

Adventures with GOD!

JOHN THE BAPTIST (B.3.SPRING.2)

Biblical Reference	Luke 1:5-17, Luke 3:1-20
Key Verse	Luke 3:16a
Key Concept	God knew John the Baptist even before he was born and God knows me.
Educational Objectives	At the end of the class today, children will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Name at least 2 positive things about themselves 2. Describe the physical appearance of John the Baptist 3. Describe some of the messages John the Baptist preached

Life Application

Today's lesson will help children understand that even before we are born, God knows us and loves us. For that we can give thanks! God gives us life and invites us to share the special message of Jesus with others. Just like John the Baptist was ready to obey and follow God's ways, we should be ready to obey and follow.

Possible Activities and Class Plan

Activity	Materials	Time
My GROW Adventure	GROW Adventure materials	5 minutes
Opening Prayer	Candle	1 minute
Bible Reading	Bible	5 minutes
Introduction	Lamb's wool	5 minutes
Bible Exploration	Bible, time machine	10 minutes
Snack and dialogue		10 minutes
Activity	Paper, markers, pens	10 minutes
Key Verse	See instructions	5 minutes
My GROW Adventure	Review	5 minutes
Closing Prayer	Candle	1 minute



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INSTRUCTIONS

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 at CovChurch.org/children/adventures-with-god.

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 Luke 1:5-17 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 passage?

Introduction: Find some lamb's wool or something that could represent lamb's wool. Pass it around and allow children to observe and touch it. Ask children if they've ever had the opportunity to see or pet a lamb. What is their wool like? It's often dirty and a little rough. Say, "There is a man who is going to visit us today, who typically dresses in clothes made out of lamb's wool. Can you imagine wearing clothes made out of lamb's wool? It seems a little strange, but he's a very interesting person and he's going to visit us today in the time machine."

Bible Exploration: Make sure to have a volunteer ready to play the part of John the Baptist. Practice the dialogue before the class so that it will go smoothly during the class. The volunteer

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should know the basic facts about John the Baptist, and the children should be able to ask questions. If possible, find or make a costume that's appropriate for John the Baptist (even if it's as simple as gluing or taping cotton balls to a shirt).

Invite children to set up the time machine and invite someone to push the buttons. Encourage children to make noises for the time machine. Introduce children to John the Baptist and continue with the Bible exploration (see dialogue option on page 5).

Snack and Dialogue: If possible, serve a snack and invite John the Baptist to join you. John ate honey among other things, so maybe offer the children honey on crackers or honey on bread, along with something to drink. During the snack, talk the ways in which Luke 1 is related to what John shared in Luke 3. What did God tell John's father before he was born? Did this prophecy come true? Ask children how they think this made John feel, knowing that even before he was born God knew him and had a plan for him. Ask children how it makes them feel to know that God knew them and had plans for them even before they were born. Say good-bye to John the Baptist and have him leave through the time machine.

Activity: Ask the children to draw a picture or make a list of some of the characteristics that made John the Baptist special. Next, children should do the same thing, but include at least two positive things about themselves. How has God made them special? Ask children to share it with one or two of the other children in the group.

Key Verse: In honor of John the Baptist who was a voice that cried out in the desert, motivate children to say the Key Verse in a whisper, then in a normal voice and then in a loud voice.

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. Give children a chance to consider how we might show God's love instead).

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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? 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

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BIBLE EXPLORATION

Questions for John the Baptist

John the Baptist (dressed accordingly): Repent from your sins! Prepare the way for the Lord! Wait, where am I? This doesn't look like the Jordan River.

Question #1 – You are right, you are in _____. You just came out of our time machine, but you can return to the Jordan River shortly. We'd like to ask you a few questions, for example, why do you preach the message that you do?

John the Baptist: Well, the people I'm around are in bad shape in terms of their life with God. For hundreds of years the prophets were God's voice to God's people warning them that God wasn't happy with the way they were living, and invited them to change and return to God, but they didn't listen. So, I believe God has also asked me to share this message with the people.

Question #2 – What's it like to be a prophet? Do you like to be a prophet?

John the Baptist: I could choose another profession, it would be a hard choice to resist. It's not easy being a prophet, but because I want to obey God, I will follow the way God has chosen for me. Many times people don't like to hear what we say; it's too harsh. Many of the prophets were killed by their own people because they didn't like their message. Some people have warned me that Herod is not happy about what I'm teaching and that some day he might try to kill me. But I know that I have been chosen by God and I want to be used by God so that people may be ready to receive God. I believe that my role is important to God.

Question #3 – What makes you different from other prophets?

John the Baptist: I have a very key role. I'm the prophet that was prophesied about even before I was born. Other prophets before me prophesied that I would one day come. An angel even told my father the plans God had for me before I was born. I'm supposed to get people ready to meet the Messiah.

Question #4 – What do people need to do to prepare to receive the Messiah?

John the Baptist: Some people are ready, as they've asked forgiveness for their sins and they are getting baptized, as a symbol of their repentance and submission to God.

Question #5 – And the other people? What do they need to do?



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John the Baptist: They need to repent and seek God. God desires to be the center of their lives. This should be seen in the way they live.

Question #6 – What does it look like when people repent and make God the center?

John the Baptist: For example, to people in general I say, “If you have two tunics, give one to someone who has none. And if you have food, share it with those in need.” To the tax collectors I say, “Don’t take more than what is required by law.” And to the soldiers I say, “Don’t use extortion to get money from others, be content with your salary.”

Question #7 – Will you always share this message?

John the Baptist: Soon the Messiah will come, I am not him. My job is simply to get people ready. Even though I don’t know who it will be or when he will come. I know God will reveal him to me. Right now I act on faith. I’m waiting for the day when I can say, “Here he is the lamb of God who comes to take away the sins of the world.”

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INFORMATION SHEET

Information about John the Baptist

What did John the Baptist do? He went throughout all the region of the Jordan and preached the repentance of sins and invited people to be baptized. (Luke 3:3)

What did John the Baptist preach? Prepare the way of the Lord (Luke 3:4)

What did he say to the multitudes that wanted to be baptized by him? You brood of vipers. Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath. (Luke 3:7)

What did he respond when the people asked him, what will we do? Luke 3:11

What did he say to the tax collectors? Luke 3:13

What did he say to the soldiers? Luke 3:14

Why was he put in jail? Matthew 14:3-4, Mark 6:17-18, Luke 3:19-20

Why did he send messengers to talk with Jesus? Matthew 11:1-6, Luke 7: 24-35

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ILLUSTRATION

