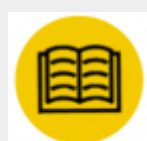


# Baptism of Jesus

Scripture Reference: [Matthew 3:13-17](#)



**Suggested Emphasis:** Please God by obeying Him and making right choices.



Background Study



Story Introduction



Telling the Story



Review Questions



Songs



Learning Activities



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## Story Overview:

Jesus was baptised in the Jordan River by his cousin, John. He was 30 years old. Jesus was not baptised because He needed to repent of wrong but because He wanted to do everything that was right. He “fulfilled all righteousness”. His heavenly Father was “well pleased.”

## Background Study:

The baptism of Jesus marked the official beginning of his ministry. This is the time Jesus publicly showed his choice to follow God’s will. Until this time he most probably lived in

Nazareth working as a carpenter like Joseph. Jesus probably walked about 70 miles from Nazareth to the Jordan River near Jericho. He must have known it was important to be baptised.

John was not yet sure that Jesus was the Messiah, but he knew that it would be more fitting for Jesus to baptise him ([Luke 3:3](#)). John and Jesus probably were personally acquainted, though they lived far apart. Their mothers were related ([Luke 1:36](#)), and they may have seen each other when they went to Jerusalem for the Passover and other feasts. It is possible that John's parents had told him about the miraculous birth of Jesus.

Jesus did not need to repent and be forgiven because He had never done anything wrong. But he wanted to do everything right. When Jesus explained this, John baptised Him. Reasons for his baptism were:

- It showed that he fulfilled all the requirements of the Messiah.
- At the baptism he was officially announced as the Messiah.
- Jesus completely identified himself with man's shortcomings ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).
- His baptism was an example to his followers. Remember that this was "John's baptism" and not the same baptism introduced in Acts 2. John's baptism was a baptism showing repentance. Baptism after Jesus' resurrection was - and is - an act that identifies us with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus ([Romans 6:1-14](#)).

John had baptised many people, but he had never seen anything like this before! There was an opening in the sky and the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, came down to rest on Jesus. We do not know what the Spirit looked like or how the people actually knew it was the Spirit. Did it look like a dove or just descend like one? Perhaps the Spirit took a body like a dove so that John and Jesus could see him. When John saw Him, he knew that Jesus was the Christ, the king John had been telling the people about ([John 1:32-33](#)). The Father, Son and Holy Spirit were all revealed together on this occasion.

The coming of the Holy Spirit would have been enough to let John know that Jesus was

really the Christ, the king, but God added His own statement too. He declared not only that Jesus was His son but also that He was well pleased with his son ([Matthew 3:17](#)). Of course, God had been pleased with Jesus before, but now He was especially pleased because Jesus wanted to do everything that was right. Jesus fulfilled all righteousness.



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## Way to Introduce the Story:

What makes your parents happy? When you obey your parents or do good things are they happy? Think of a time when you really made your parents happy. (Share something from your own life and then allow students to share.) In today's bible story we are going to learn about a time that God was very happy because of something His Son, Jesus, did.

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## The Story:

God sent Jesus to earth to do a very special work in his life. As he grew up Jesus waited patiently until the right time to begin God's special work.

Jesus was the Son of God but he was also a human being living on this earth. He learned all the things that a human being needs to know. Jesus grew up in the town of Nazareth. His mother was Mary and Mary's husband was Joseph.

Joseph treated Jesus like he was his own son. Joseph was a carpenter and he taught Jesus how to do carpentry work.

Finally, when Jesus was 30 years old, the time came to do God's special work. Jesus left his hometown of Nazareth to begin his preaching ministry.

The first place Jesus went was to the Jordan River where his cousin, John, was preaching. Jesus knew that John was telling people that they needed to repent of their sins. They needed to and have soft hearts towards God. Many people were being baptised.

John the Baptist was baptising people because they were sorry for bad things they had done. John was so surprised when JESUS came to him and wanted to be baptised. How could this be? Jesus had never done bad things. Why should he be baptised? John said to Jesus, "I should not baptise you. You should baptise me instead!"

But Jesus insisted that John baptise him. He explained to John that obeying God is not just about stopping the bad things in your life. Obeying God is also about doing what is right. Being baptised was the right thing to do and Jesus wanted everyone to know that he chose to do everything right and follow God.

So John took Jesus down into the Jordan River and baptised him. He put Jesus all the way under the water and then pulled him back up again.

John had baptised many people but this time something was very different. Something very special happened after Jesus was baptised. The clouds began to move apart and the sky opened up. The Holy Spirit came down out of heaven like a beautiful dove and landed on Jesus. The voice of God also came from heaven. God said, "This is my Son and I love him. I am very pleased with him."

Now John knew for sure that Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus was the Messiah who came to save the world. Jesus was the King of the Jews. God loved the world so much that he had sent his son, Jesus, to the earth.

Jesus made God very happy that day because he chose to do the right thing. Do you

choose to do the right thing? What things do you do to make God happy? (Let children answer.)

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## Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download the slideshow](#) or [click here to download the pictures to print](#). Be selective. Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

## Review Questions:

1. Who baptized Jesus? John the Baptist
2. Where was Jesus baptized? The Jordan River
3. Why was Jesus baptized? To do what was right.
4. What symbol showed that God was pleased with Jesus' baptism? God's Spirit coming down from heaven as a dove.

## Song Suggestions:

- [Deep and Wide Song](#)
- [I am a C-H-R-I-S-T-I-A-N \(Song\)](#)
- The children in my class helped make up verses to the following song sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It":

*If you love God and you know it \*don't tell lies.*

*If you love God and you know it \*don't tell lies.*

*If you love God and you know it then your life will surely show it.*

*If you love God and you know it \*don't tell lies.*

*\*other verses could be things like "obey your parents", "never steal" or "say kind words".*

- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

## Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

### Activities:

- Use interactive drawing to tell the story. You don't have to be an artist! The children are usually happy to help you draw. [The Baptism of Jesus- Interactive Drawing Instructions](#)
- Before class write situations on individual cards. Students can take turns reading the situations out loud. Use a coin toss or roll of dice to decide if a right or wrong choice should be made in that situation. Example: "heads" is the right choice and "tails" is the wrong. Child reads a situation that says: "My brother gets to go to the movies and I don't." The child tosses the coin and it is "tails" so the child might decide that the thing to do in that situation would be to cry and whine to their mother. Class can then decide the consequences of making the choice to do wrong.
- This is a good story to tell while sitting beside a river.
- Use a bible atlas to find the probable location of Jesus' baptism.
- Have older children look up the word "baptism" in a number of good bible dictionaries. Discuss the fact that baptism means to dip or immerse and not to simply sprinkle.
- Read Matthew 3:17 (And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom

I love; with him I am well pleased.”) and talk about how God was proud of his Son for doing the right thing. A great way to help children to relate try this:

Before class contact each parent and ask them to share something they are proud of their son or daughter about. Then, in class, after you have talked about Matthew 3:17, tell the children that their parents are proud of them like God was proud of his son. One by one share what each parent has written. Start each with, “*Child’s Name*, you are my son (or daughter) and I love you. I am so proud of you because...” *Note: I did this with 5-8 year olds and they were so touched by these words of affirmation.*

### Crafts:

- Guide the children in reading today’s scripture references. Then have them draw about what they have read. Use a blank piece of paper or print this worksheet: [The Baptism of Jesus-Responsive Drawing](#)
- Guide the children in reading today’s scripture references. Then have them draw about what they have read. Use a blank piece of paper or print this worksheet: [The Baptism of Jesus Responsive Writing](#)
- Make a dove craft. Christmas craft books are a good place to look for ideas.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "Baptism of Jesus" printables to print on A4 size paper](#)

[Click here for "Baptism of Jesus" printables to print on Letter size paper \(USA\)](#)

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## Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and worksheets about the baptism of Jesus \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page from http://www.christiananswers.net/](http://www.christiananswers.net/)
- [Craft: Use a paper cup to show Jesus being baptised. Adapted from the story of Naaman from bibleschoolteachers.blogspot.co.nz](#)
- [Printable Bookmarks from acitivitiesforkids.com. Enter your own personal text and then print them](#)
- [Online activities and games from gardenofpraise.com](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/jesus-early-ministry/>

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