



LESSON 2 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is God's Son

SCRIPTURE: Mark 1; Matthew 3

WORD OF WONDER: From Colossians 1:15

Take a moment to read Matthew 3 and Mark 1:1–12. Who do you identify with? The eager crowds? The suspicious religious gatekeepers? Or with John, who obeyed God's call to preach His word even when he didn't fully understand what was happening?

What John *did* understand is that he had a part to play in the work of God. He boldly shared the message he'd been given, but he was quick to get off the stage when Jesus showed up.

When Jesus arrived at the Jordan River, I imagine the crowd sensed something special was happening. And when Jesus was baptized, God, like any proud father, spoke words of identity and blessing over His Son. Only Jesus has the power to touch hearts and change lives. To rescue us from evil and darkness. Jesus truly is the Son of God, and that changes everything.

Take time this week to remember how Jesus has transformed (and is transforming) your life. How has He turned things upside down, made wrong things right, and brought the kingdom of God to you? Then as you hold the wonder of the moment when Jesus stepped into history and changed your eternity, ask God how you, like John the Baptist, can help prepare kids' hearts to encounter Jesus, God's Son, too.

—Lise Caldwell

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DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

John the Baptist was the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth. He was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was born. He was a prophet—like Elijah—who prepared people for the Messiah and God's kingdom. He was eventually imprisoned and executed by Herod Antipas.

WHAT?

John preached in the Judean desert and baptized at the Jordan River. Many people came to repent and be baptized, including Jesus Himself. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit came down on Him and a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son."

WHERE?

The Judean desert was between Jerusalem and the Jordan River. John was baptizing "at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan" (John 1:28, NIV). This indicates the eastern bank of the river, slightly north of the northernmost tip of the Dead Sea.

WHEN?

Jesus was about 30 years old when He began His ministry (Luke 3:23). John baptized Jesus at the outset of this ministry, around AD 26–29. After Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert, where He was tempted by the devil.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Old Testament prophets like Joel looked forward to a day when God would give the Spirit freely to all people (see Joel 2:28). John baptized with water but spoke of Jesus as the One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. It is through Jesus that God's Spirit is poured out!



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Parachute Play

SUPPLIES: parachute, large bedsheet (optional)

Have kids hold on to part of the edge of the parachute (or bedsheet) and move it up and down. Kids can take turns going under the parachute and then coming back out.

In our story today, we're going to hear about someone who went under the water and then came back out, just like you went under the parachute and came back out. When He came back out, God said that person, Jesus, was His Son!

Our Wonder Truth today is JESUS IS GOD'S SON.

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

JESUS—*Cross hands over your heart.*

IS GOD'S—*Point up.*

SON—*Put arms in a semi-circle above your head (like a sun).*



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LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **Father God, thank You for speaking to us in Your big story. We ask that Your Holy Spirit help us understand how amazing Jesus, Your Son, is. Help us know that because Jesus came to us, we can be part of Your family. Thank You for loving us and making us Your very own kids. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible.

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible special? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 303-307

John Baptizes Jesus

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

The Son is the exact likeness of God.

— Colossians 1:15

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **What does our Word of Wonder tell us about Jesus?** (*He is the image of God.*)
- **Do you know who else is made in the image of God?** (*Us!*)