

JOHN'S MINISTRY BEGAN // // // // // // // // // // //

Bible Reference: Matthew 3: Mark 1: Luke 3: John 1

Date: 4/26/26
1st Service

Grade: PreK /Kindergarten

Memory Verse:
"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." John 1:14

Big Picture Question:
Is Jesus God or a human?
Jesus is fully God and fully human

Christ Connection

- John's message for the people is the same invitation for us: "Repent and be baptized." We can turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Schedule

- Welcome/ Intro Activity.....5 minutes
 - Kindergarten in Large Group Lesson @ 9:20.....15-20 minutes
- Circle Time and Bible Story.....10 minutes
- Movement Activity.....10 minutes
- Craft.....5-7 minutes
- Music.....5 minutes
- Friends from Afar.....5-7 minutes
- Prayer and Bible Verse.....10 minutes
- Snack/ Discussion Time.....5-7 minutes
- Group Game.....10 minutes
- Additional Activities.....As Needed

Notes and Reminders

Happy last Sunday of April! After this week there are only two months left in our ministry year before Summer Sundays begin. This means you only have four more Sundays left of serving with this group of children! We pray that this year would end with as much strength and intention as the rest of the year has gone!



SHEPHERD BIBLE STUDY

The early ministry of John the Baptist is recorded in all four Gospels—*Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*. This preacher whose dress, diet, and living conditions may have seemed eccentric to some, proclaimed the good news of one greater than himself: Jesus, the promised *Messiah*.

Two Old Testament passages tell us about John the Baptist, the first being *Isaiah 40:3*—a verse cited not only by the Gospel writers but also by John himself when questioned about his identity. The second passage is *Malachi 3:1*, in which the Lord declares, “See, I am going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way before me.” The people were expecting to witness the arrival of the *Messiah* and wondered if John was the one they had been waiting for. Many were drawn to John, traveling from far away to confess their sins and be baptized.

John, however, embraced his role of a messenger to the *Messiah*. John began his ministry, humbly declaring both his unworthiness and the supremacy of Christ. He ventured throughout the area near the Jordan River, calling the people to repent and receive forgiveness from sin. He spoke against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and Sadducees, calling them, too, to repent and be changed through faith.

The crowds asked what God would have them do. John called them to love one another and be content with what they had. He exhorted them, yet proclaimed the good news, professing that Jesus is the Son of God and the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. These were weighty statements for one man to say about another, but John trusted God’s Word and proclaimed the same gospel we hear today—the same gospel you will teach to boys and girls this week.

Pray that the Holy Spirit would go before you to prepare children’s hearts to receive the good news for themselves. Ask the Lord to give you words to faithfully proclaim the truth that He alone is worthy of our repentance and trust.



JUNIOR SHEPHERD HIGHLIGHT

John the Baptist's early ministry is talked about in all four Gospels- Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. John lived in a way that seemed unusual to some people- his clothes, food, and lifestyle were different. But his message was very important. He told people about someone greater than himself: Jesus, the promised Messiah.

John made it clear that he was not the Messiah. He knew his job was to point people to Jesus. He traveled around the Jordan River, telling people to turn away from their sins and ask God for forgiveness. He also spoke strongly to religious leaders like the Pharisees and Sadducees, telling them they needed to truly change their hearts, not just act religious.

People asked John what they should do. He told them to love others, share what they had, and be content. While he challenged them to change, he also shared good news: Jesus is the Son of God and the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. That was a big and important message, but John trusted God and boldly shared it.

As we learn about the life of John the Baptist, we can reflect on the ways we are living. The instructions that he gave people about how to live still apply to us today!

How do you love others? Are you showing them patience when you get frustrated? We can share what we have when someone else needs help. Maybe this is something as small as sharing a pencil with someone who forgot theirs, or something bigger like sharing lunch with someone who has none!

No matter how you are loving and caring for other people, we must be content in our actions. We shouldn't do these things and feel bitter about them because we are losing something- we should celebrate because we are helping someone else! We must remember that without the love of Jesus and the redemption we experience from him, we are no different than anyone else because we are sinners too. We can only share love with other people because Jesus first showed his love to us.



OUTLINE



Welcome and Intro Activity

5 minutes

Welcome each child and mark them as present on the attendance sheet on the clipboard by the door.

- Give each child paper and crayons. Say different words and encourage the kids to draw a picture that reminds them of each word. Say the words “love,” “happiness,” “sadness,” and “no.”
- **SAY** Words can remind people of different things. When I hear the word ‘love,’ I think about a heart. When I hear ‘happiness,’ I think of a smiley face. Today we are going to hear about baptism. Baptism is when someone is lowered under the water and brought back up. Someone gets baptized when he or she trusts and follows Jesus. Baptism is a reminder of Jesus’ death and resurrection. We will talk more about baptism in our story today!

Circle Time and Bible Story

10 minutes

Thinking Activity

- Show the picture of someone getting baptized and talk about baptism.
- **SAY** This is a baptism. Baptism is when someone who has chosen to follow Jesus is lowered under water and brought back up. A person gets baptized to show others that he has repented, or turned from his sins to follow Jesus. Baptism is a reminder, or a picture of what Jesus has done. In our story today, a man was baptizing people before Jesus started His ministry. Let’s listen in to hear more about it!

Bible Story

- John was a man who lived in the wilderness. He wore clothes made from camel hair and a leather belt around his waist. When he was hungry, he ate locusts and wild honey. God gave John a very important job. He would get people ready for Jesus, the Messiah whom God promised. John began telling the people, “Repent and be baptized. God’s kingdom is coming. It’s almost here!” People wondered about John. “Who are you?” they asked. John said, “I am not the Messiah.” “Who are you, then?” the people asked. The prophet Isaiah had answered this question many years earlier. Isaiah had said, “Someone is shouting in the wilderness. He says, ‘Get ready for the Lord; make way for Him!’” John was the man Isaiah had talked about! Many people came to hear John teach. They came from Jerusalem and all the lands around the Jordan River. The people listened to John, and they began to repent; they turned away from their sins and asked God to forgive them. Then John baptized them in the Jordan River.





- To baptize means to lower someone in water and bring him back up. Baptism shows that a person is following Jesus and that God has forgiven their sins. Some of the people wondered if John was the *Messiah* God promised. But John said, “Someone more powerful than I will come after me. I am not good enough to even untie His sandals.” John also said, “I baptize with water, but He will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Christ Connection

- John’s message for the people is the same invitation for us: “Repent and be baptized.” We can turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Review Activity

- Demonstrate how to sky write the letter Y for “yes” and N for “no.” Ask yes or no questions from the story and encourage the children to sky write a Y or N to answer.

Questions could include:

- 1. Was John the *Messiah*? (no)
- 2. Did John eat locust and wild honey? (yes)
- 3. Are followers of Jesus baptized in water? (yes)
- 4. Was John more powerful than Jesus? (no)
- SAY John’s message did not point to himself; it pointed to Jesus! Jesus calls us to repent, or turn from our sin and trust in Him as Savior and Lord.

Movement Activity

10 minutes

Before the activity, print and cut apart the “Honey and Locusts” printable. Fold each picture of honey and a locust in half. Open the pictures like a tent and lay them out in an open area. Encourage the children to use kids’ tweezers or tongs to pick up each picture and place it in a muffin tin. Play as long as there is interest.

SAY John the Baptist lived in the wilderness and ate something sweet and something crunchy. What did he eat? (wild honey and locusts) Does anyone remember the very important job God gave to John? [Allow responses.] John got people ready for Jesus. John’s message for the people is the same invitation for us: ‘Repent and be baptized.’ We can turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.



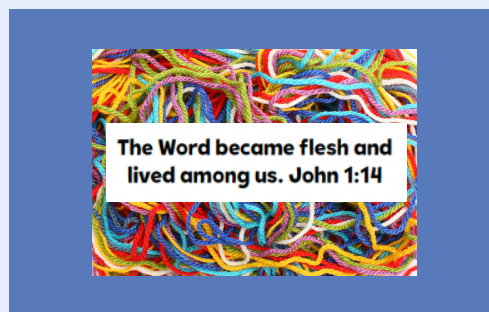


Craft

5-7 minutes

Print the “Key Passage Phrase Label” printable. Cut yarn into ½- to 1-inch lengths. Place the yarn, construction paper, and glue on the table. Invite children to create a collage by gluing the yarn to the paper. Older children may want to cut additional pieces of yarn with blunt-tip scissors. As the glue dries, encourage children to feel the texture of the yarn. Place a Key Passage Phrase Label on the collage.

SAY John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair. Does your picture feel like animal hair? John had an important job telling people that Jesus was coming. Our key passage phrase tells us, ‘The Word became flesh and lived among us.’ God became a human and lived on earth. This was John’s message to the people.



Music

5 minutes

You will find music and other video resources on the USB which is already plugged into the TV. Feel free to play the videos in any order you like! You may distribute the Activity Page for the children to complete at this time, if they would prefer to sit and listen to the music.

Friends From Afar

5-7 minutes

You will find today’s activity for Friends from Afar in the Binder on the counter. The information for this month’s Global Partner family and an activity to learn about where they are serving are included. Necessary supplies are located in your bin.





Prayer and Bible Verse

10 minutes

Prayer (Use these words, or your own, to pray about today's Bible lesson. Take time to listen to prayer requests from the children and pray for them as well!)

- God, thank You for sending John to get people ready for Jesus. Thank You for Jesus, the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us! Remind us that we can turn from our sin and turn to Jesus. Help us follow Him. Amen.

Bible Verse

- Using the Key Passage Poster, begin by reading the verse once all together. Hold a small ball and say the first word in the verse, then pass the ball to the next person in the circle, who will say the next word in the verse. Continue likewise until the verse is done. You may repeat the verse again so that each child gets a turn. Be sure to assist children with remembering the words if they need help!

Snack and Discussion Time

5-7 minutes

Have children sanitize their hands before passing out snacks and cups of water. During this time, you can connect with children and discuss questions regarding the lesson.

1. What did you like about the Bible story? (Answers will vary.)
 2. What were some things in the Bible story that made you happy or sad? (Answers will vary.)
 3. Was John the *Messiah*? (No, John told the people the *Messiah* was coming.)
 4. What does it mean to repent? (to turn away from our sin and follow Jesus)
 5. What does it mean to be baptized? (To lower someone in water and bring him back up. Baptism is a picture that shows a person is following Jesus and that God has forgiven his or her sins.)
 6. Is Jesus God or a human? Jesus is fully God and fully human.
- SAY John the Baptist had a very important job. He would get people ready for Jesus! John told people to repent and be baptized, because Jesus was coming. John got people ready for Jesus, so when Jesus came, they knew Jesus was the *Messiah*—the One God sent to rescue people from sin.





Group Game

10 minutes

- Guide one child or leader to sit facing away from the rest of the children. Lead the remaining children to line up. Tell the child or leader who is facing away from the group to say, "Who are you?" Guide the first child in line to say, "I am not the **Messiah**." Encourage the child or leader to guess who said it. Switch and let someone else be the person to face away from the group.
- **SAY** In our game you asked, 'Who are you?' In today's Bible story, people asked John this question too. John said, 'Someone more powerful than I will come after me.' John wanted to make sure people knew he wasn't the **Messiah**, but he was getting them ready for the **Messiah**! Who did John get people ready for? [Allow responses.] That's right: John got people ready for Jesus. Jesus is the **Messiah**!

Additional Activities

As Needed

Who Are You?

- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle on the floor. Choose one child to go first and say "I am not (tell the child to say one of the other kid's name)." Instruct the child whose name was called to respond "I am (her own name)! I am not (one of the other kids in the class' name)." Instruct the child that she named to respond "I am (his own name)!" Repeat as time allows.
- **SAY** We had so much fun playing our game. John came and told people that he was not the **Messiah**. John got people ready for Jesus. John came to make the way for the **Messiah**, Jesus. Then, Jesus came, just like John said!

Understand Repentance

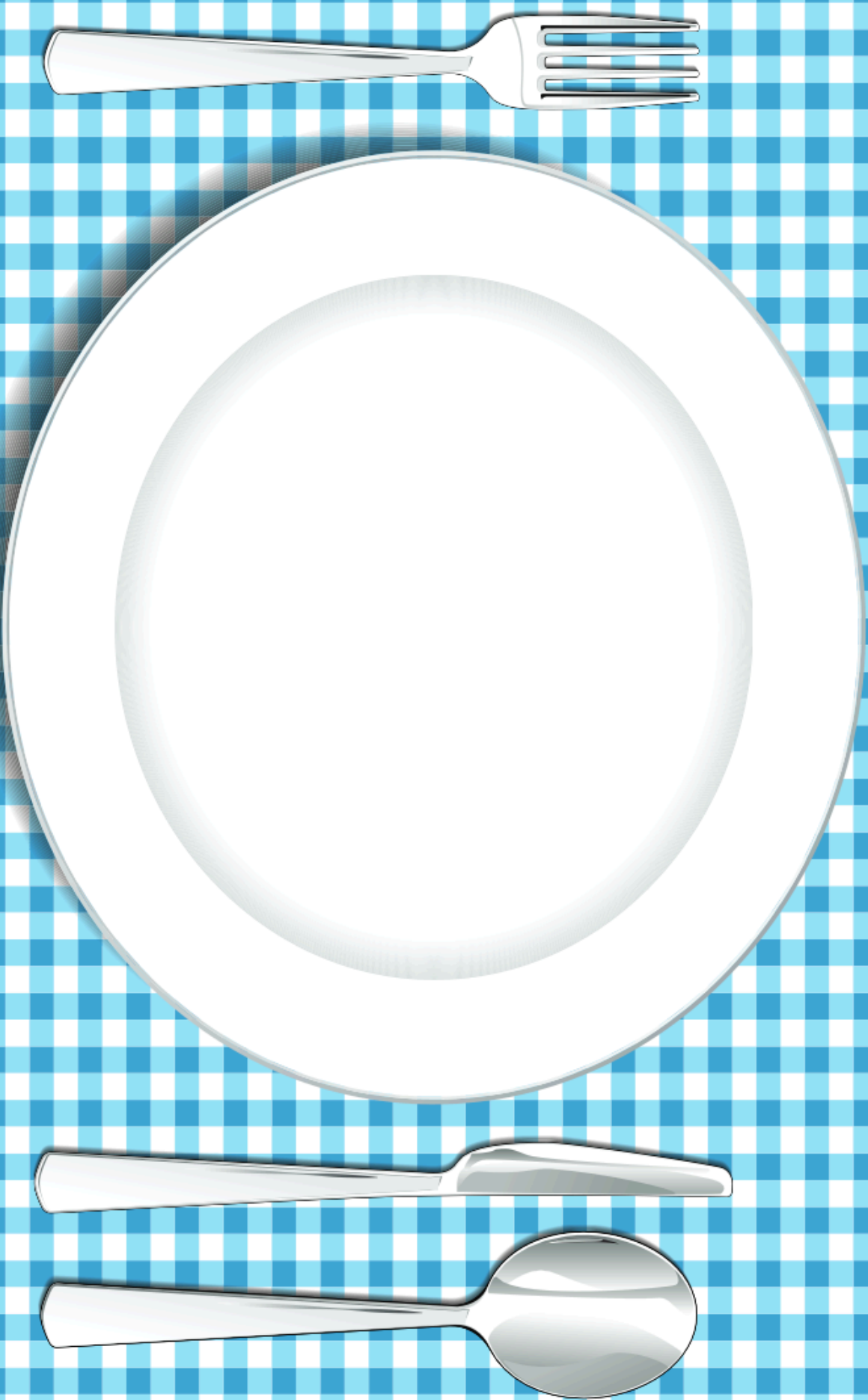
- Position all the kids on one side of the room. Stand on the opposite side, facing them. Instruct the kids to begin walking slowly toward you. As they walk, call out "Repent!" in a clear, strong voice. Immediately have the children stop, turn around, and begin walking in the opposite direction. Repeat this process a few times to reinforce the concept. Emphasize that "repent" means to turn away from one direction and go another way.
- **SAY** Great job following directions and turning when I said 'repent.' To repent means to turn the other way. We all disobey God. Disobeying God is called sin. What are some ways we sin? [Allow responses.] We sin when we tell a lie or when we disobey our parents. When we repent, we turn away from our sin and follow Jesus. John told the people to repent because Jesus was coming. John's message for people is the same invitation for us: 'Repent and be baptized.' We can turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.



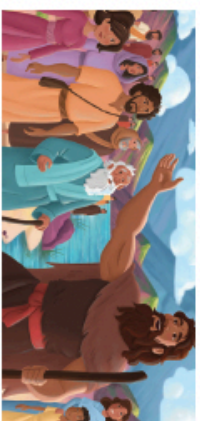


What Do You Eat?

INSTRUCTIONS: John the Baptist ate locusts and wild honey. Draw what you like to eat when you are hungry.



NAME: _____



John's Ministry Began

Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3; John 1

STORY POINT:

John got people ready for Jesus.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

John's message for the people is the same invitation for us: "Repent and be baptized." We can turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 1:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Is Jesus God or a human? Jesus is fully God and fully human.



Scan the QR code
for resources to
use at home!





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