



# 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>

January 12-13, 2013

DATE

John the Baptist

LESSON TITLE

Matthew 3 (Pg. 1054), Matthew 11:11 (Pg. 1064)

WHERE TO FIND IT

John the Baptist had an important role in God's Story

MAIN POINT

## schedule

Play games and hang out (10 minutes)  
Large group (30 minutes)  
Small group (20 minutes)  
Video/song review (10 minutes)

## tips

When you first arrive in the room set up each table with a different activity. Then as kids come, help them find something that they will enjoy. This cuts down on the chaos of "free play" at the beginning of the hour, and feels much more inviting to new families.

## check-in/out

We talked about baptism today, so kids or parents may have questions. Tell them to check the Parent Page for a link to resources that will help them discuss baptism as a family.

## large group heads up

We're talking about John the Baptist, who was pretty wacky, and the important role he played in God's Story.



## instructions

**Goal:** To show kids the unique person John was, emphasize his unique role, and give them an opportunity to think more deeply about baptism

**Why?** Jesus calls us to be baptized, like he was. We don't want to force that upon kids in *any* way, but we do want them to make an educated decision about baptism when the time is right and understand that they have a role in God's Story *right now*.

**Tip:** You're the game show host today—make it fun and get kids into the Word!

## QUESTIONS

### CONNECT

1. Tell us your name and if you have any funny/strange habits like John that you want to share. He was pretty unique, but we all are! (Maybe you can share a favorite food, shirt, etc.)
2. **DO ACTIVITY FIRST:** THE JOHN THE BAPTIST CONTEST

### REVIEW/REACT

3. Though John was strange, God had an important job for him. What was it? (preparing people for Jesus, baptizing people)
4. Are you surprised that John got to be the one to prepare everyone for Jesus? Why or why not?
5. What is baptism? (It's a way for us to publicly announce that we believe Jesus is the Rescuer and we follow him)

### GO DEEPER

6. (**Show the two pictures: baptism and the rescue**)  
**Baptism is a picture of Jesus'**

## ACTIVITY

Before we talk about today's story, we're going to have a John the Baptist contest!

John was a strange guy. It's comforting to remember that, because no matter how silly or crazy we are, we can be a part of God's Story! So, we're going to see who can be the BEST John the Baptist.

First, we're going to split into two teams (*split the kids yourself, so nobody feels left out or has to worry about his or her team. Once they are in teams, tell them*): Here's your mission:

1. Choose one person to be "John the Baptist."
2. Each team gets a bag of stuff. Try to remember details from today's story and use that stuff to dress up your "John the Baptist." Whoever has the best John the Baptist—the one closest to the real one...wins!

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## QUESTIONS

**rescue.** Look at these two pictures and see if you can figure out why. (Let kids discuss, then tell them this):

*The picture of the rescue shows us:*

- a. Jesus died
- b. Jesus was buried
- c. Jesus came back to life and had paid the price for our bad choices!

*When we are baptized, we show everybody:*

- a. We don't want to just live for ourselves anymore—we want to follow Jesus! (die to ourselves)
  - b. We go under the water (like the burial)
  - c. We come back up clean and we can live a new life! (We no longer face punishment for our bad choices!)
7. Let's read one of today's verses again. Then react to it. How does it make you feel? **Matthew 11:11 (Pg. 1064, NIV Adventure Bible) No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born. But the least important person in the kingdom of heaven is more important than he is.** How does it make you feel to think that you can have an important role in God's Story too?
8. What are some ways you can follow Jesus and be a part of his story this week?

## ACTIVITY

3. You can *only* use the Bible to try to figure out all the props. You get (3-5) minutes...ready? Set? Go!

Here's what's in the **bag** (don't tell the kids—let them figure it out!):

- **Brown material (to make clothes)**
- **A leather belt**
- **Fake bugs**
- **jar of honey (picture)**
- **piece of sandpaper (to represent the desert)**
- **Fake beard (John probably didn't have scissors or a razor—and it's fun to wear a fake beard!)**
- **Megaphone (he preached)**
- **Sticks (can set up a wilderness in the desert, pretend it is a toothbrush like in the movie, or use to pretend to build a fire on the sandpaper)**

Let each team describe their "John." Extra points if "John" quotes the Bible through the megaphone as if he is preaching! You decide the winner!

**NOW GO BACK TO QUESTION #3**

## special notes

John the Baptist had a special role: preparing people for Jesus. But God says we can all be even greater than him! Emphasize the fact that God wants ALL of us to be a part of his story!

## presenter tips

Today, you're facilitating a game to engage kids and an object lesson to explain baptism. Practice beforehand and adapt it to fit your service and site!

## script

### WELCOME

Hey, everybody, welcome to Kids' Club! Before we get started today, we're going to play a little game called "I Didn't Eat THAT." Everybody stand up. (Let kids respond.) Okay, now think about what you had for breakfast/lunch today (depending on service). I'm going to say a food. You sit down if...you didn't eat THAT. Ready? Cereal/sandwich. Sit down if you did NOT eat cereal/sandwich (Let kids respond.)

Alright, some of you are still standing because you DID eat cereal/sandwich. Let's see if we get more of you to sit down. Here's the next one: Donut/fruit (Let kids respond.) Sit down...if you didn't eat THAT. (Point to **fake bugs** and let kids respond. You can keep going and get creative if you want, but make sure some kids are standing so you can end with this):

How about THIS? (**Show picture of locust.**) Yep, that's a bug. ...A locust, which is like a grasshopper. Sit down if you didn't eat THAT! (Let kids respond.) Yuck, right? Well, today we're going to learn about a guy who DID eat bugs... for lunch, dinner, maybe even breakfast. His name was John.

### REVIEW

John might sound a bit strange, but had a really special job: his job was to prepare people for Jesus! Now remember, Jesus was growing up, just like us. Except he was both a man and...? (Let kids finish the thought.) Yes, God! And he was here to follow God's rescue plan and to show us how to live. So God wanted all of us to be ready for him.



## script continued

### JOHN THE BAPTIST PREPARED US FOR JESUS

God had lots of ways he prepared us for Jesus, but one way was through a guy named John. Now, John was not the sort of guy you'd expect to get a really important job from God. He was pretty wacky....

You already know what he ate. (point to the screen) ...Locusts. He liked to dip them in honey. ...Mmmm. He also wore the same clothes everyday—a robe made of camel's hair and a leather belt. And for awhile, nobody saw him because he went off and lived by himself in the desert.

But none of that stuff—what we wear, what we eat, whether or not people think we're weird--matters to God. John loved and followed Jesus. And he got to be a *really* special part of God's Story. Now, we're going to watch a video about John. As we watch, see if you can figure out how John prepared people for Jesus.

### **Video: John the Baptist**

So how did John prepare people for Jesus? (Let kids respond.) Yes, by telling people that God was sending his own son to rescue us and by baptizing everyone who wanted to follow God.

### BAPTISM

Let's talk about baptism for a minute. Baptism is when somebody goes under the water...and comes back up. But let's talk about what it MEANS. First, can I have two volunteers? I need two HUGE Bengals fans for this. (Choose two kids—it's even better if they're already wearing jerseys. If not, **change slide and show them the Bengals flag on the screen.**)

*To kid:* Would you put that up at your house? Why (Let kid respond.) Do you mind that everybody knows you're a Bengals fan? (Let kid respond.) Would you even say that you WANT people to know you're a Bengals fan? (Let kid respond.)

*To everyone:* Putting up this flag doesn't *turn* a person into a fan, but only a fan would CHOOSE to put it up!

**(Change slide and show the next kid the Steelers flag.)** *To kid:* Do you like *this* flag? Would you be willing to put it up in your house? (Let kid respond.) But putting it up doesn't *turn* you into a fan! Doesn't that make you feel better? (Hopefully, it doesn't!) Alright, go ahead and set back down.

**(Show picture of baptism.)** That's kind of like baptism. A person who gets baptized goes under water in front of a large crowd. They are announcing to *everybody* that they believe Jesus is God's Son, the Rescuer, and they want to follow him! You don't automatically make perfect choices *just* because you get baptized. But only a person who believes in Jesus and *wants* to follow him would choose to get baptized!



## script continued

### **JOHN WAS A SPECIAL PART OF GOD'S STORY**

And who was the very special person John got to baptize? (Let kids respond.) Yes, Jesus! When Jesus got baptized, God announced publicly that Jesus was his perfect Son. The Holy Spirit came down to earth. And Jesus showed us that he was the Great Rescuer.

John was strange. People hated him so much he got his head taken off! But none of that mattered because John understood that Jesus was more important than anything in this life. So he got to be a really important part of God' Story! In fact, in Matthew 11:11, Jesus says:

***SLIDE: No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born.***

### **GOD WANTS US TO BE PART OF HIS STORY, TOO.**

(Whisper): *But guess what else Jesus says?* (Click slide to show the rest of the verse)

(Read the whole verse off the screen): ***No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born. But the least important person in the kingdom of heaven is more important than he is.***

Who are the people in the Kingdom of Heaven? Any guesses? (Let kids respond.) Yep, everyone who follows Jesus! That means that no matter who you are or what you've done, if you follow Jesus, YOU can be a really important part of God's Story, too!

Let's read that verse aloud together one more time! **No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born. But the least important person in the kingdom of heaven is more important than he is.**

### **WORSHIP**

Wow, let's worship God today and thank him for letting US be a part of his story, just like John.

***Worship Video: Crazy Love***

***Worship Video: Better than the Best***

### **PRAY**

Ask someone to come up and pray for the group.



**script continued**

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name



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# PREP needs



## small group supplies

Each small group brown paper grocery bags with the following items:

- A piece of burlap-style brown material
- A leather belt (any type; thin fake leather material cut in a strip may work best)
- Fake bugs (grasshopper-like)
- Jar of honey (jar or picture)

- piece of sandpaper (around 8.5x11 size)
- Fake beard
- Megaphone
- Two twigs
- Bible

Each small group needs 2 posters (can be 8.5x11 size). Poster 1 and poster 2 are located in the curriculum file (identical doc and pdf versions provided—use whichever is easiest).

## large group supplies

NIV Adventure Bible (page 1054, page 1064)  
Fake bugs (grasshopper-like)

## a/v needs

1. Image: Locust (jpeg in curriculum folder)
2. Video: God's Story / John the Baptist
3. Image: Bengals flag (jpeg in curriculum folder)
4. Image: Steelers flag (jpeg in curriculum folder)
5. Image: baptism (jpeg in curriculum folder)
6. Slide with Matthew 11:11
  - a. On first click (right when slide appears, show this text): **No one more important than John the Baptist has ever been born.**

- b. Click again to add the following part of the verse to the slide: **But the least important person in the kingdom of heaven is more important than he is.**

7. Worship Song: Crazy Love
8. Worship Song: Better than the Best

## special room set-up

none

## connect questions

Tell me about John the Baptist.  
What is baptism?

## parent page

Today we talked about John the Baptist. You can find his story in Matthew 3 in the Bible. He prepared people for Jesus and baptized those who wanted to follow God. He even got to baptize Jesus! Matthew 11:11 tells us that *anyone* can be a special part of God's Story, just like John. If your kids (or you) have questions about baptism after hearing John's story, visit [www.crossroadskidsclub.net/parents](http://www.crossroadskidsclub.net/parents) to find information about it.