



## 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.



#### 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.

#### HOW CAN WE PUT JESUS FIRST?

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

#### 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

### FOLLOW THE LEADER

**SUPPLIES:** None

### PREPARE THE PATH

**SUPPLIES:** Pipe cleaners (5 per kid), tape measure, timer, tape

## 2 BELIEVE

(10 MINUTES)

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

### GREATEST TOWER

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, teaching slide, 30 plastic cups

OR

### QUESTION TOSS

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, printable pages, scissors, beanbag, 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

### POINT TO JESUS

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, craft sticks (3 per kid), glue dots (2 per kid)

### PRAYER PATH

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable pages, painter's tape

## 5



## SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP

(5 MINUTES)

**SUPPLIES:** Take-Home page, coloring supplies



# GREATEST TOWER

**SUPPLIES:**

Bibles, teaching slide, 30 plastic cups

**PREP:**

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03). Separate cups into two equal stacks.

**LEADER TIP:** If your kids are readers, write two words from the verse on each cup so kids can put the verse in order as they build.


**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:** Is anyone greater than Jesus, the Son of God?
4. **Discuss:** In our Bible story today, who was preparing people to meet Jesus?
5. **Discuss:** Who did some think John might be? What was his answer to them?
6. *Divide kids into two groups.*
7. **Say:** Let's see which group can build the "greatest" tower with their cups!
8. *Say two words from the memory verse. Have everyone repeat after you.*
9. *One kid from each group should put the first cup down to begin building.*
10. *Add two more words to the verse for kids to repeat.*
11. *A second kid from each group will put the second cup down to continue building.*
12. *Repeat until the verse is completed and all cups have been added to the towers.*
13. **Discuss:** What made our towers "great"?
14. **Discuss:** What makes Jesus great?
15. **Discuss:** Who is Jesus?
16. **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:**

As we built our towers, we were repeating that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." He is greater than any person!



# Discipleship DISCUSSION

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

**Discuss:** How does this story show us God is a promise keeper?

**Say:** God promised He would send someone to prepare the way for Jesus, and that's exactly what John the Baptist did. He pointed people to Jesus and also fulfilled God's prophecy.

## 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.



# PRAYER PATH

## SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable pages, painter's tape

## PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Print the printable pages and hang around your space.

**LEADER TIP:** To increase movement, give directions on how to move through the path (e.g., hop like a bunny, fly like an eagle, etc.).



## INSTRUCTIONS:

- Say:** John the Baptist was sent to prepare people for Jesus coming to Earth. John was sent to make a straight path for Jesus.
- Discuss:** When people praised John for how wonderful he was and wondered if he was the Messiah, how did John respond?
- Say:** John could have celebrated these compliments and allowed the praise to make him prideful or selfish. Instead, John gave all the praise and honor to Jesus. He was humble. He knew that life was not all about him! He turned the attention away from himself and toward the true Messiah—Jesus!
- Say:** Let's spend some time in prayer together as we thank God for sending Jesus to make a straight path for us to live forever with Him.
- Move with the kids around your space, stopping at each posted printable page.*
- Read the Bible verses on the printable pages and lead kids through the guided prayer on each printable page.*
- Discuss:** How can we put Jesus first?
- Say:** We can be humble and recognize His way and His plan matter the most.



## ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned that 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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.*



# 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, coloring supplies

### PREP:

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



## PRAYER

Dear God, thank You for Jesus, who is greater than any person ever was or will be. Help us to put Him first by humbling ourselves and trusting in His plan for our lives. 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

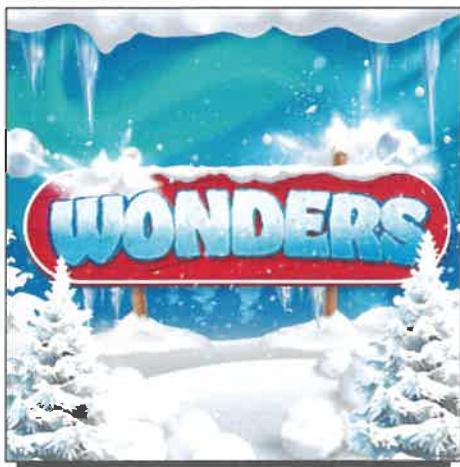
## **BEFORE YOU LEAVE:**

### **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
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- 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)**



**Jesus is God's Son.**



### HOW IS JESUS DIFFERENT THAN OTHER PEOPLE?

Jesus is the Son of God. He is holy, perfectly good and never sinned.

### 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.

### 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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## 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 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

## BELONG

(10 MINUTES)

1

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

### NEEDS VS. WANTS

**SUPPLIES:** Printable pages, scissors

### ROCK FLIP

OR

**SUPPLIES:** Printable pages, scissors

## BELIEVE

(10 MINUTES)

2

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

### CUP RELAY

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, teaching slides, 1 cup, 2 large bowls, 30 blue pom-poms

### JESUS NEVER ...

OR

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, printable page

3



## DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION

(10 MINUTES)

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

## BECOME

(10 MINUTES)

4

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

### JESUS UNDERSTANDS ME

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, paper (1 per kid)

### BREATH PRAYERS

OR

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable page

5



## SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP

(5 MINUTES)

**SUPPLIES:** Take-Home page, coloring supplies



# JESUS NEVER ...

**SUPPLIES:**

Bible, printable page

**PREP:**

Print the printable page.

**ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS:** Kids can provide a thumbs-up or thumbs-down if they are not able to jump and crouch.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Discuss:** What happened when Jesus was baptized?
- Say:** A voice from heaven declared that Jesus is God's Son!
- Say:** Let's explore how Jesus is both like us and different from us!
- Have kids stand in a line opposite from you.**
- Say:** If you think Jesus never did what I read, jump up. If you think Jesus did what I read, crouch down.
- Read the statements from the printable page one at a time. Do not read the reference. Pause after each one for kids to respond and give explanations as needed. If time allows, look up one or two of the verses to discuss.**
- Discuss:** In our activity, what things about Jesus are the same as us? What things are different?
- Say:** Jesus felt the same emotions as we do, but unlike us, Jesus never sinned!
- Read:** 1 John 5:11-12.
- Discuss:** How is Jesus different than other people?
- Say:** Unlike us, Jesus is the Son of God. He is holy, He is perfectly good and He never sinned. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior, we have new life through Him!

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

Even though Jesus walked on Earth as a person, He did not do everything that we do. As the Son of God, He is perfect and never sinned!



## Discipleship DISCUSSION

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

**Discuss:** How does this story show us that God is a promise keeper?

**Say:** Isaiah 42:1 says: *Behold My servant, whom I uphold, My chosen, in whom My soul delights; I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations.* God promised long before that Jesus would be His special chosen One. At Jesus' baptism, people began to see it and the Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove. Everything God promised about Him came true.

### 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.



# JESUS UNDERSTANDS ME

## SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, paper (1 per kid)

## PREP:

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

## INSTRUCTIONS:

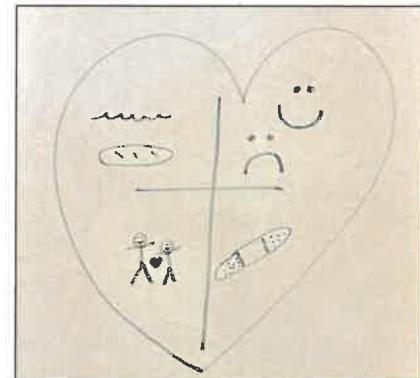
- Discuss:** What are things that Jesus experienced in our story today?
- Discuss:** How is Jesus like us?
- Say:** Because Jesus came to Earth as a man, He experienced the same things we do. We can trust that He understands us and what we go through.
- Distribute paper and coloring supplies to everyone. Guide kids in drawing a large heart on their paper with a large cross in the middle, dividing it into four sections.**
- Say:** In each part of our heart, we will draw something that Jesus experienced too! In the first section of your heart, draw something to represent food and water. Jesus felt the water when He was baptized, and He was hungry for food in the desert.
- Read:** Hebrews 2:18.
- Say:** In the next part of our heart, draw a happy and sad face. Jesus felt the same emotions that we do, like temptation. He can help us with our feelings!
- Say:** In the next part of our heart, draw two friends. Jesus surrounded Himself with special friends called the disciples. He needed friends just like we do.
- Say:** In the last part of our heart, draw a bandaid. When we get bumps and bruises, we can remember that Jesus knows what that feels like!
- Say:** Jesus experienced the same things we do! The heart reminds us of His love. The cross reminds us that we can trust in Jesus as our Savior!



## ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned Jesus is the Son of God. 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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.*





# 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, coloring supplies

### PREP:

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



## PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for coming to Earth as a person and going through hard things such as hunger, hurt and sadness. Help us to remember when we go through hard things that we can trust You to take care of us and that You truly understand how we feel. Amen.



## SAY GOODBYE!

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

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- Any craft/activity page

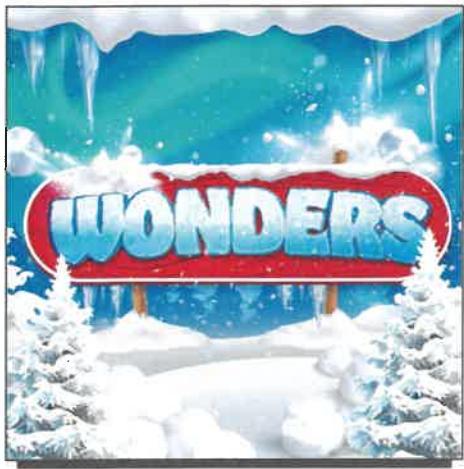
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## THE DISCIPLES FOLLOW JESUS

**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.**



### 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.

### 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.

### HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

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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 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

## BELONG

(10 MINUTES)

**1**

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

### COPYCAT DRAWING

**SUPPLIES:** Paper (1 per kid), coloring supplies, timer

### MOVEMENT TELEPHONE

**OR**

**SUPPLIES:** None

## BELIEVE

(10 MINUTES)

**2**

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

### CALL AND CALL BACK

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, teaching slide

### CROSS PUZZLE

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, printable pages, scissors, sandwich bags (1 per 4 kids)

**3**

## DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION

(10 MINUTES)

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

## BECOME

(10 MINUTES)

**4**

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

### HABIT HUNT

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable page, scissors

### PRAYER DICE

**OR**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, die

**5**

## SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP

(5 MINUTES)

**SUPPLIES:** Take-Home page, coloring supplies



# CALL AND CALL BACK

**SUPPLIES:**

Bibles, teaching slide

**PREP:**

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03).

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Discuss:** Who was the disciples' leader?
- Say:** We are learning that the disciples were excited to follow Jesus because they knew He was worthy of being followed.
- Discuss:** Why is Jesus worthy of being followed?
- 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.
- Lead kids to find John 20:31 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.*
- Discuss:** Why do we look to Jesus to be our leader?
- Have kids stand across from you.**
- Say the first phrase from the memory verse ("But these are written") in a unique voice (e.g., squeaky, robot, whisper, etc.).**
- Have kids repeat the phrase after you.**
- Repeat with longer phrases from the verse, using a different style of voice each time, until the verse is complete.*
- Discuss:** Whom were you trying to follow in this activity?
- Discuss:** What would happen if you didn't listen or pay attention to your leader?
- Discuss:** How is following Jesus different from following me?

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

You did a great job listening to me and following my example as we practiced our Bible memory verse. As disciples of Jesus, we know that He is the perfect leader. He is worthy of being followed!



# Discipleship DISCUSSION

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

**Discuss:** How does this story show that God is a promise keeper?

**Say:** Matthew 4:19 tells us that Jesus told the disciples, *“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”* He promised to turn them from fishermen into men who told people about Jesus! And that's exactly what happened.

## 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 DICE

**SUPPLIES:**

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, die

**PREP:**

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

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Discuss:** What does it mean to follow Jesus?
- 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.
- Discuss:** Jesus' disciples wanted to learn how they could live more like Him. What are some things we can do to follow Jesus?
- Say:** One way we can follow Jesus is by spending time with Him in prayer!
- Read:** Psalm 71:15.
- Discuss:** How can prayer help us draw near to God?
- Say:** We will take turns rolling a die. This will help guide our prayer time.
- Have kids take turns rolling the die and completing the corresponding prayer and motion from the key below:**
  - 1—Praise God for who He is (*lift hands in praise*).
  - 2—Tell God you're sorry for when you don't follow Him (*thumbs down*).
  - 3—Ask God to help you (*shrug shoulders then point to yourself*).
  - 4—Ask God to help others (*shrug shoulders then point to others*).
  - 5—Listen to Him (*hands cupped to your ears*).
  - 6—Share anything that is on your heart (*hands over your heart*).

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

Today we learned that 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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.*



# 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, coloring supplies

### PREP:

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



## PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for inviting us to follow You! You are the perfect example of a leader. Help us to trust 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)**



**Jesus has power over everything.**



#### 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!

#### 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.

#### 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 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](http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/vhyn6fdnkp/tabs_exorcism_0912132013%20%281%29.pdf)

# Small Group ROADMAP

## BELONG

(10 MINUTES)

1

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

### ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS

**SUPPLIES:** None

### SNOWBALL LAUNCH

OR

**SUPPLIES:** Cotton balls (1 per kid), plastic spoons (1 per kid), painter's tape

## BELIEVE

(10 MINUTES)

2

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

### SING IT!

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, teaching slide

### WHOSE POWER?

OR

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, printable pages, beanbag (1 per kid)

3



## DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION

(10 MINUTES)

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

## BECOME

(10 MINUTES)

4

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

### IMPOSSIBLE IS POSSIBLE

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, potato, strong boba straw

### POWERFUL PRAISES

OR

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, craft sticks (1 per kid), ribbon, scissors, tape

5



## SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP

(5 MINUTES)

**SUPPLIES:** Take-Home page, coloring supplies



## SING IT!

**SUPPLIES:**

Bibles, teaching slide

**PREP:**

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide (Image 03).

**LEADER TIP:** Be sure to practice the song ahead of time so you can teach kids.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. **Lead kids to find John 20:31 in their Bibles. Read the verse aloud together.**
2. **Discuss:** In our Bible story, what miracles did Jesus do?
3. **Discuss:** Which miracle was your favorite? Why?
4. **Discuss:** How is Jesus so powerful?
5. **Say:** Jesus is omnipotent, which means He has ultimate power!
6. **Say:** Jesus showed that He is God and has God's power. He is omnipotent, and His power has no limits!
7. **Discuss:** How did Jesus' miracles show that He is the Son of God?
8. **Say:** Let's practice our memory verse by singing it! We'll use the tune "If You're Happy and You Know It."

*But these are written so that you may believe (clap, clap)  
 that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, (clap, clap)  
 and that by believing you  
 may have life in His name.  
 This is found in John 20:31 (clap, clap)*

9. **Repeat several times.**


**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

Hiding God's Word in our hearts is a great way to remind us of His mighty power. Jesus shows us that He has power over everything!



# Discipleship **DISCUSSION**

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

**Discuss:** How does this story show that God is a promise keeper?

**Say:** Psalm 89:9 says this about God: *You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, You still them.* That's exactly what Jesus did! Jesus showed He is the Son of God. Also, in Genesis 3, God promised that one day His Rescuer would crush the head of evil. In today's story, Jesus showed that He has authority over evil, and one day He will destroy it for good!

## 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.



# POWERFUL PRAISES

## SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, craft sticks (1 per kid), ribbon, scissors, tape

## PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid). Cut the ribbons into 12-inch pieces (3 per kid).

**LEADER TIP:** Play upbeat worship music and have kids praise Jesus by dancing around!



## INSTRUCTIONS:

- Discuss:** What is the most amazing thing you've ever seen?
- Say:** When Jesus was on Earth, people were amazed at the things He did!
- Discuss:** What were amazing things Jesus did in our Bible story today?
- Discuss:** Do you think people who saw these miracles were scared because of what they saw? Why or why not?
- Discuss:** Is Jesus' power scary?
- Say:** Jesus is 100 percent good and loves us so much. We can respond with awe and wonder at His amazing power.
- Say:** We don't need to respond to Jesus's power with fear. He loves us so much and is working for our good. Let's spend time praising Him for His power!
- Read:** Psalm 150:1-2.
- Pass out the craft sticks and ribbons.** Show kids how to tape the ribbons to the top of the craft stick. If time allows, have kids decorate it with coloring supplies.
- Say:** Wave your streamer sticks in the air and praise God for His power. Repeat after me, "Jesus has power over everything!"
- Pray together and invite volunteers to pray aloud.**
- After praying, have kids wave their streamer sticks and say, "Thank You, Jesus, for having power over everything!"**



## ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned 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 the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



# 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, coloring supplies

### PREP:

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



## PRAYER

Dear Jesus, thank You for having power over everything! Help me 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?"*

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

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- Work on Books of the Bible
- Work on Memory Verse
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**Hand each parent:**

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### After 11:45 Services:

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- 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