



LESSON 2 JESUS' BAPTISM

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is God's Son

SCRIPTURE: Mark 1; Matthew 3

GOD'S BIG STORY: John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus by encouraging people to repent and be baptized. At Jesus' baptism, God reveals that Jesus is His own Son.

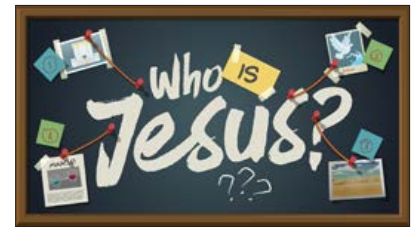
WORD OF WONDER: The Son is the exact likeness of God, who can't be seen. The Son is first, and he is over all creation. —Colossians 1:15

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: Who are you? I am _____.
- Curiosity Questions
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: Colossians 1:15
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Praise Songwriting



Notes! Use the Notes Pages on the back of the Coloring Sheet each week to help kids stay engaged and remember what they are learning. Encourage kids to make notes, draw pictures, and write questions throughout small group and large group. This also provides parents with resources to keep the conversation going throughout the week!



[Who is Jesus Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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WORD OF WONDER: Colossians 1:15

Take a moment to read Matthew 3 and Mark 1:1–12. Who do you identify with? The eager crowds? The suspicious religious gatekeepers? Or with John, who obeyed God's call to preach His word even when he didn't fully understand what was happening?

What John *did* understand is that he had a part to play in the work of God. He boldly shared the message he'd been given, but he was quick to get off the stage when Jesus showed up.

When Jesus arrived at the Jordan River, I imagine the crowd sensed something special was happening. And when Jesus was baptized, God, like any proud father, spoke words of identity and blessing over His Son. Only Jesus has the power to touch hearts and change lives. To rescue us from evil and darkness. Jesus truly is the Son of God, and that changes everything.

Take time this week to remember how Jesus has transformed (and is transforming) your life. How has He turned things upside down, made wrong things right, and brought the kingdom of God to you? Then as you hold the wonder of the moment when Jesus stepped into history and changed your eternity, ask God how you, like John the Baptist, can help prepare kids' hearts to encounter Jesus, God's Son, too.

—Lise Caldwell

Children's Ministry Volunteer

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

John the Baptist was the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. He was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was born. He was a prophet—like Elijah—who prepared people for the Messiah and God's kingdom. He was eventually imprisoned and executed by Herod Antipas.

WHAT?

John preached in the Judean desert and baptized at the Jordan River. Many people came to repent and be baptized, including Jesus Himself. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came down on Him and a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son."

WHERE?

The Judean desert was between Jerusalem and the Jordan River. John was baptizing "at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan" (John 1:28, NIV). This indicates the eastern bank of the river, slightly north of the northernmost tip of the Dead Sea.

WHEN?

Jesus was about 30 years old when He began His ministry (Luke 3:23). John baptized Jesus at the outset of this ministry, around AD 26–29. After Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert, where He was tempted by the devil.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Old Testament prophets like Joel looked forward to a day when God would give the Spirit freely to all people (see Joel 2:28). John baptized with water but spoke of Jesus as the One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. It is through Jesus that God's Spirit is poured out!

Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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WORD OF WONDER: Colossians 1:15

Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#), whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils
Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group. Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

As kids arrive..

Invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question: on the designated board:

“Which animal reminds you most of yourself: a dog, a cat, or a mouse? Why?” ” Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- **What are the most important relationships in your life? Why do they feel special?**
- **Fill in the blank: I am God’s _____. How does this relationship change things in your life?**

****NEW!! Large Group leaders will now lead an opening game or activity 10 minutes before service begins. It is very important that you are with your groups and ready to participate with them!**

Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find Mark 1. As kids find the passage, remind them it is in the New Testament, toward the back of their Bibles. Mark is one of the four Gospels—books that tell the story of Jesus from different people’s perspectives.

Read Mark 1:1-11 aloud from an NIV Bible. (Or pages 237-241 in the Laugh and Grow Bible for Kindergarten groups) Then discuss the following:

- **How was John the Baptist different from most people?**
- **Why were people coming to John to be baptized, or dipped in water?**
- **John baptized with water, but what does John say Jesus will baptize with?**
- **When John baptized Jesus, what did Jesus see? Whose voice was heard? What did the voice say?**
- **Jesus is God’s Son! When we follow Him, we become God’s kids too! What is one way you can remind yourself this week that you are God’s kid?**

Have kids close their eyes as you re-read the story. Ask them to imagine what they would see, feel, think, and hear if they were sitting there watching all of this happen.

- **What do you see, hear, feel as John baptizes Jesus? Share.**

Leader Tip: Help kids make the connection that other people were repenting and being baptized because they needed forgiveness and cleansing for their sins. Jesus never sinned, and He didn’t need forgiveness. Jesus was baptized to carry out God’s plan for Him. Jesus only ever acted as an obedient Son to the Father.

"God loves us and sent Jesus, His very own Son, to live and die and rise again so the wrong things we do can be forgiven. Because of Jesus—God’s Son—we can be God’s kids too! No matter what happens this week, we can know that God loves us. Let’s praise God for His love and ask Him to help us as we follow Him this week."

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Invite kids to share things they want to praise God for. What is He doing in their lives? Then invite them to share prayer requests. What do they need God’s help with as they follow Jesus? Pray for each kid by name and invite anyone who would like to close in prayer to do so.

Make It Inclusive!

Incorporating simple physical gestures into your prayer time is an easy way to involve every kid, including those who are nonverbal or less comfortable sharing out loud. Invite kids to point up as they think quietly about one thing they praise God for. Then invite them to put a hand over their hearts as they think about one way they want God to help them.

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–10 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Help kids use the table of contents in their Bibles to find Luke chapter 2. As kids find the passage, explain that the book of Luke was written so readers (like them!) could know about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The book introduces us to the most important person we'll ever meet!

Turn to Page 3 of this guide and help kids understand the context of this passage. Encourage kids to use the *NOTES* page to follow along as you read and complete activities.

Assign 4 kids readers to read Mark 1:1–3; 4–5; 6–8, and then 9–11. Then discuss the following:

- **What was John the Baptist's message to the people? How did people respond to his message?**
- **What happened as soon as Jesus was baptized? How does this event reveal who God is?**
- **How do you know Jesus is different from any other man who has ever lived—or who ever will?**
- **When and how have you seen Jesus' power in your life?**
- **Jesus is God's Son! When we follow Him, we become God's kids too! What is one way you can remind yourself this week that you are God's kid?**

Have kids close their eyes as you re-read the story. Ask them to imagine what they would see, feel, think, and hear if they were sitting there watching all of this happen.

- **What do you see, hear, feel as John baptizes Jesus? Share.**
- **What do you think it would have been like to meet John the Baptist and hear his message?**

Leader Tip: Help kids make the connection that other people were repenting and being baptized because they needed forgiveness and cleansing for their sins. Jesus never sinned, and He didn't need forgiveness. Jesus was baptized to carry out God's plan for Him. Jesus only ever acted as an obedient Son to the Father.

"God cares so much for us that He sent Jesus, His very own Son, to us. This week, we can remember that by sending His Son Jesus, God made the way for us to be His kids. When we follow Jesus, we too become God's kids forever! God loves us, and nothing can change that fact! Let's pray and ask God to help us remember that this week as we follow Him."

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids to share prayer requests. How can they grow in confidence as God's kids? Then invite them to share praises. How is God working in their lives? Ask a few volunteers to pray aloud for the praises and requests, or have kids pair off and pray together. Close by thanking God for sending His Son to us

Make It Inclusive!

Incorporating simple physical gestures into your prayer time is an easy way to involve every kid, including those who are nonverbal or less comfortable sharing out loud. Invite kids to point up as they think quietly about one thing they praise God for. Then invite them to put a hand over their hearts as they think about one way they want God to help them.

WORD OF WONDER

The Son is the exact likeness of God, who can't be seen.

The Son is first, and he is over all creation.

—Colossians 1:15 (NirV)

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

"The Word of Wonder for the Who Is Jesus? series is Colossians 1:15. Today we've learned that Jesus is God's Son. This verse teaches us about who Jesus is in relation to God the Father. Let's read the Word of Wonder together!"

Invite kids to open their Bibles to Colossians 1:15. Read the verse aloud one time as kids follow along in their Bibles. Invite two older kids to stand and read the verse aloud. Then invite everyone to stand and read the verse aloud together.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. If kids are pre-readers, invite different leaders to read the verse aloud as kids listen.

Discuss these questions:

- What does this verse teach us about Jesus, the Son of God?
- What does this verse reveal—or show—us about God?

Word of Wonder Activity

"Jesus is God's Son and the exact likeness of God. Jesus resembles His Father perfectly! Today we'll practice our Word of Wonder by doing exactly what our partners do. Let's try to mirror each other in every way as we speak our Word of Wonder."

Help kids pair up to practice the Word of Wonder. Partners will take turns saying the Word of Wonder in a unique style. One partner will say part or all of the verse and then pause for the other partner to mimic her exact voice and actions. The partner leading can use an accent or different voice or do a certain action or pose. Once they've gone through the verse one time, partners can switch roles, so every kid gets a chance to lead and to be the mirror.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Simplify this activity by leading the kids in the verse. Say the first few words in a silly voice or with a certain action, and pause for kids to repeat after you. Continue until everyone has said the whole verse. Do this several times, and then give kids a chance to be the leader.

PAUSE for Large Group time, then continue...

Responding in Worship: Praise Songwriting

SUPPLIES: coloring utensils, pencils

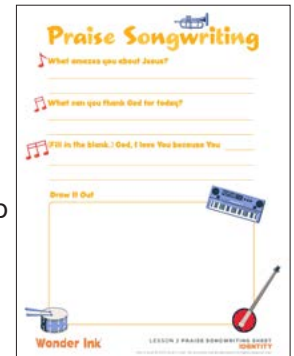
RESOURCES: [Praise Songwriting Sheet \(1 per kid\)](#), [Who Is Jesus? Elementary](#)

[Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, print a copy of the Praise Songwriting Sheet for each kid.

In this activity, kids will write phrases of praise to God and create a worship song based on what they explored and learned about Jesus in God's big story today.

Hand a Praise Songwriting Sheet to each kid and set out coloring utensils and pencils. Help kids form small groups or pairs. Then invite kids to work together to write out phrases on their Praise Songwriting Sheets that praise Jesus for who He is. The phrases don't have to rhyme or be set to music. Kids can simply focus on worshiping God by writing simple words that express how they feel about Him. Let them know that in the end all the words they write will create an original praise song! Play music from the [Who Is Jesus? Elementary Spotify playlist](#) softly in the background while the kids create.



The Praise Songwriting Sheet includes the following three prompts. Read them aloud slowly as kids write their ideas on their pages:

What amazes you about Jesus?

What can you thank God for today?

God, I love You because You ____.

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Gather younger kids and give them verbal prompts. Write down their responses and then read the song back to them. Give a Praise Songwriting Sheet to each kid and invite them to draw a picture at the bottom to illustrate the group's song. Encourage kids to sing the words of the song, putting it to any tune they like!

After the kids spend a few minutes working together to write phrases of praise, ask a few volunteers to share their new praise songs with the group. If time allows, invite kids to illustrate their songs in the space at the bottom of the Praise Songwriting Sheets or to try singing their new songs to an original or familiar tune.