



LIFE OF JESUS - 13 September
BAPTISM: Down Into The Water

Point of the day: At Jesus' baptism we see how pleased the Father is with the son

Memory Verse: While Jesus was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit came down on him like a dove. Luke 3:21-22

SESSION AIM

The aim of this session is to see that Jesus was baptised to show his commitment to doing God's will and that God was well pleased with Jesus.

PARENTS'/CARERS' NOTES

Baptism is a defining moment in the life of a Christian. It is a time that we remember for life; the public start of our walk with God. When we are baptised we recognise that Jesus died to forgive our sins: we go "into the grave" with him and then rise again into our new life - although in reality many of us have been Christians for some years before taking the step of baptism.

Although Jesus had been aware from childhood that he had a ministry to fulfil, although he knew that he was the son of God, his baptism made these things into a reality. When he was baptised two things happened:

1. The Holy Spirit fell onto him in the form of a dove
2. and a voice from heaven said "you are my beloved son; in you I am well pleased."

The question always arises, why did Jesus need to be baptised? Why did he need these signs? Jesus did not have to confess or repent of any sin - he was perfect. So why the symbol of repentance? Why did Jesus - who was God and had a relationship with the father that we cannot even dream of - need the confirmation of the Holy Spirit's descent and the voice? Was it a sign for other people - and especially John? Was it a public manifestation of the beginning of his ministry - a rite of passage? (Jesus' ministry begins with a picture of death and resurrection in being buried in the water and coming out from it, and ends with a physical death and resurrection) All of these things are possible reasons. But when John objected, Jesus told him that he had to be baptised to obey God's word.

This session does not look much at why Jesus was baptised, it concentrates more on the fact that Jesus was committed to OBEYING his father and that God was "well pleased".

VIDEO



Watch this short video on the baptism of Jesus:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=oGMCA_aUY4c

ACTIVITY ONE

Type of activity: Starting Rituals

Equipment

None.

Duration: 10 mins.

Ask the children if any of them go to Brownies, scouts or any other groups that have a uniform.

Ask them what happens when you become a full member of that organisation - what ceremonies do you have to go through? Let the children explain - and demonstrate if they like - the rituals. For most of these groups there is a uniform, something to recite - the law and promise - actions to perform and then, finally, the child is given a badge - something to mark them out as a full member!

Ask if there are rituals that we go through to mark the start of other things? For instance, how would you mark the first day of a new school? Or a new house or job?

Say that often people have parties when they move house or when they get married to celebrate the start of a new situation. Parents often take photographs on the first day of a new school. Often Christians will hold a prayer meeting in a new house.

Ask the children if it is the same when we do things for God? Ask the children if they have ever seen someone getting baptised? Explain that baptism is a way that we show people that we want to follow God. We invite family and friends to hear our testimony and to watch us going under water to symbolise that our old life is dead and our new life is going to be lived for God.

Say that when Christians go off to do something new for God there is often a commissioning service for that person, with special prayers being said to mark the start of something new. If the children have seen such services they can put in their experiences, and you could talk about why it is important to have these services.

Say that before Jesus began his work of teaching people and performing miracles he was baptised. This was a sign that he was starting his life's work, and we are going to look at this in more detail in this session.



The Point: To think about how we mark the start of a new phase.

ACTIVITY THREE -

Type of activity: Baptism Explored

Equipment
Bibles.

Duration: 15 mins.

John 1:29-34

- What was John's job - why was he baptising people?
- Who did John say Jesus was?
- What proof did John have that Jesus was the son of God?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the son of God?
- Why did John say that Jesus was greater than he (John) was?
- Why is it surprising that Jesus wanted to be baptised?
- Why do you think that Jesus chose to be baptised?
- Why do you think that the Holy Spirit fell on Jesus when he was baptised?

Romans 6:2-4

- Paul explains that baptism is a picture of something that happened to Jesus - what?
- How do we "die with Christ" when we go under the water when we are baptised?
- How do we start a new life when we come out of the water?
- Why do you think it is important for Christians to be baptised?

PRAYER:

"Lord God; please help me to follow you. Help me to listen to your voice and to do what you are saying. Amen."

CRAFT:

Make a paper plate dove

