People who trusted God were very eager for Him to send the promised Messiah.



One day, the angel of the Lord appeared to a priest named Zechariah in the temple. Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, were very old and did not have any children. The angel told Zechariah that he and Elizabeth were going to have a son. Zechariah was very surprised to see an angel, because people hadn't heard from God in 400 years! So even though he had been praying for a child, he was amazed when an angel spoke to him. The angel said that they were to name their son **John**.

John was assigned a very special mission from God even before he was born. God made it clear to Zechariah and Elizabeth that John's purpose in life would be to prepare the way for Jesus. **Ask:** What are some things that you do to prepare for a special time like a family vacation, the holidays, or birthdays? *Listen for answers.*

JOHN (Luke 3:1-20)



Say: John grew up to be a very special man. He was very different from the other people who lived in this time. John chose to live in the desert, clothe himself with an outfit of camel's hair, and eat a diet of locusts and wild honey. He was very different. After all, who else was preaching in the wilderness? Most people preached in the temple where all the people were. But John was preaching out in the desert! To prepare the way for Jesus, John told the people to turn from their wickedness back to righteousness. The people wanted to know how they should live. Here are some of the things that John told them:

John answered, "If you have extra clothes, you should share with those who have none. And if you have extra food, you should do the same."

Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?"

"Don't collect any more than you are required to," John told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?"

John replied, "Don't force people to give you money. Don't bring false charges against people. Be happy with your pay." - Luke 3:11-14

Above all, John told the people to repent from their sin. Repent means to "change your mind". To repent is to agree with God that your sin is very very bad, and go in the opposite direction. It does **not** merely mean to say, "I'm sorry". John told them that in order to have a change in behavior, there had to be a **change of heart**.

Even though John lived in the desert, he was very aware of the sins of the people who came to hear him preach. He did not just say what people wanted to hear: he preached the truth. For example, the wicked King Herod had taken another man's wife to be his own. John told the people that this was wrong. And he told the Pharisees (the religious leaders who ACTED religious on the outside) that they were like a bunch of snakes! Needless to say, his preaching caused quite a stir!



The religious leaders of that day were very proper. They wore long, fancy robes. They taught people in the clean temple, and they ate fine food. The religious leaders thought that John was a crazy man. They wondered who John thought he was and why he was preaching in the desert. So they came out and asked the question: "Who do you think you are anyway?"

Application: As Christians, this is something we also face (or should be facing). People should be checking out who we are, because we should speak and live differently than everyone else around us.

Say: During this time, the Jewish people were very tired of living under the Roman rule. They wanted a hero - a leader. They knew that one day God would send a Deliverer, the Messiah. They were hoping that John the Baptist was the Messiah, the Christ.

Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, and they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah. - Luke 3:15 NLT



But John made it perfectly clear that he was **not** the Messiah. Then they asked if he was the prophet Elijah that was promised at the end of Malachi. John told them, "I am not Elijah." (John 1:21)

Then they asked if he was the prophet that they had been expecting. He told them he was not.

John was not seeking recognition. His job was to prepare the way for Jesus.

John replied, using the words of Isaiah the prophet. John said, "I'm the messenger who is calling out in the desert, 'Make the way for the Lord straight.'" - John 1:23

Later on, John told the people that he was not even worthy to untie the sandals of Jesus. John said:

He (Jesus) must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less. - John 3:30 NLT

John knew that the most important person in his own life shouldn't be himself; it should be Jesus! So he made sure everybody knew that he was just a servant of the Messiah who was about to come.

Application: John was not the point of the message. He was just the messenger. John was sent to prepare the way for Jesus. The same is true of us. We are not the message. (It's not about you). But we are here as a voice to tell others about Jesus. It is very important for us to lead others to Jesus and not to ourselves.

Say: John was not concerned about what people thought of him. He was not after popularity. He did not say or do things just to make his audience happy. He came, simply, to tell the truth. He came to call people to a relationship with God.

Once people believed in the message of God through John, John began to baptize people. John was baptizing people in the Jordan River. When John began his mission, he preached a message of baptism as a SYMBOL. John the Baptist called on people to repent and to change their way of life. John told them of their need to leave their sins behind and to live a new kind of life. Baptism does not wash away the person's sin. Baptism is a SYMBOL that a person has put their trust in God.



Illustration: Teacher: Hold up a wedding ring. Say: Most people who are married wear a wedding ring. This ring shows everyone that they are married. There are some people who are married who do not wear a ring. **Ask:** Are they still married? Yes. What if a man takes off his ring to wash his hands? Is he still married? Yes. What if an unmarried woman tries on a wedding ring at a jewelry store? Would that make her married? *No.*

Say: The wedding ring doesn't make someone married. It's just a symbol. In the same way, being baptized is an **outward symbol** of the change that's been made on the inside. Baptism shows everyone that you have believed and trusted God.

JOHN BAPTIZES JESUS (Luke 3:21-22)

One day, when John and Jesus were both about 30 years old, Jesus came out to the wilderness where John was baptizing people (Luke 3:23).

John said, "Look, the Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!" - John 1:29b

Ask: Do you remember the animal sacrifices that were being made to cover the people's sins? Can you imagine how the people felt when John said that Jesus was the **Lamb of God** who would permanently take away all of their sin? Because Jesus is the Lamb of God, there would be no more need to sacrifice lambs.



Jesus wanted John to baptize Him (Matthew 3:13). Jesus wanted to be identified with John's message. He wanted to show people that John's message was true. John said that he was not worthy to baptize Jesus, but Jesus insisted that this was the right thing to do. So John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. And when they came out of the water, the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God came down like a dove and rested on Jesus (Luke 3:21-22).



A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, and I love Him. I am very pleased with Him." - Matthew 3:17

Say: I am a human. If I have a son, what is he? *Human.* If my dog has a baby, what is the baby? *It's a dog.* When God announced that Jesus was His Son, this was the first time that it was announced that **JESUS IS GOD!**

John saw the Spirit come down from heaven like a dove and remain on Jesus. John believed!

PPT Verse

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