

Life of Christ

John Baptizes Jesus

John 1:29-34

Younger Verse

“The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29 (NIV)

Older Verse

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29 (NIV)

Bible Story

The following is a summary of the Bible story to help supplement your preparation. In your personal study time, use this summary as a guide, and make notes to help you remember your plans for the lesson. Please do NOT read to the children.

So far in the book of John we have talked about Jesus being with God from the beginning and about his birth. We have also talked about someone who came to tell everyone about Jesus and to get them ready to receive Jesus. Who was he? John - John the Baptist!

One day, John had the opportunity to baptize Jesus. John was baptizing in a river and Jesus walked up, wanting to be baptized along with the others. But something special happened when Jesus was baptized. God’s Spirit came from heaven, like a dove, and landed on Jesus. This had never happened before while John was baptizing. And before it happened, John had not known that Jesus was the One God had sent, but when it happened, John knew that Jesus was God’s Son. John knew this because God, the One who had sent John to make people ready for Jesus, had told him that a dove would come from heaven and that the person it landed on was the One, His Son.

Our verse today tells us that John saw Jesus later and said “Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” Well, what is sin and why does it need to be taken away? And how can Jesus be the “Lamb of God?”

Well, let’s first figure out what sin is. Sin means “to miss what you are aiming for.” Have you ever played ball and hit or kicked the ball in the wrong direction, away from where you wanted it to go? In life, when we do things that go the wrong way from what God says is right, that is sin. A couple of weeks ago, we talked about following Jesus’ example. Well, when we mess up and wander away from acting like Jesus, or when we do the wrong thing, then we are sinning. What are some things that God tells us not to do? (Wait for your students to respond, helping where needed. Their responses may sound something like “lie,” “steal,” “kill,” etc.) And what are some things God tells us to do? (Again, wait for responses that may mirror “obey your parents,” “go to church,” “be kind to one another,” etc.)

Well, have any of you ever done anything that you knew God did not want you to do? Or have you ever NOT done something that you knew God

Lesson Goals

Introduce concepts of sin and baptism.
Explain Jesus’ death in our place.
Discuss personal responsibility in salvation.

did want you to do? You know what? I have, too. So you have sinned and I have sinned and Romans 3:23 tells us that everyone has sinned. A couple of chapters later in Romans, we read that because we sin, we deserve to die. That sounds pretty hard, doesn't it? Because I lied or because I didn't obey my mom I should die. That would be kind of nice to get away from, wouldn't it? That's why Jesus, the Lamb of God, needs to take away the sin of the world. But it sounds a little funny to call Jesus a lamb, huh?

Well, a long time ago, the people of God had to kill an animal whenever they sinned. And many times, that animal was a lamb. A perfect lamb. Those perfect lambs would have to die in place of all of those people who had sinned. But one day, God sent His One and only Son, His perfect Son, to die in your place and in my place. Instead of an animal dying for our sin, Jesus died, once for everyone. That is why Jesus is called the Lamb of God. He took your sin and He took my sin to make a way for us to be okay again with God, because when we are dirty with sin, it separates us from God. But, we do not just automatically get made right with God. We have a responsibility. We must choose whether or not we believe Jesus is God's Son, the Lamb of God, who died in our place. And when we do that, choosing to follow Jesus' example, we get baptized, like Jesus, to show others that we have turned from sin to God. But, had Jesus ever sinned? NO! So, He didn't get baptized to show that He was turning from sin, it was to show why He came. He came to die and be buried (like going under the water in baptism) and to be raised back to life (like coming back up out of the water).

Do you know that you have sinned? Have you ever trusted God and told Him that you believe in His Son, Jesus, and that you want to turn from your sin and follow Him? If you have not, but would like to, let's talk.

Using the outline of either a dove or a lamb, cut out one dove (or lamb) for each word of today's Bible verse. [Note: The "younger verse" has 13 words and the "older verse" has 25.] Print one word from the verse on each. Have your students put the verse in order several times, helping when necessary. Each time the verse is completed, read it together.

If possible, separate out those who have questions or who have expressed a desire to accept Jesus. Use this time to answer questions and lead them in a prayer of salvation if they are ready.

Serve "sheep" made of marshmallows with pretzel legs. Take this time to review the lesson as well as helping your students clean up - modeling how to clean up when necessary.

Hebrews 4:15
& I Peter 1:19
speak to Jesus'
sinlessness.

Memory Verse Activities

Prayer Time

Clean Up and Snack Time

Preparing for Next Week

Lesson 5
Andrew and Philip Follow Jesus
John 1:35-51

Preschool Lesson

John Baptizes Jesus

Last week we learned about Jesus' cousin. Does anyone remember his name? Jesus' cousin was John! John was a little older than Jesus. He was actually 6 months older. Can you count with me? 1-2-3-4-5-6

Today, we read from the Bible about something that happened after Jesus and John had grown up. John had already started telling people that God had sent His Son. And John was baptizing people in a river called the Jordan. People came to John and listened. And people began to realize that maybe they were not acting the way they should. So they came to John, wanting to do the right thing. And some even followed him and listened to John teach.

On one of the days that John was baptizing people in the Jordan River, Jesus came too. Jesus wanted to be baptized. So, John held Jesus and lowered him into the water, and then under the water, and then he brought Him back up out of the water. And then something special happened. God's Spirit came out of heaven. His Spirit looked like a dove, a beautiful white bird, and it landed on Jesus' shoulder. And John knew, because God had already told him, that this man, Jesus, was the One God had sent, His Son.

John had been telling people that God had sent His Son. Now he would tell everyone who that Son was. Jesus was God's Son!

Pray: God, thank you for sending Jesus. And thank you for sending John who baptized Jesus!

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- Make a Jesus paper bag puppet with a dove attached.
- Make origami doves (birds).
- The word used throughout the New Testament when either John or Jesus' disciples were baptizing (baptizo) is often confused with a word that simply means "dipping." A Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C., explained the difference clearly in a recipe for making pickles! The recipe uses both words. "Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (bapto) into boiling water and then 'baptized' (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change."

In light of word meanings, sample cucumbers and pickles. Ask students what the difference is between the two. Explain in as little or as great detail as is necessary, the similarities between the pickle and baptism.

- Play Tic-Tac-Toe. Set up your game board on a white board, chalk board or poster board. Ask questions from this lesson and the previous four. For example: Who is God's Son? How long has He been around? Who did God send to tell everyone about Jesus? . . .

For a more interactive game, set up a life-sized game board in tape on the floor. Rather than using X's and O's, have your students stand in the squares. This game works well with boys vs. girls.