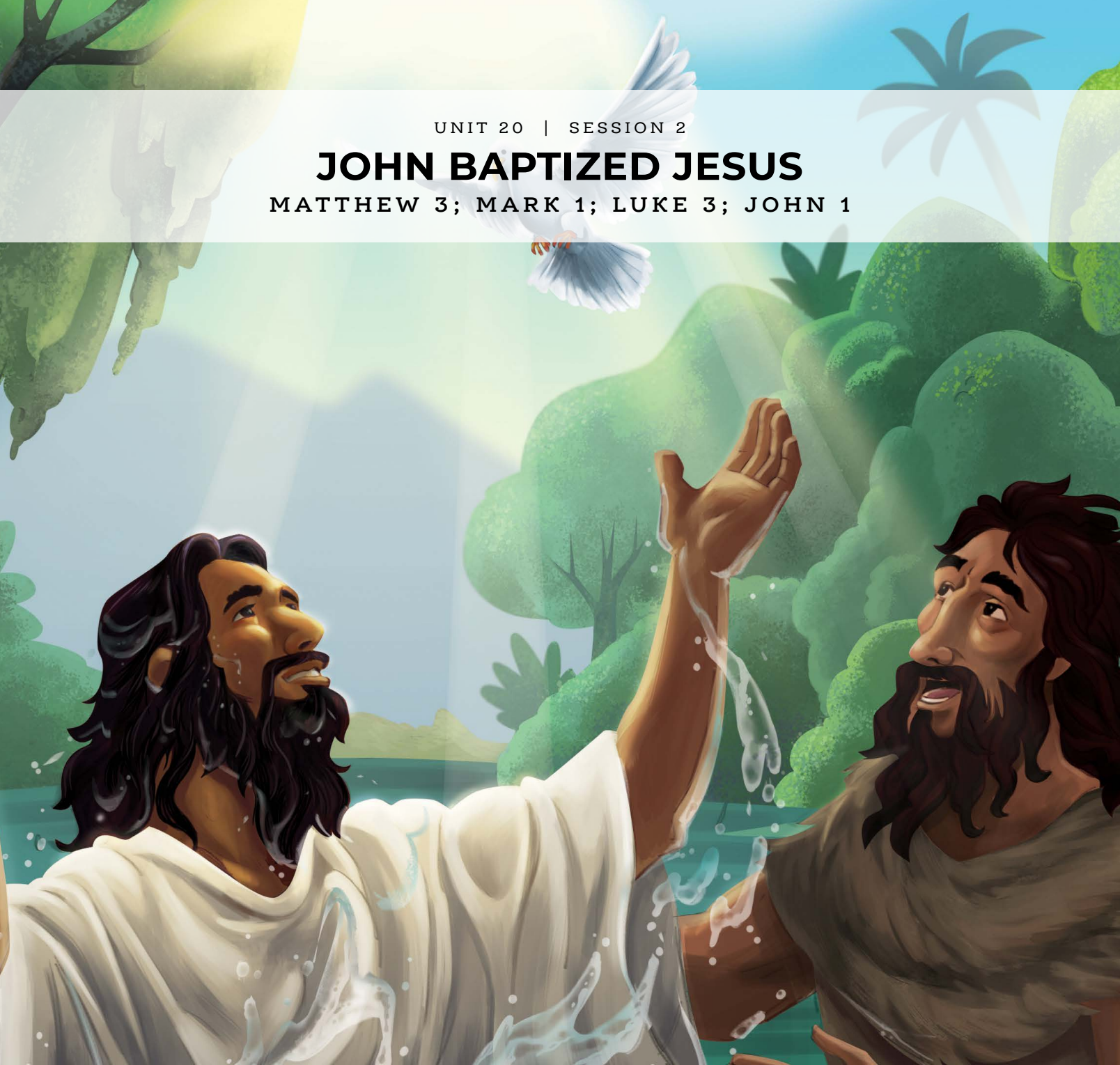


UNIT 20 | SESSION 2

JOHN BAPTIZED JESUS

MATTHEW 3; MARK 1; LUKE 3; JOHN 1



KEY PASSAGE: John 1:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Is Jesus God or a human? Jesus is fully God and fully human.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus obeyed His Father by being baptized. Later in life, He obeyed His Father by dying on a cross for our sins and rising again, so that all who trust in Him will receive eternal life.

STORY POINT: Jesus obeyed God by being baptized.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

There is much we don't know about the early life of Jesus. After Jesus' trip to the temple as a 12-year-old, we are told that He "increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people" (Luke 2:52). Luke's Gospel account then fast-forwards to the baptism of Jesus as an adult. This was an important event in the life of the promised Messiah that is recorded in each of the four Gospels.

At first glance, it may seem strange that Jesus would seek to be baptized as even John seemed surprised by this request and tried to stop Jesus. After all, Jesus never sinned and was not in need of God's forgiveness. Yet, Jesus was fully committed to doing the will of His heavenly Father, which included baptism. Jesus' baptism modeled how His followers are to publicly profess their faith in Him. Jesus' baptism would also be His next step in beginning His earthly ministry. Indeed, the very next day, Jesus began calling disciples to follow Him.

As Jesus went up from the water, we see a beautiful picture of the Trinity: the heavens opened as the Son prayed, the Spirit descended upon Him, and the Father declared Jesus the Son in whom He is well pleased. Jesus' baptism represents believers' death to sin. Just as Christ died on the cross and was raised, so, too, are His followers born again and raised up from the grave into new life.

Lead children to see that Jesus lived a perfect life of obedience and died as the sacrifice for our sins before rising again. Help them understand that though we cannot follow God perfectly, we can place our trust in the One who did. Remind boys and girls that Christians are called to obedience through baptism. While baptism does not have the power to save us, it is an outward expression of an inward reality in the life of the believer.



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "Deciphering Doves" activity page



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "John Baptized Jesus" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 20, Session 2" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "United States Map" printable

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "Dwelt Among Us (John 1:14)" song
- ☐ plastic tub
- ☐ small stones
- ☐ water
- ☐ towel (optional)
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ pennies (lightly dirty or worn)
- ☐ plastic sandwich bags, one per kid
- ☐ vinegar
- ☐ salt

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “What are some ways you obey your parents every day?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Deciphering Doves” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “By matching up the doves, you guys were able to decipher our story point. In today’s lesson, we’ll learn how **JESUS OBEYED GOD BY BEING BAPTIZED** by John.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: COMMAND CHAIN



Have the kids stand, form a circle, and close their eyes. Tell them to only open their eyes when they are tapped on the shoulder by the person on their left. Choose one volunteer to begin the game. This volunteer must whisper a simple command in the ear of the kid standing on his right. The kid who heard the command should open her eyes, tap the kid to her right, and perform the action in front of them. The next child should then tap the child to their right and perform the action. Continue down the line to see if the action stays intact as it is repeated throughout the circle.

| **SAY** “You all attempted to follow your friends’ silly commands. God’s commands are much more serious and are for our good, but God’s people cannot obey Him perfectly because of sin. Jesus, however, came to perfectly obey God’s commands. Today we will learn that **JESUS OBEYED GOD BY BEING BAPTIZED**.”

☐ OPTION 2: MIRROR ME ART

Give each kid a piece of paper and something to draw with. Lead them to fold the paper in half; on the right side of the fold, they are to draw one half of a simple picture. Some examples include a house, an animal’s face, or a tree. After a few minutes, lead the kids to trade pictures with a classmate. Have the kids open up the folded papers and on the opposite side of the drawing, complete the picture.

| **SAY** “You had to follow the example of the drawing to complete it. You paid attention to what had been drawn before and then tried to draw the same thing on the other side of the paper. Jesus set the perfect example of obedience for us to follow. In today’s story, we will learn that **JESUS OBEYED GOD BY BEING BAPTIZED**.”





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “Hi there! Thanks for joining us as we learn from God’s Word today! My name is [your name], and we are going to be hearing more about John the Baptist and Jesus as we read together in the Gospels. Can anyone remind me what we learned last week? [Allow responses.] John was telling people to repent and baptizing them to prepare the way for Jesus’ ministry. Today, we will learn about John again as we hear about the time Jesus asked John to baptize Him in the Jordan River. If you brought your Bible with you, go ahead and take it out [Distribute Bibles to any kid who needs one.] Let’s pray together before we open God’s Word. ‘God, as we read about Jesus’ baptism, help us learn from His perfect example of obedience to You. Please give us wisdom to understand what You have revealed through Your Word.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “Last week we studied a new truth about Jesus through our big picture question: **Is Jesus God or a human?** Do you remember the answer we learned? [Allow responses.] **Jesus is fully God and fully human.** Let’s say the answer out loud together [Guide the kids to repeat the answer.] **Jesus is fully God and fully human.** Jesus is the Son, the second person of the Trinity who God the Father sent to earth to show us His glory. Through His perfect obedience to the Father, Jesus came to offer us salvation from sin. Let’s learn more about Jesus’ obedience as we read about His baptism. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “We have learned that God sent His Son Jesus to dwell with us. As He continued to grow, Jesus found favor with the people. In the temple, Jesus’ wisdom and understanding revealed that He had come to do His Father’s will. Later, John began his ministry in the wilderness and preached a message of repentance to the people. John was preparing the way for Jesus, God with us. Today, we will learn that Jesus obeyed God through baptism. ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 3. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “John Baptized Jesus.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JOHN BAPTIZED JESUS

“Day after day, John was leading people to confess their sins and be baptized in the Jordan River. One day, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee to be baptized in the Jordan River by John.

When John saw Jesus, he said, “Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I have been telling you about, the one who is greater than me, because he has always existed. I have been baptizing you with water to prepare the way for him, so that he might be revealed to all God’s people.”

When John realized that Jesus wanted to be baptized by him, John tried to stop Him. John said, “I need to be baptized by you! Why do you come to me to be baptized?”

Jesus answered him and said, “Allow me to be baptized by you. This is the way it must be for us to fulfill all righteousness, by obeying God’s plan.” So, John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River.

As soon as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens opened up for Him, and He saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove onto Him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

Christ Connection: Jesus obeyed His Father by being baptized. Later in life, He obeyed His Father by dying on a cross for our sins and rising again, so that all who trust in Him will receive eternal life. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Say the phrase: As you read the story, have the kids repeat the phrase *Inside out!* each time they hear the word *baptized*. Remind kids that baptism is the outward display of how Jesus has inwardly changed someone’s heart.

Use emphasis: Consider changing the tone of your voice to reflect John’s surprise at Jesus’ request as you read through their conversation.

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “As John was baptizing people, Jesus came to be baptized also. What did John say when he saw Jesus coming toward him? [Allow responses.] The Lamb of God is a title for Jesus that shows that He is like the Passover lamb in the Old Testament, whose blood was shed so that God’s judgment would pass over sinners. John recognized Jesus as the Lamb of God, whose death on the cross would pay the penalty for sin once and for all. John also told the people about Jesus’ power and authority. Jesus has always existed because He is God.

Why did John try to stop Jesus from being baptized? [Allow responses.] John rightly understood that Jesus is the one who should be baptizing him. Jesus is the Messiah who had come to bring sinners like John to repentance. But Jesus told John that His baptism was in obedience to God’s plan. By being baptized, Jesus



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

identified with the sins of the people He came to save, even though He was not guilty of sin.

When Jesus came up from the water, what did the voice from heaven say? **[Allow responses.]** God the Father made it known that Jesus is more than just a man, He is the Son of God. God the Spirit also came down on Jesus. This picture of the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God The Holy Spirit) confirms what John had spoken: that Jesus is God who came to save His people from sin.

JESUS OBEYED HIS FATHER BY BEING BAPTIZED. Later in life, He obeyed His Father by dying on a cross for our sins and rising again, so that all who trust in Him will receive eternal life. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “ Jesus is the Son of God who has always existed. God showed His great love for us by sending Jesus to earth to live in perfect obedience to Him and die on the cross for our sins. When we repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as Lord, we are saved. To learn more about what it means to trust your life to Jesus, you can see one of your parents or a church leader. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 20, Session 2” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. If I am saved, do I need to get baptized? Is it okay not to?
2. When we trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord, why is baptism important?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Show the location of Kansas City, Missouri, on the “United States Map” printable.

SAY “ Kansas City, Missouri, is a city known for good barbecue, but it is much more than that. In years past, it was known as The Most American City due to the number of native-born people who lived there. Now, people born in other countries make up about six percent of the population, and the number is rising. Almost two million people live in the metro area around Kansas City, and they all need to know about Jesus. Four out of five people living there say they are not a Christian.

Luis and Nohemi Sanchez saw a need for a Spanish ministry in the Kansas City metro area. Luis and Nohemi were born in Mexico and raised in the United States. Their heritage allows the Sanchez family to connect to first- and second-generation Hispanic immigrants. The couple started Primera Iglesia Bautista de Independence Church in Independence, Missouri. While Luis was pastoring this church, they started another Hispanic church on the north side of the city. They partnered with Northland Baptist Church to start Northland Baptist en Español. ”

Practice counting in Spanish 1–10. Do an online search of the numbers, if necessary. Ask questions that can be answered by using the Spanish words for the numbers. Example: How old are you? or How many pets do you have?

Pray for the Sanchez family as they minister to people in their church. Pray that Northland Baptist Church en Español will continue to grow.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 1:14 together.

SAY “ Through Jesus’ baptism, God confirmed His identity as the only Son who was sent by the Father to call us to repentance. Let’s review this idea more through our key passage. ”

Gather small stones and a plastic tub. Use a permanent marker to copy the words of the key passage onto each stone. Fill the plastic tub with water and drop the stones randomly inside the tub. Encourage the kids to work together to rearrange the stones in the tub according to the correct order of the key passage. Invite the kids to read the key passage aloud together. Consider providing a towel for kids to dry off their hands when the activity is finished.

Lead kids to sing “Dwelt Among Us (John 1:14).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ God, as we look back on Jesus’ perfect example of obedience, help us recognize His lordship over us. Guide us to share the grace and truth found in Jesus with those around us. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to John 1. Explain that the Gospel of John was written by John, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. John's Gospel is an eyewitness account that points us to Jesus as the eternal Word of God.

Consider pointing out the location of the Jordan River (E6-H6) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 1:32-34, or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Think about a time you did something that made your parents or other family members proud. When we show strong character or try hard and persevere in a difficult situation, our parents, teachers, or even grandparents may tell us it was a job well done. Jesus lived in perfect obedience to God's will, and God the Father said how pleased He was with Jesus' actions. We are unable to obey God perfectly because we sin. But because of God's love for us, He sent Jesus to live the life we cannot. When we trust Jesus as Lord, we can be baptized to show others how Jesus has cleansed us from our sin. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ If Jesus never sinned, why was He baptized? ”

Remind kids that Jesus perfectly obeyed God and so did not need to repent of doing anything wrong. Explain that Jesus' baptism was a picture that showed He would die in the place of sinners and then rise again. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 2 Corinthians 5:21.)

SAY “ Is baptism for everyone? ”

Explain that baptism is an action that shows people how Jesus has changed someone's heart through salvation. Share that anyone who has repented of their sins and trusted in Jesus as Lord can share about this decision with others through believer's baptism. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Romans 6:4.)

SAY “ Does trusting in Jesus mean that we will obey Him perfectly? ”

Share that none of us are able to perfectly obey God; that's why Jesus came! When we trust in Jesus, though we will still sin, God changes our desires so that we seek to be more like Jesus. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 1:8-9.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: OBEDIENCE CHARADES



Gather the kids and choose one volunteer. Invite the volunteer to stand at the front of the room and whisper a scenario into their ear. The scenario should be a way that kids can obey God in their lives everyday. Examples could include praying every morning, reading their Bible with a parent, helping a friend at school, etc. Encourage him or her to act out the example for the group. Instruct kids to guess the scenario by raising their hand. The first kid to guess the answer correctly may act out the next scenario. Play as time allows.

SAY “ **JESUS OBEYED GOD BY BEING BAPTIZED.** God calls each of us to obey Him, too. Each of the examples you acted out demonstrate ways you can obey God in your daily life. ”

☐ OPTION 2: CLEANING COINS



Have the kids sit on the floor or at a table. Provide each kid with a plastic sandwich bag. Go around and fill each bag with ¼ cup of vinegar and 2 teaspoons of salt. Give each kid a handful of pennies and instruct him or her to place them inside the bag and seal it. Consider double checking everyone's bag to ensure it's closed tightly. Invite the kids to join you in counting to 60 while gently shaking the pennies around in their bags. When you finish counting, allow the kids to remove the shiny pennies.

SAY “ Through His baptism, Jesus demonstrated how He had come to cleanse God's people from sin. When we trust in Jesus, we can obey God by being baptized. This shows others a picture of the truth that God has forgiven us of our sin. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.