

Adventures with GOD!

THE IMPRISONMENT OF JOHN THE BAPTIST (C.1.Spring.11)

Biblical Reference	Mark 6:14-29
Key Verse	John 1:26-27
Key Concept	Serving God does not mean that life will always be easy.
Educational Objectives	At the end of the class today, the children will be able to: 1. Evaluate the life of John the Baptist 2. Express their reaction as they learn about John the Baptist's death. 3. Explain why John the Baptist said that Jesus was "before him"

Life Application

Today we will see that just because we love and serve God, doesn't mean that we will have an easy life. It's a tendency today to want to have a smooth and painless life, but that's not the life that God has offered. John the Baptist declared the truth and that's why he was imprisoned. It wasn't fair. But sometimes the justice the world gives isn't fair. Only justice that comes from God is true justice. John the Baptist followed God and knew that God's justice would prevail. The children have the opportunity to see Jesus as a human, reacting to the sad news of John's death.

Possible Activities and Class Plan

Activity	Materials	Time
Introduction	Game, Bible, paper, pens, Jar Game from session 8	20 minutes
My GROW Adventure	GROW Adventure w/God materials	5 minutes
Opening Prayer	Candle	1 minute
Bible story	Bible, white board or poster board, markers, faces, names	20 minutes
Conclusion	Bible, pens	20 minutes
My GROW Adventure	Review	5 minutes
Closing prayer	Candle	1 minute

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INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction: When the children arrive, use the “jar game” from session 8 to review what they’ve learned so far in this trimester. As other children arrive, include them in the game. You may wish to add some new questions.

You can also play a game with the todays verses. Make various cards with each verse 2 or 3. Hide the cards in the room. When everyone is there, give each child a card with the Bible reference on it (or have them work together). The children will have to find all of the cards with the Bible verse they have. It’s like playing “treasure hunt” where they have to find things that are hidden. The difficult part of this game will be to find the cards that have their particular verse on them. They can also help others to find their verses as they come across them.

My GROW Adventure with God Weekly Review: As children enter take time to have them reflect on their adventure with God booklets and either discuss or use art materials to express their journey during the past week. You may wish to add any art work, written poems, prayers or songs to a GROW wall in the room. You can find my GROW Adventure with God materials on the Covchurch.org website in the same place as the Adventures with God sessions.

Opening Prayer: Gather children around a candle. Light the candle and explain that we are entering into a special time with God. Encourage the children to hold their hands out in front of them palms up as a sign they are ready to receive what God has for them today.

Prayer Example: Lord God, thank you for making us, for loving us, for forgiving us, and guiding us. We know you are here with us right now. As we enter into your word, the Bible, help us draw close to you, to understand and to listen to what you have to say to us. Amen (For safety sake, you may wish to extinguish the candle after the prayer)

Bible Reading: Explain that as we read the Bible we do that first to spend time with God. Children can remain with hands out stretched palms up to receive the word as it’s being read. Alternatively they can be invited to draw what they hear. Read the key verse Bible passage for the day two times and ask children to respond.

Question examples: What did you notice in this passage? How does it make you feel? Was there anything you would ask God about that you didn’t understand or was confusing? Is God saying anything to you though the story?

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Bible Story: Before the class, make several big circles and hang them on the wall. Draw faces that show the different reactions that different people have in hearing the Bible story today. Have other faces that are left blank so the children can draw in faces after the story.

Ask them if any of them have lost a loved one, or if they've had a loved one put in jail, or move far away. Ask them if they want to share how they felt regarding these experiences (they may express sadness, as well as other emotions such as anger, confusion, abandonment, fear). Allow them to express the emotions they experienced. Maybe share an experience you had or read them a modern day story about a similar situation.

Then ask them to find their Bible verse cards and have them read them in order, given the Bible references they have. When they've finished reading them out loud, ask: "What happened in today's story? What did Jesus feel when he heard the news? What did John the Baptist feel? What did the disciples want to do? Do you think what happened was fair?"

It's time to ask them to approach the big circles on the wall. Give each child a marker and explain that they should draw a face that expresses the emotion that the different people in the story felt: Jesus, John the Baptist, Herod, the people who were at Herod's party, the disciples.

Then spend time reflecting on the results of John's death. The key phrase to emphasize is that the truth cannot be hidden. Even though John's death was unfair, the truth would not be hidden. Jesus himself kept preaching the same things that John had preached, and after Jesus' death the disciples kept teaching what they'd learned from Jesus. Now it's our time to continue in their footsteps. We have been given the task of sharing the good news of Jesus with others. It might not always be easy, but we can trust that God is with us, as we share with those around us about Jesus.

Conclusion: It's important to understand that Jesus was a human being. He suffered as we suffer. He experienced emotions that you and I experience when something bad happens to our loved ones. He can help us carry the pain we feel. We all face difficult situations and the loss of loved ones and it's important to help children understand that Jesus knows what they feel and that they are not alone, when something similar happens.

To finish your time today, pray together and give God thanks because he carries our pain and suffering. Pray for people in your church, or in the children's families that are suffering. Pray that God would help the children to continue to share the truth of God's love with others. Don't forget to add the symbol to the timeline of Jesus' life.

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Today's GROW Adventure with God Review:

G: God's Word: What is the story? (give children an opportunity to express their understanding of the story)

R: Relationships: Is there anything in today's bible story that shows us how we should or shouldn't share God's love with others? (Remind children that sometimes God uses the stories of the bible to show us how we shouldn't act toward God or others and give them a chance to consider how we might show God's love instead)

O: Outward Action: Is there anything in the bible story that shows us how we should help or serve God or others? (Explore concrete ways the children could live this out in the coming week)

W: Worship: Is there anything in the bible story that shows us how we should accept God's love for us and others? Ask: How do you feel about God? How would you like to respond to God? What would you like to say to God?

Closing Prayer: Gather children around the candle again. As you light the candle explain that the flame is something that is present in the light and the darkness. In the same way, it reminds us that God is always with us. Is there anything anyone wishes to say to God? After children have responded, close the prayer time.

Prayer Example: Lord God, we thank you that you are always with us, and always love us. It's good to be with you. Thank you for what we have learned today. Thank you for being with us and for teaching us through the Bible. Help us to remember what you have taught us today and to live it out when we leave. Amen