

Jesus Is Baptized

Bible Verse

You are my Son, whom I dearly love. (Luke 3:22)

Did You Know?

It has been several weeks since we read about the birth of Elizabeth and Zechariah's son, John. Thirty years later, John is in the wilderness baptizing people in the river Jordan and exhorting people to acknowledge their sin and accept God's forgiveness. John encouraged people to be baptized as a way to show they had changed their hearts.

Some people questioned whether John was the Christ, but John told them that one more powerful than him was coming. John was speaking, of course, of Jesus, whom John claimed was so much greater than he that John was not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. Untying sandals was a servant's job.

Though each of the four Gospels tell of Jesus' baptism, each Gospel writer treats it differently. In Luke, the actual baptism of Jesus is only referred to, not described. Luke spends the first twenty verses of the third chapter talking about John the Baptist and his ministry. It is only after describing John's arrest that Luke takes two verses to mention Jesus' baptism: "When everyone was being baptized, Jesus also was baptized" (Luke 3:21).

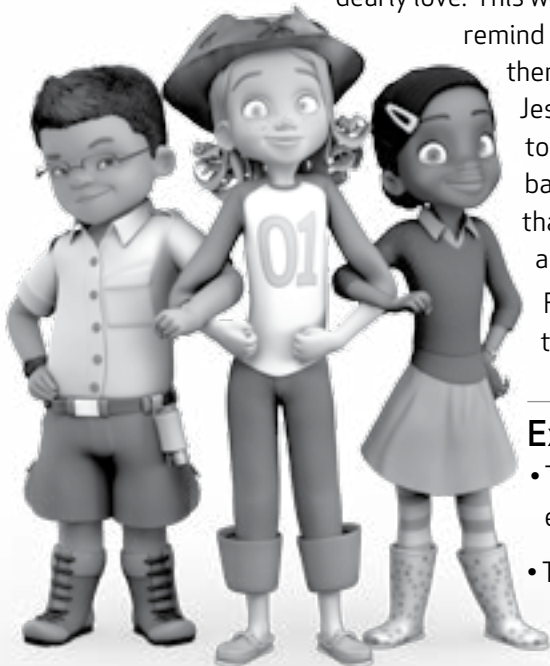
In Matthew and Mark, the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, descends on Jesus as he emerges from the water. In Luke, the Spirit descends on Jesus while he was praying. Accompanying the Spirit, a voice from heaven declares, "You are my Son, whom I dearly love." This week's lesson provides an opportunity to

remind the children in your class that God loves them. God has chosen them just as God chose Jesus. As you discuss baptism, be sensitive to those children who have not yet been baptized. Assure them that it is not baptism that makes us children of God. God has already chosen each of us.

For more Bible background information, go to: DeepBlueKids.com.

Exploration Points

- The children will learn about Jesus' love for everyone.
- The children will learn about baptism.



Bible Story


Luke 3:1-22

Anchor Point

God chose Jesus; Jesus chose God.

Your Lesson

- Welcome
- Descending Doves
- Watery Designs
- Show Me a Sign
- Theater Group
- Jesus Is Baptized
- Voice From Heaven
- Worship
- Younger Elementary Small Group
- Older Elementary Small Group

 Requires preparation.



Jump In!

The following activities are planned to introduce today's theme. Be sure that there is a leader to welcome and direct the kids to the interest groups of their choice.

An adult will be needed at each group to lead the activity with the children.

WELCOME

- Greet each parent and child as they arrive.
- Play music to make your room cheerful.

DESCENDING DOVES (SCIENCE ACTIVITY)

Supplies: "Descending Dove Twirler" Handout, scissors, paper clips, baskets

⊗ Photocopy "Descending Dove Twirler" for each child.

- Give each child a copy of "Descending Dove Twirler" and a pair of scissors.
- Encourage each child to cut out the Dove Twirler, cutting on all solid lines only.
- Have each child fold along the vertical dotted lines, folding the sides of the bottom of the twirler toward the center.
- Give each child a paper clip and have him or her place it on the bottom of the twirler.
- Have each child fold the wings of the dove along the dotted lines, folding one wing down on each side of the twirler.
- Encourage each child to gently toss her or his Dove Twirler into the air.

SAY: As the dove descends, the air pressure on the wings causes the dove to spin.

- Place the baskets on the floor scattered around the room, and invite the children to try to land their doves in the baskets.

SAY: Today we will hear the story of Jesus' baptism. After Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form of a dove.

WATERY DESIGNS (ART ACTIVITY)

Supplies: paper, washable markers, empty spray bottles, water, paper or plastic table coverings, table

⊗ Protect the work area with paper or plastic. Fill the spray bottles with water.

- Encourage each child to use the washable markers to draw a design.

SAY: Our Bible story today involves water. What Bible stories can you think of that involve water? (*There are many!*)

- Allow the children an opportunity to share.

SAY: There are lots of stories in the Bible about water. The water story we will hear today is Jesus' baptism.

≈ TIP ≈

Encourage the children to share their "Jump In!" projects with each other.



≈ TIP ≈

If you do not have spray bottles, place bowls of water on the table. Invite the children to dip their fingers in the water and then lightly flick the water on their pictures.

- Invite each child to lightly spritz her or his picture with water, watching as the colors blur and spread.

THEATER GROUP (REHEARSAL FOR LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY)

Supplies: "Jesus is Baptized" Handout

- ✂ Photocopy "Jesus Is Baptized" for each child. You will need seven readers.
 - Give each child a copy of "Jesus Is Baptized."
 - Assign parts and have the children practice reading the story.
 - Let the children know they will share the reading with the class during Large Group Time.

Dive Deeper

Bring the children together to experience the Bible story and worship. Use a bell to alert the children it is Large Group Time.

JESUS IS BAPTIZED

Supplies: "Jesus is Baptized" Handout

- ✂ Photocopy "Jesus Is Baptized" for each child to take home.
 - Invite the children who have prepared the story to present it to the class.
 - Thank the children for sharing the story with the class.

ASK: Why were people being baptized by John? (*to show they had changed their hearts and lives*) What happened after Jesus was baptized? (*The Spirit descended on him like a dove and a voice from heaven spoke.*)

SAY: When Jesus was baptized, God affirmed that Jesus was God's Son. God also claims each one of us as a child of God. By choosing to be baptized, Jesus was showing that he chose to follow God. Each one of us also chooses whether we follow God.

ASK: Have any of you been baptized?

SAY: Some people are baptized when they are babies, and some people are baptized when they are older. Every one of us is a child of God, whether or not we have been baptized. And we can choose to follow God, whether or not we have been baptized.

VOICE FROM HEAVEN

Sign the Bible Verse

Supplies: Luke 3:22 Bible Verse Poster; Luke 3:22 Sign Language Handout

- ✂ Familiarize yourself with the sign language for the Bible verse so you can teach it to the children.
 - Show the Bible verse poster.
 - Encourage the children to read the verse together with you.

≈ TIP ≈

If you have more than seven children who want to help tell the story, you may split the parts up.

- Show the children the signs for the Bible verse from American Sign Language.
- Encourage the children to read and sign the verse together with you.

SAY: When Jesus was baptized, a voice from heaven spoke these words. Since none of us were there, we don't know what this voice from heaven sounded like. Let's imagine what God's voice might have sounded like.

- Invite a child to choose a type of voice (loud, soft, squeaky, slow, bouncy, fast, and so forth).
- Encourage the class to say the Bible verse in the type of voice chosen by the child.
- Invite a new child to choose a voice.
- Say the Bible verse several times in this manner.

WORSHIP

Supplies: large bowl (preferably clear), pitcher of water, small rock for each child, table

⊗ Place the rocks in the bowl, and place the bowl and the pitcher of water on a table in your worship center.

- Stand behind or to the side of the table so that the children can see the bowl and pitcher.
- Slowly pour the water from the pitcher into the bowl.
- Use your cupped hands to raise some water up and then let the water fall back into the bowl.

SAY: Today we have been talking about Jesus' baptism. God chose to send Jesus to teach people about God. Jesus' baptism was a symbol that Jesus chose God and was ready to begin his ministry.

- Lift some more water with your hands and then let it fall back into the bowl.

SAY: God has chosen each one of us to be a child of God. This happened before we were even born, and there is nothing we can do to change it. We are God's children, and God loves us. When we make the decision to choose God, we are choosing to follow Jesus' example about how to live.

- Have the children come to the table.
- As each child comes forward, place a wet rock in his or her hand.
- As you hand each child a rock,

SAY: *(Child's name)*, you are a child of God. Remember Jesus' baptism.

PRAY: God, thank you for loving us and choosing us to be your children. We choose to follow you. Amen.

- Dismiss the children to their small groups.




Grow Stronger

Divide the children into small groups based on age levels. Keep the groups small, with a maximum of ten children in each group. You may need to have more than one of each group.

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP

Supplies: “God Chose Jesus, God Chose Me” Handout construction paper, crayons, scissors, glue

 Photocopy “God Chose Jesus; God Chose Me” for each child.

ASK: Do you remember what the voice from heaven said after Jesus was baptized? *(You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness.)*

SAY: You have each received a rock to remind you that you are a child of God. God loves you and finds happiness in you. God has already chosen us as God’s children. We decide about choosing God.

ASK: What does it mean when we say we choose God? *(We choose to live as God wants us to live. We choose to follow Jesus.)*

- Give each child a copy of “God Chose Jesus; God Chose Me.”
- Have each child cut out the water droplets.
- Give each child a piece of construction paper.
- Invite each child to glue the water droplets on the paper so they read, “God chose Jesus. Jesus chose God. God chose me. I choose God.”
- Have each child color his or her paper.
- Invite those children who have been baptized to share what they remember or what they have been told about their baptism.
- Remind the children that if they haven’t been baptized yet, they will be someday.

PRAY: God, thank you for your amazing love for us. Help us to act as your children in the way we live our lives. Help us to show love to one another. Amen.

OLDER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP

Supplies: "Jesus Baptism Quiz", pencils, envelopes

✂ Photocopy "Jesus' Baptism Quiz" for each child.

SAY: You have each received a rock to remind you that you are a child of God. Just as God claimed Jesus as God's Son when Jesus was baptized, God also claims each one of us as children. Being claimed as a child of God brings reassurance.

ASK: What does *reassurance* mean? (*to be certain of*)

SAY: The reassurance that comes with being a child of God is knowing God loves you no matter what! There is absolutely nothing you can do or say that would make God stop loving you.

ASK: If God loves us no matter what we do, does that mean it's okay to do whatever we want? (*No.*) Why not? (*We thank God for loving us by living as God wants us to live.*)

SAY: Along with reassurance, being children of God comes with something else.

- Give each child a copy of "Jesus' Baptism Quiz" and a pencil.
- Encourage each child to take the quiz and discover what goes along with reassurance. (*Answer: Responsibility*)

ASK: What is *responsibility*? (*having certain obligations*) What responsibilities do you have in your family?

- Let the children respond.

ASK: What responsibilities do we have because we are part of God's family?

- Allow time for the children to respond.

SAY: As we've said, God claims each one of us as God's child. However, God created us with free will. That means we are free to accept or ignore the fact that we are children of God. Imagine you have received a letter from God. It says, "Dear (*say each child's name*), you are my child. I invite you to be a part of my family. Love, God." Spend a few moments thinking about what you might like to say to God in response to such a letter.

- Have each child turn over her or his piece of paper and write a letter to God.
- Give each child an envelope to put his or her letter in.
- Have each child write his or her name on the outside of the envelope, and seal the envelope.

SAY: Take your letter home as a reminder of your conversation with God. This letter is between you and God, and you do not need to share what you have written.

PRAY: God, thank you for choosing us to be your children. Thank you for the reassurance that you love us. Help us to live up to the responsibility of being your children. Amen.

Jesus Is Baptized

Narrator: John was living in the wilderness. He went...

One: John? I remember him!

Two: Me too! He was Zechariah and Elizabeth's son.

Three: Yes! Remember Zechariah and Elizabeth were old when they found out Elizabeth was pregnant?

One: And remember Zechariah didn't believe the angel who delivered the news?

Two: So Zechariah wasn't able to speak until after John was born.

Three: And remember how Elizabeth's baby jumped for joy when Mary visited Elizabeth?

Narrator: Yes, that's the John I'm talking about. May I go on?

All: Yes, yes, please do!

Narrator: As I was saying, John was living in the wilderness. He traveled throughout the region of the Jordan River, encouraging people to be baptized as a way to show they were changing their hearts.

Four: Changing their hearts? Into what? Lungs? Livers? Spleens?

Five: How do you do that?

Six: I don't think that's what John meant. I think it was a symbolic changing of their hearts.

Four: Oh! You mean to show that they had changed the way they lived.

Six: Exactly.

Five: I get it now!

Narrator: Ahem.

All: Please, go on!

Narrator: As I was saying, John encouraged people to be baptized as a way to show they were changing their hearts. John preached about repentance. He told people to give up their wicked ways and turn back to God. People began to follow John, and some people wondered if he might be the Christ.

One: The Christ? You mean the Messiah? The Savior?

Two: John wasn't the Christ!

Three: No, that was Jesus!

One: Yes, Jesus was the one whose birth had been foretold many years before.

Two: Where was Jesus while John was baptizing people?

Narrator: Do you mind?

All: Sorry!

Narrator: As I was saying, some people wondered if John might be the Christ. But John replied, "I baptize you with water, but the one who is more powerful than me is coming. I'm not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals."

Four: Sandals? What do sandals have to do with anything?

Five: That's what Jesus wore on his feet.

Four: I know what sandals are!

Six: Back then, I think people had servants to take their sandals off and wash their feet.

Five: So John was saying he wasn't worthy enough to be Jesus' servant and take off his sandals and wash his feet.

Four: Wash his feet—hey, that reminds me of another story...

Narrator: As I was saying...

All: Please, go on!

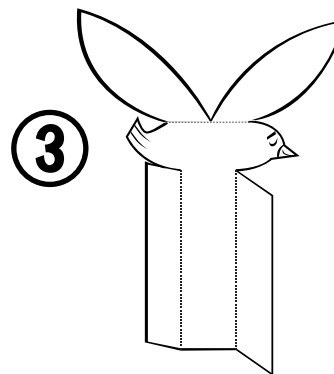
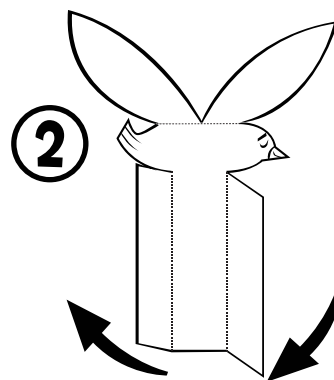
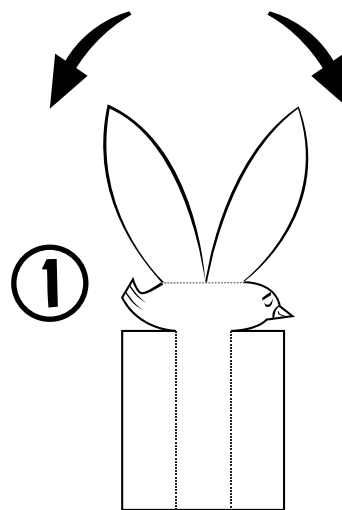
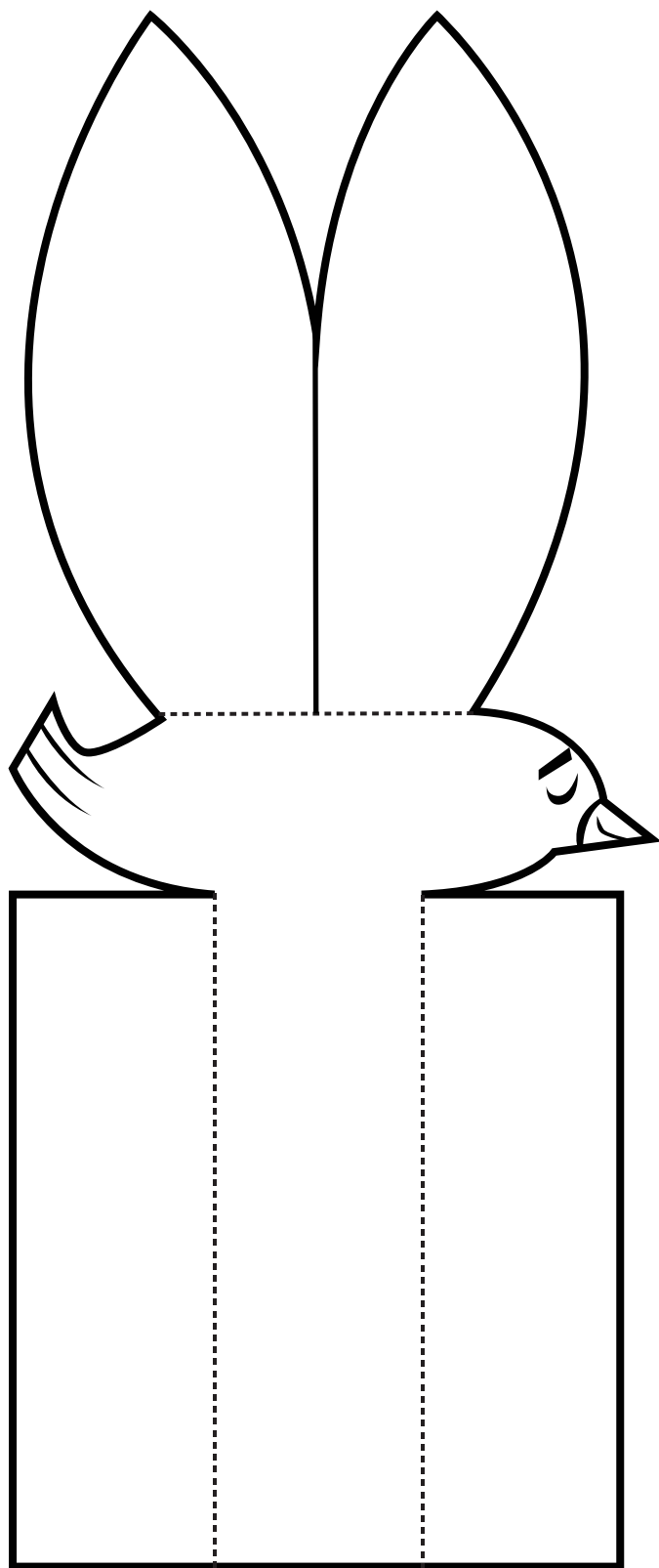
Narrator: John told people that while he baptized with water, the one who was coming would baptize with the Holy Spirit. *(Pauses.)* What, no interruptions?

All: No, no, go on!

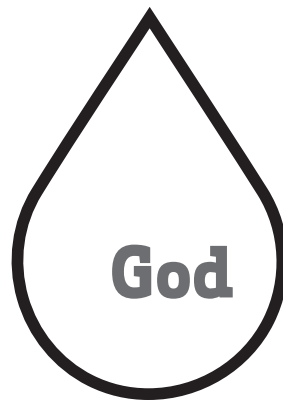
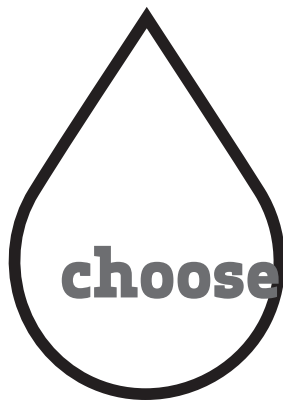
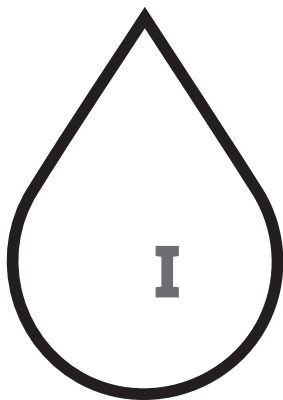
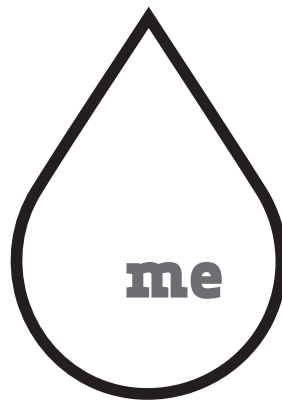
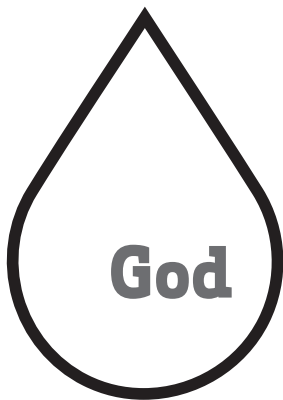
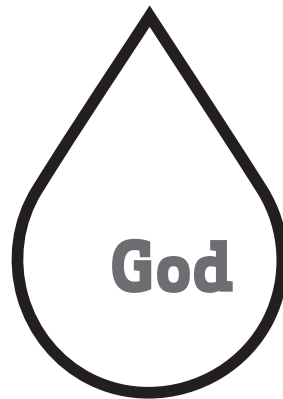
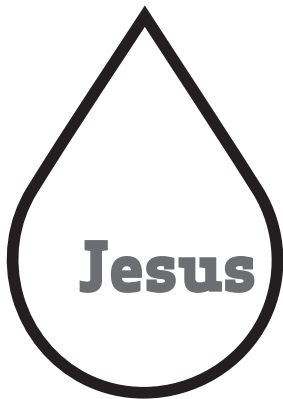
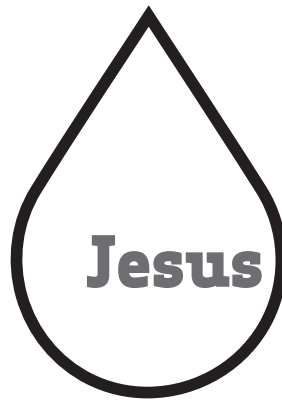
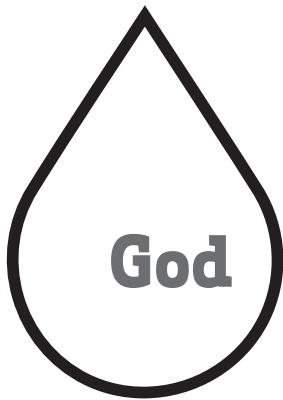
Narrator: While people were coming to be baptized, Jesus came and was baptized also. The Holy Spirit came down on him in the form of a dove. A voice from heaven said, "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."

(Based on Luke 3:1-22.)

Descending Dove Twirler



God Chose Jesus; God Chose Me



Jesus' Baptism Quiz

Being a child of God comes with the reassurance that God loves us. There is something else that goes along with being a child of God. Circle the correct answers to the questions below. Then write the letters of the correct answers in order on the blanks at the bottom of the page.

1. Who baptized Jesus?

- AR. God
- RE. John the Baptist
- ER. Zechariah

2. Where was John baptizing people?

- SP. Jordan River
- ST. Sea of Galilee
- PS. Pacific Ocean

3. Who did some people mistakenly think John was?

- NO. Moses
- ON. Christ
- PO. God

4. What did John say that he baptized with?

- SI. water
- IS. honey
- IF. grape juice

5. What did John say that the one who came after him would baptize with?

- BC. grape juice
- ID. water
- BI. Holy Spirit

6. What descended on Jesus after he was baptized?

- LL. a cloud
- LT. a rainbow
- LI. the Spirit (like a dove)

7. What did a voice from heaven say after Jesus was baptized?

- TE. "Well done. Now it's time to get to work."
- TY. "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."
- XY. "Time to dry off!"

**You are my Son,
whom I dearly love.**

Luke 3:22



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Luke 3:22

You are my Son, whom I dearly love.



You
Point out with your
index finger.



Son
Bring your thumb
and extended fingers
of your right hand
to the right side of
your forehead as if
you are grasping an
imaginary hat brim.
Then rest the right
hand in the left elbow
and swing your arms
as if you are rocking
a baby.



Love
Cross your fists at the
wrists and press them
to your heart.