

January 16, 2013

Baptism of Jesus

Luke 3:7-22

LESSON FOCUS

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

God declared Jesus to be the Promised Messiah, our Savior. Jesus was baptized to publicly begin His ministry as our Savior. We have been baptized and will want to tell others about Jesus, the Savior.

About thirty years after Jesus' birth, His cousin John began his ministry in Judea. Isaiah had prophesied about John in chapter 40:3, *“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the LORD. Make his path straight.”*

John preached in the wilderness, where living off the land was difficult to do. His clothing was camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was simple also-- locusts (grasshoppers) and wild honey. He called for the people to repent of their sins, and when they did he baptized them in the Jordan River.

Many people of Judea and Jerusalem came out to confess their sins and be baptized by this prophet of God. His work was to prepare the people for the coming of the promised Messiah and His ministry.

As John's ministry continued he drew not only the attention of the people, but also of the chief religious leaders, namely, the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

When he saw them coming he confronted them by calling them a “brood of vipers!” Some Pharisees and Sadducees thought that since they were descendants of Abraham, they were assured of salvation. John warned them that without true repentance for sins they would be like a tree that does not bear good fruit and is thrown into the fire. Many people consulted John on how to bear fruits of faith.

When speaking to tax collectors, John advised them not to collect more than was due them.

John counseled soldiers not to intimidate anyone, falsely accuse anyone, or complain about their wages.

Many people wondered if John was the Christ. John humbly rejected this expectation, preaching that the One coming after him was mightier and greater than he. John believed he was not even worthy to untie Jesus' sandals. John baptized with water, but the coming Christ would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus journeyed from Galilee to John at the Jordan so He could be baptized. When John saw Jesus approaching, he declared Him to be “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” At first, John was reluctant to baptize Jesus, thinking that he was not worthy to baptize Him. Jesus told John to baptize Him, and John obeyed.

Immediately after the baptism the *heavens* were opened and the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, flew down and landed on Jesus. The Father's voice from heaven declared, *“This is My beloved Son in who I am well pleased.”*

After Jesus' baptism, He began His ministry. Many people listened and believed. As Jesus' following grew, those that followed John became fewer and fewer. King Herod, upset that John had rebuked him for a public sin, imprisoned John. Eventually, as a favor to his daughter, he had John beheaded.

BIBLE STORY

Baptism of Jesus Luke 3:7-22

Read from your Bible. Ask students to find it in a Bible too. Those that can read can follow along. Choose the passages you would like to read aloud. Use visuals to help tell the story.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

Many years went by, and Jesus grew from a boy into a man. His cousin, John the Baptist, was living out in the desert. John was a preacher. He preached about people’s need to turn away from their sins (repent) and turn to God. John told people they needed to be baptized as a symbol of their changed lives. He baptized many people in the Jordan River.

John also prepared the people for the coming of the Messiah. God’s chosen people, the Israelites, had been waiting for God’s Chosen One to come. Some of them even thought John might be the Messiah! When they asked him if he was the Messiah, John said that the Messiah was so much greater than him that he was not worthy to be his slave! So the people continued to get ready for the Messiah to come.

One day, as John was baptizing people, Jesus Himself came to the water to be baptized! Wait a minute—did Jesus need to be forgiven of sins? No, Jesus never sinned. But Jesus wanted the people to see His example of following God’s will.

Also, this was the time Jesus began His ministry. So Jesus’ baptism was a way of saying that He was ready to follow God’s plan for Him.

After Jesus was baptized, something amazing happened. The Holy Spirit came and rested on Jesus in the shape of a dove. Then a voice from heaven said, “You are my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with you.” It was God’s voice!

That must have really encouraged Jesus to know that His Father was happy with Him. Everything Jesus did was to obey His Father. He obeyed God’s will for Him, even when He had to die on the cross. He knew He had to die so that our sins could be forgiven and we could have eternal life.

- 1. Who did God send to get the people ready for Jesus to come?** (John the Baptist)
- 2. What happened after Jesus was baptized?** (The Spirit of God came down on him like a dove; God said, “You are my beloved Son, and I am fully pleased with you.”)

John the Baptist was a man of God. God used him in a very special way— to get the people ready for Jesus to come. John was bold in his preaching. He didn’t worry about what people thought about him. We can learn a lot from John’s example. How many times do we want to tell someone about Jesus, but then we think they might think we’re weird or different? The truth is that people are waiting for someone to share about God’s love. They need to hear about how God loves them and sent Jesus to die on the cross for them. If we don’t tell them, who will?

In the book of Acts, the believers prayed for boldness to share the Good News with others. God answered their prayers in mighty ways.

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You for showing us that, through His baptism, Jesus is Your Son sent to be our Savior. Help us to picture in our hearts Jesus' baptism and how He kept the law for us to be our perfect Savior. When we sin, call us to repentance and faith that Jesus Christ, Your Son, washes us clean from all our sin, just as our baptism reminds us. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

BIBLE CHALLENGE

Read this passage from your Bible. Ask students to locate it in a Bible too. Help them learn this verse.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

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Teach the kids how to make an origami bird. Tell the story again and let the kids use their birds to fly down when Jesus is baptized. Directions are at the end of this lesson.

GAMES

Game 1: Listening to God

Form groups of three. Have one person in each group close his or her eyes. Have the other two take the person at least 20 feet away from their group.

Say: You have one minute to get back to your seat with your eyes closed. Your friends in your group will guide you, but listen well.

The "blind" people can't be led by the hand; they must follow only their group members' instructions. Play three times to let each group member have a turn being the blind one. Then ask: How easy or difficult was it to listen to your group members' voices? How did other people's instructions affect you? What techniques did you use to listen well?

Say: Listen to this story about a little boy who learned to listen well -- and heard God's voice.

Read aloud **Luke 3:7-22**

Ask: Think of the techniques we used in our game to listen well. How can we use some of those same techniques to listen well to God?

Game 2: Listen Carefully

Blindfold one person and have him or her face the group while standing about 20 feet away.

Have a leader point to one of the other children. The child who's chosen attempts to move slowly and quietly toward the blindfolded person. The blindfolded player listens carefully for the approaching player and tries to point toward the location of the approaching player.

The approaching player freezes once he or she has been located, and then another player is picked to move.

The object is to get the kids close enough to the blindfolded player to tag him or her. Once the blindfolded person is tagged, blindfold another child.

Afterward ask, "How easy or difficult was it to hear the approaching players? How is that similar to or different from listening to God?"

SCIENCE OR CRAFT ACTIVITY

This is My Son, Listen to Him

Yarn Snowflakes

Help your children's ministry kids learn the importance of forgiveness while build a snowflake craft.

You'll need

White yarn

Scissors

Glue

Pie tins

Wax paper

Bible

Glitter

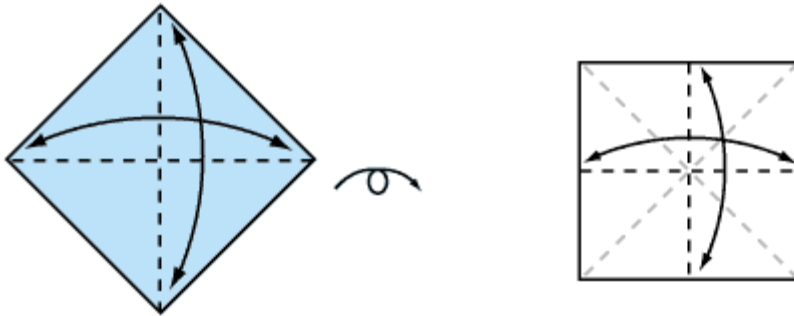
Black Permanent Marker to write name on wax paper

Have kids dip yarn strings in glue in pie tins and form snowflake shapes on wax paper, overlapping the yarn pieces. When the yarn is dry, peel away the snowflakes and attach yarn loop hangers at the top.

Read aloud Isaiah 1:18. Tell kids that their snowflakes are a reminder that Jesus forgives our sins.

Bible Challenge Origami Instructions

Origami Crane or Dove Instructions

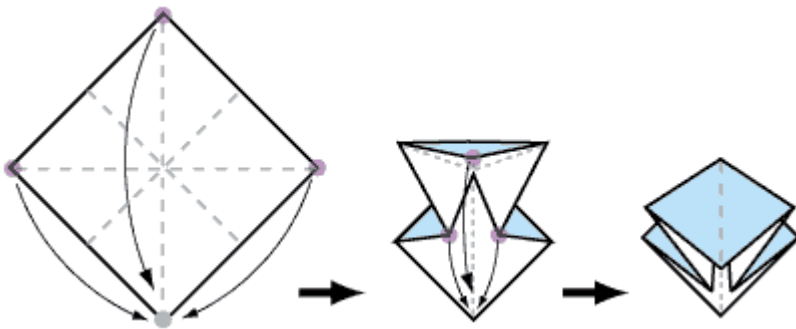


1. Start with a square piece of paper, coloured side up.

2. Turn the paper over to the white side.

Fold the top corner of the paper down to the bottom corner. Crease and open again. Then fold the paper in half sideways.

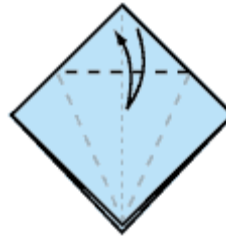
Fold the paper in half, crease well and open, and then fold again in the other direction.



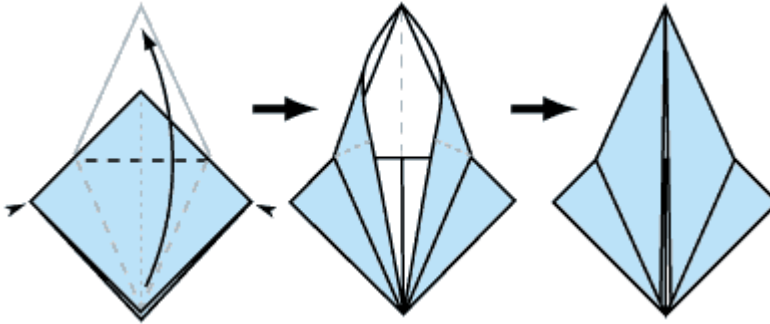
3. Using the creases you have made, Bring the top 3 corners of the model down to the bottom corner. Flatten model.



4. Fold top triangular flaps into the centre and unfold

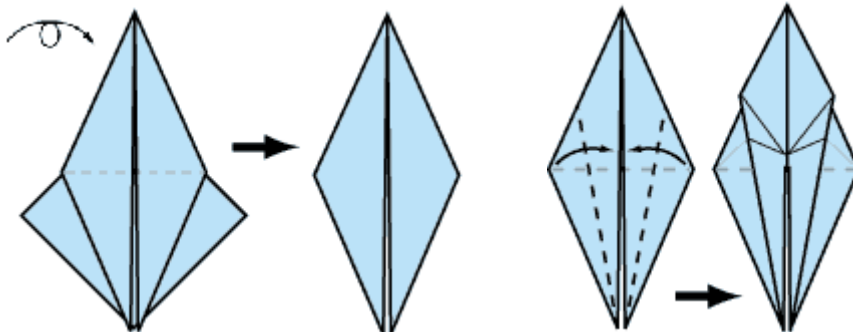


5. Fold top of model downwards, crease well and unfold



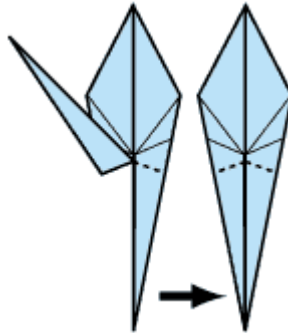
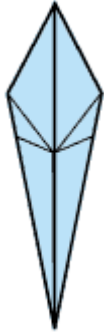
6. Open the uppermost flap of the model, bringing it upwards and pressing the sides of the model inwards at the same time.

Flatten down, creasing well.



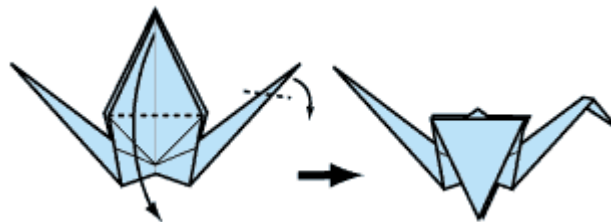
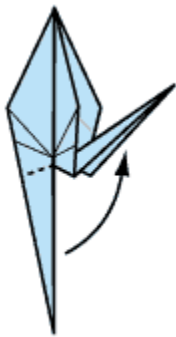
7. Turn model over and repeat Steps 4-6 on the other side.

8. Fold top flaps into the centre.



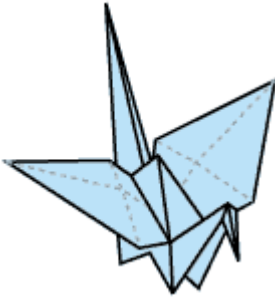
9. Repeat on other side, so your model looks like this.

10. Fold both 'legs' of model up, crease very well, then unfold.



11. Inside Reverse Fold the "legs" along the creases you just made.

12. Inside Reverse Fold one side to make a head, then fold down the wings



Finished Crane!