

STORIES WITHIN THE TRUE STORY



Week Twenty Two - Jesus Is Baptized

A Note to the Parents/Teachers

The story of Jesus being baptized may seem confusing at first for many. Why did Jesus need to be baptized? What exactly does baptism mean? But this story is so instrumental in seeing the identity of Jesus - and finding our identity in him.

- **Big Idea:** Jesus fully identifies himself with humanity - so humanity can find our identity in Jesus.

Starter

- **Evidences of Grace**
Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything, big or small, which is good is from God. When a kid shares, encourage everyone to thank God together.
- **Baptismal Identity Video**
You may choose to watch this video before the lesson starts: <https://youtu.be/6DmMZo8JIQU>

Sing Together

Story - from Matthew 3:13-17

While Jesus was living in the Galilean hills, John, called “the Baptizer,” was preaching in the desert country of Judea. His message was simple: “Change your life. God’s kingdom is here.”

John dressed in a camel-hair robe tied at the waist by a leather strap. He lived on a diet of locusts and wild honey. People poured out of Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordanian countryside to hear and see him in action. There at the Jordan River those who came to confess their sins were baptized into a changed life.

When John realized that a lot of Pharisees and Sadducees were showing up for a baptismal experience because it was becoming the popular thing to do, he exploded: “Brood of snakes! What do you think you’re doing slithering down here to the river? Do you think a little water is going to make any difference? It’s your life that must change, not your skin! And don’t think you are good just by claiming Abraham as father. Descendants of Abraham are a dime a dozen. What counts is your life. Is it flourishing? Because if it’s deadwood, it goes on the fire.

“I’m baptizing you in the river, but the real action comes next: The main character in this drama—compared to him I’m a mere stagehand—will ignite the kingdom life within you, a fire within you, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out. He’s going to clean house—make a clean sweep of your lives. He’ll place everything true in its proper place before God; everything false he’ll put out with the trash to be burned.”

Then Jesus appeared, arriving at the Jordan River from Galilee. He wanted John to baptize him. John objected, “I’m the one who needs to be baptized, not *you!*”

But Jesus insisted. “Do it. God’s work, putting things right all these centuries, is coming together right now in this baptism.” So John did it.

The moment Jesus came up out of the baptismal waters the skies opened up and he saw God’s Spirit coming down like a dove and landing on Jesus. And along with the Spirit, a voice: “This is my Son, chosen and marked by my love, delight of my life.”

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- What do you think it meant to be baptized by John in the water?
- What do you think John meant by saying the one coming after him would give a better baptism? Who was he talking about? What kind of baptism did he mean?

[Explain that baptism simply means to be covered in. You can be covered in water, but Jesus really wants to cover us with his righteousness]

- Why do you think Jesus came to be baptized if he had no sin?
[Even though he was perfect, he chose to fully identify himself with the sin of humanity, in order to take on the penalty for us - so that we could be fully identified with Jesus' righteousness]
- If you are in Jesus, the Father God looks at you and says the same words: *"This is my child, who I love, and I delight in."*
Do you believe this? How can you live if this is true?

Breakout Time

- **Prayer:**

God, thank you for sending your Son. Thank you for allowing us to be covered (baptized) by Jesus, so we can have the identity of being your children. Thank you for loving us. Amen.

- **Craft:**

- Use the coloring sheet attached
- OR make a dove craft - fold a paper plate in half, glue on a googly eye, orange triangle for beak, and a feather



- OR create a baptism scene - decorate popsicle sticks as people, glue the bottom and sides of a sheet of paper to a larger paper so there is an opening on the top end, and place the people in the 'water'



- **BLESS Activity:** **For kids to do during the week**
Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask Spirit to help us Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak, and Sabbath (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.

This week, focus on the **Speak** rhythm. God spoke words of affirmation and love over His Son, Jesus. If we are in Jesus, He speaks these words over us. How can you speak words of love and life to others this week?

