

## Jesus' Baptism

**Bible Story:** Jesus' Baptism • *John 1:29-34; Matthew 3:1-17; Easter Story*

**Bottom Line:** God sent Jesus to save us.

**Memory Verse:** "God's power has given us everything we need to lead a godly life." *2 Peter 1:3a (NIRV)*

### Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

## 1. Bible Story Review/Discussion

**What You Need:** Bible, "Gospel Script" Activity Page, Bible, rocks, index cards, markers, craft sticks, tape

### Begin by saying:

"The greatest rescue of all time happened when Jesus died on the cross. It didn't look like it at the time, but when Jesus rose from the dead, those who were there began to understand. Today we have the whole story of God's rescue plan. It's written in the pages of the Bible. It tells us that we all have a sin problem that separates us from God in a way that we can't fix on our own. We need God's help. Jesus stepped in to take the punishment we deserve for our sin. He saved or rescued us. Our rescuer will save anyone who will call out to Him and believe."

### What You Do:

- **Sit** in a circle.
- **Review** the Bible story briefly by letting students take turns answering the following questions, but without repeating a previous answer.
  - What interesting fact do you remember about John the Baptist?
  - Share something Jesus did in today's story.
- **Refer** to John 1:1-34 as needed to clarify any answers that are given.
- **Remind** students that the purpose for everything Jesus did was to glorify God and to point others to Him.
- **Invite** students to participate in an activity that will help them understand what it means to follow Jesus.
- **Use** the "Gospel Script" Activity Page and the provided objects to explain God's rescue plan.
- **Allow** the students to take turns doing the activities as you read the "Gospel Script."

- **Pause** at the end to allow the opportunity for students to ask questions to make sure they understand how to have a relationship with God.
  - What questions do you have about the things we just talked about?
  - What's one thing God helped you better understand from today's Bible story?
  - If you could take away one main idea from today, what would it be?

**Ask:**

- Why do we need to be rescued?
- What is the hardest thing for you to understand about what it means to be a follower of Jesus?
- If being good isn't what saves us, what does?
- When the Bible says that Jesus is the only way to God, what does that mean?
- Can anyone—even murderers and people in prison—go to heaven? Why or why not? If so, how?
- If you are a follower of Jesus, tell us when you made that choice and how it came about.
  - What made you realize that you needed a relationship with Jesus in your life?
  - Is there anyone who helped you understand more about what Jesus did for you?
- How do you share your faith with others?

**Wrap Up and Say:**

"Jesus made a way for everyone to have a relationship with God, but not everyone makes the choice to do so. Many people say NO to God and go their own way. The Bible is clear that Jesus is the ONLY way to God. We can't go to heaven by being good, attending church, or by being born into a family that loves God. Each person must make his or her own choice to believe that Jesus died for them and to invite Him to be their Savior—the One who rescues us from being separated from God."

**SNACK TIME****DO “VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU” DURING SNACK****2. Verse to Take with You**

**What You Need:** Bible, “Level Up” Activity Pages, pens

**What You Do:**

- **Invite** someone to read **2 Peter 1:3a**.
- **Ask:**
  - What does it mean to “know the God who chose us”?
  - What are the benefits of having a close relationship with God?
  - What are some consequences of not following Jesus?
- **Invite** students to ask any questions they have about what it means to follow Jesus.

*Note: Be sensitive to the fact that some students may not be comfortable asking questions in front of the whole group. As you have opportunity, look for ways to have individual conversations with your students to know where they are right now in their relationship with God.*
- **Provide** each student with a copy of “Level Up” Activity Page.
- **Point out** the different levels and explain each one briefly.
- **Encourage** the students to think about where they are on the levels and place their name on the line below the one that best describes them.
- **Collect** the “Level Up” pages and follow up with individual conversations. (If you know a student’s parents are believers, encourage the student to follow up with a conversation with them. Most parents of kids this age will want to be involved and included as their child makes a decision to trust God with their life!)

### 3. Make It Personal with Prayer

**What You Need:** “Power Up Prayer” Activity

**What You Do:**

- **Give** students the “Power Up Prayer Cards.”
- **Invite** them to choose one of the prayer options that the group will use today. If students can't decide on one option, form groups based on their choices.
  - **Download:** Kneel and pray silently at the same time with one or more friends.
  - **Upload:** Pray standing with hands raised in the air.
  - **Live Chat:** Choose one student or adult to lead in prayer while pausing to let others echo the same words.
  - **One-Up:** Pop up and pray one-sentence prayers with a friend or in a group.
  - **Offline:** Write a short prayer for someone else to pray.
  - **Online:** Write out a prayer and include the words HELP, THANKS, and LOVE.
  - **Triple Play:** Three kids, three minutes, three prayer requests.
  - **Blitz:** Write out a prayer request, wad up the paper, sit in a circle, and volley the paper wads to one another for ten seconds. Then grab a paper wad and pray silently for whatever is written on it.
- **Direct** them to focus their prayers around this statement: “**God sent Jesus to save us.**”

**Close in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads you.**

### 4. Travel Time

As you travel to the next track, use the following questions to keep the conversation going and to keep kids thinking about what they're learning!

- If you told a friend about your favorite things so far at Power Up, what would you tell them?
- What have you learned so far today about Jesus?
- How is Jesus like a lifeguard? EMT? Fire fighter?