



JOHN THE BAPTIST

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-18

FOCUS VERSES: Philippians 2:9; Colossians 1:19-20;
Matthew 6:33; John 3:30

Summary: Before Jesus was born, an angel told Zechariah that his wife Elizabeth would have a son named John. John would prepare the people for the coming Messiah and fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah. John grew up in the wilderness, preached repentance and baptized people in the Jordan River. He rebuked religious leaders for relying on tradition instead of true repentance. When people wondered if he was the Messiah, John said the true Messiah was coming, one mightier than him, who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.



MONTHLY Memory Verse

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)

BRITE Idea

**Jesus is greater than
any person.**

HE

WHO IS JESUS?

Jesus is God's Son, the promised Messiah. Because Jesus is God, He is greater than any person who has ever lived or will ever live.

WE

HOW CAN WE PUT JESUS FIRST?

We can be humble and recognize His way and His plan matter the most.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID HAS SENSORY NEEDS

A kid might seek sensory input by rocking, flapping arms, tapping a pencil or displaying other movements that make the kid feel good and help them calm down. If the behavior is problematic, look for alternate activities to meet that need. Determining if a kid is sensory avoidant or sensory seeking is the first step. A common mistake is when a kid is extremely active, leaders assume they need more activity. The opposite might be true. They might need a quieter activity to calm down. Experiment to determine the need.

- **Sensory avoidant:** Many kids with autism are hypersensitive to sensory input. They might be overwhelmed by the noise and activity in your space. Provide noise-canceling headphones or fidgets to meet those needs. Set up a quiet corner in the back of the room with soft pillows.
- **Sensory seeking:** For a kid who is sensory seeking, the hallway is a great place to expend some energy with a relay race or two with their favorite leader. Jumping can also meet some of those sensory needs.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: CELEBRITIES AND FAME

Research shows that 73 percent of kids look up to famous athletes, 56 percent look up to TV and movie stars, and 32 percent look up to musicians.* Celebrities have a significant influence on many kids, including how they dress, talk and behave. Many kids also dream of being a celebrity—especially being the next famous YouTuber. In today's story, kids will learn about John the Baptist, who was somewhat of a celebrity in his time. John chose to continually point the focus back to Jesus. If celebrities or fame come up in your group's conversation, gently turn the conversation back to Jesus without either judging or endorsing the people they mention. Help encourage kids to follow John's example of pointing away from himself and pointing to Jesus.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Messiah: the promised Savior

Prophecy: a message about the future given by God through a person (prophet) to people

Repent: to turn away from sin and turn toward God

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/2wH60zU9Z>

Small Group ROADMAP

1

BELONG (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

IN THE RIVER, ON THE BANK

SUPPLIES: Painter's tape

OR

PIPE CLEANER PATH

SUPPLIES: Pipe cleaners (3 per kid), unsharpened pencils (1 per 4 kids), marbles (1 per 4 kids), rolls of tape (1 per 4 kids)

2

BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

VERSE BUILDING

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, 60 wooden blocks, permanent marker

OR

MOVIN' ON UP

SUPPLIES: Bibles, clear cups (4 per kid), colored cups (1 per 4 kids), permanent marker

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4

BECOME (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

JOURNEY TO JESUS

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable page, scissors

OR

COMPASS POINT PRAYER

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, painter's tape

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



VERSE BUILDING

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, 60 wooden blocks, permanent marker

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03). Write a word from the memory verse on each block. Make two sets.

LEADER TIP: If you don't want to write directly on the blocks, use painter's tape on each block and write on that instead.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 20:31 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** According to this verse, who is Jesus?
3. **Discuss:** Since Jesus is the Son of God, could anyone be greater than Him?
4. *Divide kids into two groups. Give each group a set of blocks.*
5. *Have kids use their Bibles to put the verse in order as they build their towers.*
6. **Say:** Your towers were wonderful, but of course there are towers bigger than yours. People thought John the Baptist was the greatest and wondered if he was the Messiah.
7. **Discuss:** Who did John the Baptist say was coming?
8. **Say:** John the Baptist was preparing people for Jesus.
9. **Discuss:** What do you think your friends or classmates would say if someone asked them who Jesus is?
10. **Discuss:** What would you say if someone asked you who Jesus is?
11. **Discuss:** Who is Jesus?
12. **Say:** Jesus is God's Son, the promised Messiah. Because Jesus is God, He is greater than any person who has ever lived or will ever live.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Our memory verse taught us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God! Like John, you can share that awesome news with others this week!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: Why would crowds go into the wilderness just to hear someone speak?

Say: The Bible tells us John the Baptist preached in the wilderness and baptized people in the Jordan River. Archaeology confirms the people and places in his story. Historians like Josephus, a Jewish writer from the first century, wrote about John the Baptist and said he was a good man who baptized many. Archaeologists have also uncovered sites near the Jordan with mikvehs—ritual baths—just like the kind used for baptisms. These discoveries confirm that John was a real person doing real ministry, just like the Bible says.

Read Matthew 3:3 directly from the Bible: *For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... CELEBRITIES AND FAME?

Discuss: Have you ever heard the word celebrity? Do you know what it means?

Discuss: A celebrity is a famous person. Who is a celebrity, or famous person, that you hear kids talking about?

Discuss: Why do you think so many people want to be famous?

Discuss: What do you think God says about that?

Say: Sometimes it may sound pretty awesome to be famous, and it can be fun to follow celebrities or watch their videos on social media. We all have our favorites! But it's a problem when they become too important to us or we let them influence us more than we should. Celebrities are just people. Sometimes we think our lives would be perfect if we could be a famous person or at least live and act like them. But God has created us to focus on Him more than anyone else, even ourselves. Psalm 96:3 says: *Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples!* By focusing on giving God the glory instead of giving it to others or ourselves, we know we are focusing on the One who loves us, will never let us down and will always point us in the right direction.



COMPASS POINT PRAYER

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, painter's tape

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable pages and tape them around your space at kids' eye level.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Have a few quiet fidgets for active learners to increase focus and engagement during prayers and Scripture activities.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** What did the disciples do to put Jesus first in their lives?
2. **Say:** The disciples left their jobs to follow Jesus. They knew that following Jesus was the most important thing.
3. **Say:** The disciples spent time with Jesus. How can we spend time with Jesus?
4. *If no one brings up prayer, steer the conversation in that direction.*
5. *Lead kids to find Matthew 6:9–13 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
6. **Say:** These verses explain how Jesus taught His disciples to pray. We are His disciples too! Let's spend some time in prayer following His example for us.
7. *Move with the kids around your space. Stop at each sign in this order: E—express praise, S—sorry, N—need, W—wait.*
8. *Have a kid read the verse on each sign. Move kids through the prayer together.*
9. **Say:** Prayer helps us remember that we worship a God who is greater than any person, including us! Prayer keeps our focus on God and His plans for our lives.
10. **Discuss:** How can we put Jesus first?
11. **Say:** When we pray, we are putting God first in our lives. We can be humble and recognize His way and His plan matter the most.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus is greater than any person. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray, or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear God, thank You for sending us Jesus. Help us to remember that He is greater than any person there ever was or will be. Help us to trust that His way and His plan for our lives is always best. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - ERASE A WORD: Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - BEAN BAG: Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - POPCORN: Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - HAND MOTIONS: Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- **Erase whiteboard.**
- **Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.**
- **Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk**

After 11:45 Services:

- **Erase whiteboard.**
- **Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)**
- **Turn off TV by:**
 - **Close PowerPoint**
 - **Power off computer**
 - **Turn off TV**
- **Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty**
- **Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.**
- **Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk**
- **Take supply tub to Resource Room**



JESUS' BAPTISM AND TEMPTATION

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 3:13–17, 4:1–17; John 1:29–34

FOCUS VERSES: Galatians 2:20; 1 John 5:11–12;
Hebrews 2:17–18

Summary: John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. When Jesus asked to be baptized by him, John hesitated, but Jesus explained it was part of God's plan. After Jesus' baptism, the Spirit of God descended on Him, and a voice from heaven declared Him as God's beloved Son. John later identified Jesus as the Lamb of God, the One who would take away the sin of the world. Jesus then resisted temptation in the wilderness before starting His ministry.



MONTHLY *Memory Verse*

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)

BRITE  *Idea*

Jesus is God's Son.

HE

HOW IS JESUS DIFFERENT THAN OTHER PEOPLE?
Jesus is the Son of God. He is holy, perfectly good and never sinned.

WE

HOW IS JESUS LIKE US?
Because Jesus came to Earth as a man, He experienced the same things we do. We can trust that He understands us and what we go through.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?
Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the “overlooking.” Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

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Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID WANTS TO ESCAPE

When a kid attempts to escape, their desire might be to avoid a person, task or activity. They might try to run away or behave in such a way where they would no longer have to do a task. Trying the following ideas might enable the kid to continue participating in the group:

- **Modify the activity.** Rather than attempt to do an activity they feel they can't do, a kid might destroy the supplies or refuse to sit with the group. Consider what the kid is able to do and offer assistance or modification.
- **Offer choices.** Identify alternative activities and offer options to the kid. If they feel they are unable to do the activity successfully, our limited time with the kid might be better spent offering an alternative rather than trying to convince them that they can do it.
- **Help them calm.** If a kid is escalated, attempting to reason with them will be ineffective. Going into the quieter hall or quieter area of your space and offering a drink of water or a fidget might help them calm so you can talk with them and identify what they were trying to avoid.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: JESUS WAS JUST A GOOD MAN

Many of the world's religions believe that Jesus was real. They believe that He was a great prophet. One survey revealed 52 percent of American adults believe Jesus was just a good teacher, but nothing more important than that.* Jesus was certainly a good teacher and a great man, but He was also God. You may have kids in your group who are confused about who Jesus truly is because of what they have heard from others or on social media. In today's lesson, kids will learn that Jesus was like us in many ways, except He was also fully God. Listen for kids expressing ideas about Jesus that aren't theologically correct. Gently correct them and point them toward what the Bible says is true about Jesus. While it is hard for us to completely understand how Jesus could be fully man and fully God, we can trust that God's ways are right.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Holy: set apart; perfect

Hypostatic Union: Jesus is both fully divine and fully human

Sin: anything we think, say or do that disobeys God

Temptation: something that causes us to consider doing the wrong thing

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/1iZtpV8W9>

Small Group ROADMAP

1

BELONG (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

WHO AM I?

SUPPLIES: Printable pages, scissors

OR

SNOWBALL SEARCH

SUPPLIES: Printable pages, scissors

2

BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

ROCK RELAY

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors, 2 large bowls, several sheets of blue tissue paper

OR

HULA-HOOP VENN DIAGRAM

SUPPLIES: Bibles, 2 Hula-Hoops, sticky notes (several per kid), writing supplies

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4

BECOME (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

SCRIPTURE EMOJIS

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, paper (1 per 3 kids), coloring supplies, 5 sticky notes

OR

FILL IT IN PRAYER

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



HULA-HOOP VENN DIAGRAM

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, 2 Hula-Hoops, sticky notes (several per kid), writing supplies

PREP:

Lay the Hula-Hoops on the floor so they are slightly overlapping in the center. Write Jesus, Us and Both on 3 sticky notes. Put the Both sticky note in the overlapping section. Put Jesus and Us in the other two sections.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Say:** We learned about Jesus being baptized and about how He resisted temptations. How did these stories show He is God but also human?
2. **Say:** Let's use Hula Hoops to investigate how Jesus is like us and how He is different from us. This is called a Venn diagram.
3. **Discuss:** What are some things that are true about us as humans?
4. *Lead kids to find Romans 3:23 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
5. *Give each kid a sticky note and have them write their responses. They should stick them in the "Us" part of the Venn diagram.*
6. **Discuss:** What are some things that are true about Jesus?
7. *Lead kids to find Hebrews 2:18 and John 10:30 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
8. *Give each kid a sticky note and have them write their responses. They should stick them in the "Jesus" part of the Venn diagram.*
9. **Discuss:** Let's look at both sides of our diagram. Do you notice anything that's the same about us and Jesus? Let's move those sticky notes to the "Both" section of our diagram.
10. **Discuss:** How is Jesus different from other people?
11. **Say:** Jesus is the Son of God. He is holy, He is perfectly good and He never sinned.



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Even though Jesus came to Earth as a man, He is still different from all other people. He faced struggles and temptations like we do, but because He is God's Son, He never sinned.



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: Why do you think Jesus chose to be baptized, even though He never sinned?

Say: The Bible tells us that Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River and then went into the wilderness, where He was tempted by Satan. Archaeologists have found sites near the Jordan River that match early Christian traditions about Jesus' baptism, including Bethany beyond the Jordan, which contains ancient baptism pools and early churches. The Judean wilderness, where Jesus fasted and prayed, is a harsh, dry land—exactly as described in the Bible. These real places show that the events of Jesus' baptism and temptation happened in a real setting we can still visit today.

Read Matthew 3:17 directly from the Bible: *And behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... "JESUS WAS JUST A GOOD MAN"?

Discuss: Have you ever heard people say, "Jesus was a good man" or "Jesus was just a great teacher?" What do they usually mean by that?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: Many religions around the world believe that Jesus was a real person, but they don't believe He is God. Jesus was definitely a great man and an amazing teacher, but He is so much more. In Matthew 16:16, Peter told Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus was 100 percent human and 100 percent God. He walked on Earth and ate food and took naps. But Jesus also did amazing miracles and eventually died on the cross and rose from the dead, making a way for us to live with Him forever. The only solution for our sin problem was for a perfect person to die in our place. Only Jesus could fill that role because only Jesus is fully human and fully God.



FILL IT IN PRAYER

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** What did God say when Jesus was baptized?
2. **Discuss:** God declared that Jesus was His Son. How is Jesus like us?
3. **Say:** Because Jesus came to Earth as a man, He experienced the same things we do. We can trust that He understands us and what we go through.
4. *Lead kids to find Luke 6:12 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
5. **Discuss:** What did Jesus do?
6. **Say:** As a man, Jesus prayed all the time, and we can follow His example.
7. *Gather kids in a circle.*
8. **Say:** Let's spend some time in prayer thanking Jesus for who He is. When I pause during our prayer time, we will go around our circle and each fill in the blank. If you don't want to pray aloud, say "pass" and pray silently in your head.
9. *Lead kids through the following prayer, allowing everyone to answer each blank:*
 Dear Jesus, thank You for coming to Earth as the Son of God. I praise You because_____. When I feel_____, help me trust You with my feelings and remember that You understand me better than anyone. This week, to be like You, I will_____. Thank You for forgiving us. Thank You for loving us and making a way for us to live with God forever. Amen.

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned that Jesus is God's Son. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for coming to Earth as a person to connect with us in a special way. Help us to rely on Your Holiness and the promise that You understand what we are going through, as we trust You with all of our feelings. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

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Extra Time?

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Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

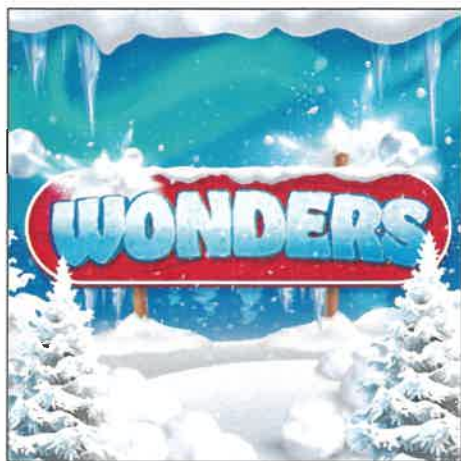
BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

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- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

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THE DISCIPLES FOLLOW JESUS

BIBLE PASSAGE: John 1:35–51

FOCUS VERSES: John 8:12; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 1:3;
Psalm 71:15

Summary: John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God. Two of his followers, including Andrew, followed Jesus. Andrew then told his brother, Simon (whom Jesus renamed Peter), about the Messiah. Jesus later called Philip, who in turn invited Nathanael to meet Jesus. Though unsure at first, Nathanael recognized Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus continued to gather twelve disciples from diverse backgrounds, who witnessed His teachings, miracles and ministry.



MONTHLY *Memory Verse*

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)



Jesus invites us to follow Him.

HE

WHY IS JESUS WORTHY OF BEING FOLLOWED?

Jesus is the Son of God and the perfect example of how God wants us to live. He loves us more than anyone else can and showed that by paying the price for our sin.

WE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FOLLOW JESUS?

We follow Jesus by trusting in Him as our Savior, seeking to know Him more and more and following His example in how we live our lives.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

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Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

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After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID IS SEEKING ATTENTION

When kids are seeking attention, either positive or negative attention will meet that need. A temper tantrum or escalated behavior might be their attempt at seeking connection. When it seems like a kid is often seeking attention, proactively connecting with them as they arrive and throughout your time together can help minimize outbursts.

- **Be intentional about being one-on-one.** Spending just a few minutes with a kid as they arrive can help fill that need for attention so they don't have to seek it in a more disruptive way. Get on their eye level and ask about their week or what they are doing after church. This is not the time to remind them of previous infractions. Instead, connect with the kid on a personal level.
- **Give alternative ways to get attention.** If a kid regularly seeks attention in inappropriate ways, coach them on new ways to get the attention they need. For example, rather than screaming at you across your space, suggest they stand by you and put their hand on your arm.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: FRIEND GROUPS

Research shows that there are many social benefits to kids having a solid friend group. Kids who have a group of friends tend to be friendlier and kinder.* Friend groups provide security for kids, but friend groups also greatly influence kids' behavior. Choosing a healthy friend group is very important in the lives of the kids in your group. Help kids develop friends in the safe space of your group. Facilitate opportunities for them to get to know each other better and build connections. Coach kids when they exhibit unfriendly behavior and strive for every kid to feel they belong. In today's lesson, kids will learn about Jesus' disciples—the friend group He picked to do ministry alongside. Help kids discover the greatest friend groups are those focused on Jesus!

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Savior: the only One who can save us from our sins

Sin: anything we think, say or do that disobeys God

Worthy: deserving of praise because of what one has done or who they are

*For more resources on this topic, check out: <https://pin.it/2p6SThQ2p>

Small Group ROADMAP

1

BELONG (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

COPYCAT FREEZE

SUPPLIES: None

OR

REPEAT THE RHYTHM

SUPPLIES: None

2

BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

COPY THAT!

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, whiteboard, several colors of dry-erase markers, die

OR

HE IS WORTHY BANNER

SUPPLIES: Bibles, butcher paper, scissors, coloring supplies, painter's tape

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4

BECOME (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

SPIRITUAL HABITS MATCH

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable page, scissors

OR

PRAYER PICTURE

SUPPLIES: Bibles; Take-Home page; writing supplies; white paper (1 per kid); purple, red, blue and yellow paper (2 of each); scissors; glue sticks (1 per kid)

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



HE IS WORTHY BANNER

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, butcher paper, scissors, coloring supplies, painter's tape

PREP:

Cut a piece of butcher paper several feet long. Write the words "He Is Worthy" in large letters on the paper.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find 1 Peter 2:21 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** How did the disciples follow Jesus?
3. **Discuss:** Have you ever started to follow after someone or something, only to be disappointed? What was that like?
4. **Discuss:** How is following Jesus different?
5. **Discuss:** Why is Jesus worthy of being followed?
6. *Lead kids to find Revelation 4:11 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
7. **Say:** Jesus is the Son of God and the perfect example of how God wants us to live. He loves us more than anyone else can and showed that by paying the price for our sin.
8. *Have kids draw or write pictures and phrases on the butcher paper of what makes Jesus worthy of being followed.*
9. **Say:** There are a lot of people and things we can follow after, but Jesus is the only perfect leader.
10. *Hang up the banner to remember that Jesus is worthy of being followed!*



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

You created a beautiful banner together to remind us that Jesus is worthy of being followed! As you pray this week, think of all we added to the banner and praise Jesus for who He is!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: What would make someone leave everything to follow a teacher?

Say: The Bible says the first disciples left their jobs and families to follow Jesus. Some were fishermen from the region of Galilee. Archaeologists have discovered fishing boats from the first century near the Sea of Galilee, including one perfectly preserved boat (the "Jesus boat") that shows how fishermen like Peter and Andrew worked. They've also uncovered homes and towns like Bethsaida and Capernaum, where Jesus called His disciples. These findings match the Gospel accounts and show that the people, places, and way of life in the Bible were real!

Read John 1:43 directly from the Bible: *The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow Me.'*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... FRIEND GROUPS?

Discuss: Do you have a friend group that you spend time with?

Discuss: What can be good about friend groups? What can be bad?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: Friends are a great blessing from God! He created us to know and be close to other people. As we follow Jesus, it is important to choose friends who help us grow closer to Him. The wrong friends can take us down bad paths very quickly! The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:33: *Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals."* We can choose friends who are fun, share the same interests, show kindness and help us live like God wants us to live. That is the best kind of friend group!



PRAYER PICTURE

SUPPLIES:

Bibles; Take-Home page; writing supplies; white paper (1 per kid); purple, red, blue and yellow paper (2 of each); scissors; glue sticks (1 per kid)

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Cut the colored paper into ½ inch strips. Divide them into piles based on color. Make an example prayer picture and label what each color represents.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Say:** Prayer is one way we can draw closer to Jesus and learn how to follow Him. Jesus' disciples knew this too. They asked Him to teach them how to pray.
2. *Lead kids to find Matthew 6:9–13 in their Bibles. Read the verses aloud together.*
3. **Discuss:** How does prayer help us follow Jesus?
4. *Pass out the blank paper and glue sticks.*
5. *Explain that each colored strip represents a part of prayer:*
 - purple: praise
 - blue: ask
 - red: repent
 - yellow: yield/listening
6. *Have the kids take several strips of paper and create a "Prayer Picture" on their blank paper. They can make a design, pattern or image. Have them label what each color represents on their pictures.*
7. *Once they are finished, encourage everyone to pray silently using the color code.*
8. **Discuss:** What does it mean to follow Jesus?
9. **Say:** We follow Jesus by trusting in Him as our Savior, seeking to know Him more and more, and following His example in how we live our lives.
10. *Pray together following the example Jesus left for us, using the Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6:9-13.*



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus invites us to follow Him. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for being the perfect leader for us! Thank You that we can follow You. Help us to trust You and follow You more each day. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

Extra Time?

- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
 - ERASE A WORD: Write on a white board, erasing one word at a time after the class repeats the verse out loud to you.
 - BEAN BAG: Have children toss a bean bag to each other and when they catch the bean bag they say the next word in the verse
 - POPCORN: Have children sit in a circle and jump up in turn and say the next word of the verse, sitting down quickly after saying their word
 - HAND MOTIONS: Either you or the kids make up hand motions to key words or phrases of the verse. Practice and then have a competition between boys and girls.

Greet parents at the door. Make sure you match their security tag with Attendance Book. Have them initial Attendance Book (their security tag and child's nametag can be given to Welcome Desk for nametag ball.)

Hand each parent:

- Any craft/activity page

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

After 10:00 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk

After 11:45 Services:

- Erase whiteboard.
- Make sure chairs are stacked (kids can do this)
- Turn off TV by:
 - Close PowerPoint
 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room



JESUS DEMONSTRATES HIS POWER

BIBLE PASSAGE: Mark 4:35–5:20

FOCUS VERSES: 1 Chronicles 29:11; Matthew 19:26;
Psalm 150:1–2; Exodus 15:11

Summary: Jesus was asleep in a boat with His disciples when a terrible storm struck. The disciples woke Him, fearing for their lives. Jesus rebuked their lack of faith, calmed the storm, and left them amazed. Then they encountered a man possessed by demons. Jesus cast out the spirits, sending them into a herd of pigs, which drowned. The people in the town asked Jesus to leave, but Jesus told men to share what God had done.



MONTHLY *Memory Verse*

But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.

(JOHN 20:31)

BRITE *Idea*

Jesus has power over everything.

HE

HOW IS JESUS SO POWERFUL?

Jesus showed that He is God and has God's power. He is omnipotent, and His power has no limits!

WE

IS JESUS' POWER SCARY?

Jesus is 100 percent good and loves us so much. We can respond with awe and wonder at His amazing power.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the opportunity to reflect on the truth they learned about God and respond accordingly.

Pray for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. Pray specifically for kids who are typically overlooked by others. Pray that they would be made to feel special and valued. Also pray for kids who are typically doing the "overlooking." Ask God to show them other kids who need to feel valued. Pray that these kids would work to make others feel included and special.

Before Kids Arrive

- Go through your supply tub and make sure you have all the supplies you need for the morning. (we do sometimes make mistakes 😊)

Arrival

Kids will be with their parents for worship and be dismissed to meet you in the Bridge Kids Lobby. During the kids blessing, come to the Bridge Kids Lobby and get your Attendance Book.

Welcome kids and verify you have all kids listed in the book (and that all kids ARE listed in the book. Any kids not listed will need to be checked in by the Welcome Desk).

Big Group

When prompted, take your group to the Big Group Room. If any brought their Bibles, have them place their names on the slips of paper and place in the proper container.

Please sit with your few and help them be good listeners.

After Big Group

Welcome the kids to your group.

Ask: What was the best part of your week? What was the worst part of your week?

Ask: How did God use those experiences to grow you as a disciple of Jesus?

Ask: How can I pray for you (write them on the journal page).

Start With Prayer Requests – this builds relationship.

You will pray at the end of the service



Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: WHEN A KID NEEDS TANGIBLE ITEMS

Some kids might want a toy, food or an electronic device. Kids might show their desire for an item by hitting, begging, biting or other actions that they believe will help them gain access. Identify what the desired item is, then determine what need that item might be fulfilling for them.

- **Provide a transition item.** Is the kid having a difficult time separating from their caregivers or moving to a different activity? Allow them to have a preferred item (e.g., a fidget, an item from home, etc.) that they can carry with them.
- **Identify the preferred item.** Work with the kid to identify a time they can play with or use this item. Using “first ... then” phrases can be helpful. For example, “First we are going to small group, then you can play with [desired object].”
- **Identify the need.** Often there is an underlying need when a kid desires a tangible item. Maybe they are nervous about entering your space, or they have a sensory need and that tangible item helps meet that need.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: IS EVIL REAL?

Over 40 percent of people either are not sure or don’t believe that Satan is real.* Some neuroscientists believe that they have proven that evil is simply a “glitch” in the brain and not a free choice. Many of us grew up with the devil pictured as a cartoon in a red suit with a pitchfork or as a terrifying force in a horror movie. In children’s ministry, discussing evil can be challenging because we don’t want to frighten kids. Because there is so much confusion in the world, it is essential that kids develop a biblical worldview of who Satan is and an understanding that evil is very real. In today’s lesson, kids will learn that God is more powerful than anything.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Miracle: an amazing act that can only be done with the power of God

Omnipotent: having unlimited power; stronger than anything

*For more resources on this topic, check out: http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/vhyn6fdnkp/tabs_exorcism_0912132013%20%281%29.pdf

Small Group ROADMAP

1

BELONG (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

RPS EXTREME

SUPPLIES: None

BALLOON BOP

OR

SUPPLIES: Balloons (several per kid), painter's tape, timer

2

BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

WATERCOLOR VERSE

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, cardstock (1 per kid), white crayons (1 per kid), watercolor paints (1 per 4 kids), water, cups (1 per 4 kids), paintbrushes (1 per kid), paper towels

OR

GUESS THE POWER

SUPPLIES: Bibles, printable page, scissors

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4

BECOME (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

POWER WALK

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, scissors, painter's tape, worship music, music player

OR

STICKY NOTE PRAISES

SUPPLIES: Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, sticky notes (several per kid)

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, writing supplies



WATERCOLOR VERSE

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, cardstock (1 per kid), white crayons (1 per kid), watercolor paints (1 per 4 kids), water, cups (1 per 4 kids), paintbrushes (1 per kid), paper towels

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03). Set up watercolor stations with watercolor paints, paintbrushes, paper towels and cups of water.

LEADER TIP: Consider having kids who are not strong writers only write out key words or draw symbols from the memory verse instead of writing the whole thing.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Lead kids to find John 20:31 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
2. **Discuss:** What were some of the miracles that Jesus performed in our story?
3. **Discuss:** How did Jesus' power help others believe that He is the Son of God?
4. **Discuss:** How is Jesus so powerful?
5. **Say:** Jesus showed that He is God and has God's power. He is omnipotent, and His power has no limits!
6. *Practice the verse several times together.*
7. *Pass out cardstock and white crayons. Have kids write out the memory verse in white crayon on the cardstock.*
8. *Show kids how to paint over the crayon with watercolors to reveal their memory verse.*
9. **Discuss:** What made the words stand out when you added paint?
10. **Discuss:** Did Jesus' power and miracles make Him stand out?
11. *Practice the verse together again.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Jesus' power to perform miracles showed others that He is the Son of God—the Messiah.



Discipleship DISCUSSION

HOW CAN I KNOW THIS IS TRUE?

Discuss: What would you think if you saw someone calm a storm with just their words?

Say: The Bible tells us that Jesus calmed a storm and healed a man who was suffering. These things happened around the Sea of Galilee, a real place that still exists today. Archaeologists have found ancient towns like Gergesa (near the area of the demon-possessed man), and a first-century boat pulled from the Sea of Galilee shows what Jesus and His disciples likely used. The sudden storms on the Sea of Galilee are also real. Scientists have studied how strong winds sweep across it even today. These facts confirm the Bible's setting and remind us that Jesus has real power over creation and evil.

Read Mark 4:39 directly from the Bible: *And He awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.*

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... IS EVIL REALLY REAL?

Discuss: How is "evil" usually shown in movies or shows you have watched?

Discuss: Do you feel some kids might think evil is just pretend or made up by movies? Why would they think that?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: Some people don't believe evil is real or they think of the devil as a cartoon character who is the opposite of God. Most people don't really understand the devil is real. 1 Peter 5:8 says: *Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* While some people may picture the devil as a guy with a pitchfork, the Bible tells us he is dangerous, but he is not equal to God. He is tricky and one of his tricks is to make the world think he isn't real or isn't that bad. It is important to know what the Bible says about evil so we know how to stand against it.



POWER WALK

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Take-Home page, writing supplies, printable pages, scissors, painter's tape, worship music, music player

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable pages and cut out (1 large number and 1 small number per kid). Tape the large numbers to the floor in a circle shape. Make the cards with smaller numbers into a deck.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Give the group one or two examples before asking the kids to share. This will help those who have trouble on the spot.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** What would it have been like to be alive when Jesus walked on Earth?
2. *Lead kids to find Mark 4:31 and Mark 5:16–17 in their Bibles.*
3. **Discuss:** Imagine you were a person in today's story (disciples, people from the town, people who were healed). Do you think you would have been scared if you saw Jesus perform a miracle? Why or why not?
4. **Discuss:** Is Jesus' power scary?
5. **Say:** Jesus is 100 percent good and loves us so much. We can respond with awe and wonder at His amazing power.
6. *Have kids stand in a circle behind the printable pages on the ground. Each kid should be behind one page. Play the music and tell kids to walk around the printable pages. Stop the music after several seconds and tell kids to freeze behind a number.*
7. *Choose a number card from the deck. The person standing behind that number should finish the sentence: "I see Jesus's power when ...". Choose a second number and have that person finish the sentence: "And that shows me He is good because ...".*
8. *Repeat for several rounds.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned that Jesus has power over everything. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to use the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages to choose a prompt and draw/write their response. Allow kids to volunteer to share their responses.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, writing supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

Dear God, thank You for loving us so much and using Your amazing power for our good. Help us to trust in You. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

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 - Power off computer
 - Turn off TV
- Put everything away – all tables should be completely empty
- Place Prayer Journal and Curriculum book in supply tub.
- Return Prayer Sheet, KidMin Team Member Report (if needed) and Attendance Book to Welcome Desk
- Take supply tub to Resource Room