

# FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

## Jesus' Baptism

THE BIG YEAR SEASON 4 WEEK 1

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### WHAT YOU NEED

- See-through container with lid (can be glass or plastic)
- Bowl of water
- Dishcloth

### LET'S READ THE BIBLE

- Matthew 3:1-2
- Matthew 3:4-6
- Matthew 3:11
- Matthew 3:13-17

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### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

We've finally arrived in the New Testament! What a journey we've been on so far in "The Big Year." We ended off the Old Testament with God's people waiting for their Saviour to arrive. 400 years passed and they were still waiting. Then, Jesus was born.

I'm sure most of us are familiar with the story of Jesus' birth, but we'll do a quick recap anyway. Mary and Joseph were engaged to be married when an angel of God appeared to Mary and told her that she would give birth to God's Son, and that she had to name the baby Jesus. Mary told Joseph what had happened. Joseph decided to break off his engagement to Mary because she was now pregnant without being married. But an angel of God appeared to Joseph and told Him that Mary was telling the truth.

Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth. One day, the ruler of the country, called Caesar Augustus, sent a letter to Nazareth saying that all the people had to go to the city where their families came from. Every person in the family had to be counted. Joseph and his family had come from a little town called Bethlehem. Bethlehem was a long way from Nazareth. In those days people had to walk or ride animals to get from one place to another. So, Joseph and Mary packed up their things and began their trip to Bethlehem. Mary rode a donkey, while Joseph walked beside her.

When they finally arrived in Bethlehem, the town was jam-packed with people. They could not find a place to stay, it was very late, and it was almost time for Mary's baby to be born. Finally, they find a stable/cave that animals lived in to stay and soon after Mary had her baby. They named Him Jesus just as the angel had said. Mary wrapped Jesus up and placed him in a manger (a kind of box farmers put hay in so the animals could eat from it).

Some angels appeared to some shepherds nearby and told them that God's Son had been born and where to find Him. The shepherds rushed into town and found the baby just as the angels had said. Later, some wise men from the East came to visit this special baby. They had followed a bright star to the place where Jesus was born. They gave Jesus special gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Jesus grew into a little boy and his family moved to the town of Nazareth. Jesus grew up doing the things that little boys do. He played games with His friends, and he went to school. Joseph was a carpenter, so Jesus learned how to help make things from wood. Jesus made Mary and Joseph very happy.

God sent Jesus to earth to do a very special work in His life. As He grew up Jesus waited patiently until the right time to begin God's special work. Jesus is the Son of God, but He was also a human being living on this earth. He learned all the things that a human being needs to know.

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## WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

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Finally, when Jesus was 30 years old, the time came to do God's special work. Jesus left his hometown of Nazareth to begin His preaching ministry.

The first place Jesus went was to the Jordan River where His cousin, John, was preaching. Jesus knew that John was telling people that they needed to repent of their sins. They needed to have soft hearts towards God. Many people were being baptised.

John the Baptist was baptising people because they were sorry for bad things they had done. John was so surprised when Jesus came to him and wanted to be baptised. How could this be? Jesus had never done bad things. He was perfect. Why should He be baptised? John said to Jesus, "I should not baptise You. You should baptise me instead!"

But Jesus insisted that John baptise Him. He explained to John that obeying God is not just about stopping the bad things in your life. Obeying God is also about doing what is right. Being baptised was the right thing to do and Jesus wanted everyone to know that He chose to do everything right and follow God.

So, John took Jesus down into the Jordan River and baptised Him. He put Jesus all the way under the water and then pulled Him back up again.

John had baptised many people but this time something was very different. Something very special happened after Jesus was baptised. The clouds began to move apart, and the sky opened up. The Holy Spirit came down out of heaven like a beautiful dove and landed on Jesus. The voice of God also came from heaven. God said, "This is My Son and I love Him. I am very pleased with Him."

Now, John knew for sure that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah, who came to save the world. Jesus was the King of the Jews. God loved the world so much that He had sent His Son, Jesus, to the earth.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

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- Where was Jesus born?
- Why did Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem?
- Who were Jesus' parents? *(God is His Father, Mary was His mother, Joseph treated Jesus like His own son)*
- Who baptised Jesus?
- Where was Jesus baptised?
- What two things happened after Jesus was baptised?

## LET'S GO A BIT DEEPER

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- Jesus made God very happy on the day He was baptised because He chose to do the right thing. Do you choose to do the right thing?
- We also baptise people in our church. What have you seen/heard about baptism?
- What is baptism about? *(Talk about baptism in an age appropriate way with your kids. Baptism is an outward sign of something that's changed on the inside of us).*
- Why do we still get baptised today? *(To show others that we've decided to follow Jesus. We've asked Jesus to forgive our sins and wash us clean on the inside).*
- Have you made a decision to follow Jesus and allow Him to wash you clean on the inside? *(Talk to your kids about their salvation).*

## LET'S PRAY TOGETHER

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Pray together:

- Thank Jesus that He came to earth, lived a perfect life, and died in our place so our sin can be forgiven, and we can be washed clean.
- Ask Jesus to help you to show and to tell others that He has changed you on the inside.

## LET'S HAVE SOME FUN

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In preparation:

- Dirty your see-through container on the inside and then put the lid onto the container.
- Fill a bowl with water and have a dishcloth ready.

Method:

- Say: "Is this container clean?" (*Allow kids to answer*).
- Say: "This dirty container is like us. It shows that we are all dirty inside because of our sin. Today we've talked about Baptism. Can you remember what Baptism is about?" (*Recap what Baptism is about*).
- Say: "This dirty container is going to help us remember what Baptism is about."
- Keep the lid on the container and then wash the outside of the container in the bowl of water. Next, dry the container.
- Say: "Is this container clean?" (*Allow kids to answer*). "Just like this container is not clean because it's still dirty on the inside, Baptism by itself can not clean us on the inside."
- Say: "We can't get clean all by ourselves. We need help. We need to ask Jesus to forgive, take our sins away, and clean us on the inside. We need Jesus to 'take off the lid' and clean us on the inside' (*as you say this, take the lid off the container and wash it on the inside*) – Jesus does this when we ask Him to forgive us and take all our dirty sins away."
- Dry the container and put the lid back on.
- Say: "Is this container clean now?" (*Allow kids to answer*). "Now, this is what baptism is like. After we have asked Jesus to clean us on the inside, we show others what Jesus has done for us by being Baptised." (*As you say this, dunk the container back into the water and then take it back out*).
- Say: "There is nothing special about the water we use in our church to baptise people, it's just water. Baptism is a symbol to show on the outside what has already changed inside of us."