



UNIT 19 | SESSION 2 | MARCH 7-8, 2020

4th-5th Lesson

John Was Born

Bible Passage: Luke 1

Story Point: John was born to prepare the way for Jesus.

Key Passage: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.” John 1:1-2

Christ Connection: John would point people to Jesus, and they would praise God for keeping His promise to send the Savior.

**KID CONNECT:
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
20 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Some of the last words of the Lord recorded in the Old Testament are found in Malachi 4: “Look, I am going to send you the prophet Elijah ... he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers” (v. 5-6). The Book of Malachi was written more than 400 years before Jesus was born. For centuries, God’s people did not hear from Him. They were back in their homeland but were subject to other ruling nations. Eventually, the Romans took over.

The Roman emperor installed Herod as a leader over Judea and surrounding regions such as Samaria and Galilee. To gain the people’s favor, King Herod replaced Zerubbabel’s temple in Jerusalem with a beautiful marble temple constructed by 10,000 workers. This was the temple in which Zechariah, a priest from the family of Abijah, served the Lord. This was the temple in which God, through the angel Gabriel, broke His silence after so many years.

Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, were both “righteous in God’s sight” (Luke 1:6), living by faith in God’s promise to send a Messiah. Like Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 18, they were getting along in years and did not have any children. Elizabeth’s barrenness was a point of disgrace for her among the community (Luke 1:25) and God graciously answered this couple’s prayers.

An angel appeared to Zechariah in the temple sanctuary and delivered good news: “Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son.” Echoing Malachi’s prophecy, the angel declared this son would “turn the hearts of fathers to their children” (Luke 1:17).

For his doubting, Zechariah was rendered mute until the promise came to pass. When John was born, Zechariah could speak again. He praised God and prophesied. John was born to prepare the way for Jesus. John would point people to Jesus, the Savior God promised.

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

Play intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share their routines for getting ready for school in the morning. What happens if they aren’t ready on time?

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

LARGE GROUP GAME

(CG + SFX: GAME INTRO SLIDE + MUSIC, SFX: FUN MUSIC)

DRINK UP, BABY

(3 Baby Bottles Filled with Gatorade, 3 Chairs)

SAY • Hey guys! It’s time for another game! This time, I need 3 contestants BUT they need to be Small Group Leaders. Trust me kids, you’ll be glad about this! *Choose 3 Small Group Leaders and have them sit down in chairs on stage. Give each SGL a baby bottle filled with Gatorade.* Ok, this game is called Drink Up, Baby! The rules are simple – when I say GO, you each will have 1 minute to drink as much of your Gatorade baby bottle as possible. Whoever drinks the most after 1 minute wins! And if you are a super awesome baby and happen to be the first to finish your entire bottle before time runs out, then you – of course - *automatically* win! Got it? I hope you babies are thirsty! Ready, set, GO!

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: MOVIN ME, VIDEO: THIS IS LIVING NOW)

SAY • Let’s worship God!

INTRODUCE THE SESSION

(CG: AWKWARD FAMILY PHOTOS – BABY EDITION)

(No Supplies Needed)

SAY • Hey, everyone! Welcome back to KidCity! We started last week talking about photos and if you were here, we got to see some pretty awkward big family photos. Well, now I have a new question for you. How many of you had your photo taken when you were a baby? *[Pause for kids to respond.]* How many of you are embarrassed of some of these baby pictures? *[Pause for kids to respond.]* Yeah, probably all of us. The problem is babies are too young to understand what it means to be in a photo. So they oftentimes just end up ruining the picture that Mom & Dad had planned because they cry the whole time or throw a tantrum. Like these – check it out.

Show Awkward Family Photos – Baby Edition. Respond accordingly to each one.

All this talk of babies makes me think of a Bible story. God had big plans for a baby boy and sent an angel to tell about those plans. But the baby's dad didn't believe at first! I'll tell you all about it.

GIANT TIMELINE

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY • Through the entire Old Testament, the history of God's people pointed forward to the time when God would fulfill His promise to send a Rescuer. We learned last week that Jesus' family line proved He is the Messiah. This week, we will learn about a special baby who would come right before Jesus did to prepare the way for Jesus.

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: JOHN WAS BORN, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT, CG: QUESTION 1, CG: QUESTION 2)

(Bible)

Show the Bible story video "John Was Born."

SAY • At the very end of the Old Testament, the last prophet, Malachi, wrote about a messenger who would prepare the way for the Messiah. John was the messenger whom God had promised through Malachi.

Zechariah did not believe the angel Gabriel at first. Zechariah knew that he and his wife were too old to have children. However, one wonderful thing about God is that He has power over all things. Nothing can stop His plans, and He often does things no one else could do to prove His power and love.

Despite their old age, Zechariah and Elizabeth had a baby just as God promised. God is faithful, and all His promises come true. John was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit even

as a baby! God had plans for John, and John's birth was like a small glimpse at the birth of the Messiah still to come. John was born to prepare the way for Jesus.

QUESTION 1: What does this story teach us about God?

SAY • God's people hadn't heard from God for 400 years, but God didn't forget His plan to save people from their sin. God broke His silence by sending an angel to speak to Zechariah.

QUESTION 2: What part did John play in God's plan?

SAY • John was born to prepare the way for Jesus. John would grow up and remind people about the Messiah God had promised to send. John was going to get people ready to meet Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible)

Show the key passage slide. Open the Bible and lead the kids to read John 1:1-2 together.

SAY • Our key passage comes from the very start of the Gospel of John. The writer of this book was not the same John from our story today, but one of Jesus' closest friends and disciples. He explained that Jesus is God and was with God in the beginning. That means that even before Jesus was born as a baby, He already existed eternally with God the Father and God the Spirit.

CHRIST CONNECTION

(CG: CHRIST CONNECTION)

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

SAY • God used the lives of Zechariah, Elizabeth, and John to bring glory to Himself. Elizabeth should have been too old to have a baby, but God allowed her to have John anyway. When Zechariah believed God's word, he praised God. John was born to prepare the way for Jesus. John would point people to Jesus, and they would praise God for keeping His promise to send the Savior. Ultimately, Jesus died on the cross and rose again to glorify God and make the way for us to be saved to glorify God as well.

PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUP

Bible Passage: Luke 1

Story Point: John was born to prepare the way for Jesus.

Key Passage: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.” John 1:1-2

Christ Connection: John would point people to Jesus, and they would praise God for keeping His promise to send the Savior.

PLANT A SEED

(Cup with Lid or Bag, 1 per kid, Soil, Water, Spoon, Seeds, 1 per kid)

Display the necessary items for planting a seed. You will need a cup with a lid or bag, soil, water, spoon and a seed. Instruct the kids to pour some potting soil into the cup or bag, then add a little water, next the kids can bury the seed in a few inches of soil.

SAY • We had to follow several steps to prepare the container for the seed. We have to put in the right kind of soil, then add some water. Then we can put the seed in and add some more good soil around it to help it grow.

What would happen if we just stuck this seed in the pot without taking time to prepare the pot?

The plant would probably never grow. When planting seeds, we have to think about what the plants need to live. Plants need soil, water, sunlight, and sometimes a little fertilizer. Just like we needed to get the cup ready for the plant with the good soil, John was born to prepare the way for Jesus. John helped the people understand that they needed a Savior. He was planting seeds but only Jesus could make them grow.

John had a big job. He was helping get God’s people ready for the Messiah; they had been waiting for hundreds of years! By sharing the gospel, we can plant seeds for Jesus to grow too.

DISCUSSION

(Bibles)

SAY • God’s plan to rescue sinners was for God the Son to become a human, live the perfect life we failed to live and take the punishment we deserve for our sins by dying on the cross in our place.

- Why do you think God made angels?
- What message does God give us to share with the world?

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Luke 1. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 1:16-17. Explain that the Book of Luke is the third book in the New Testament. Remind kids that Zechariah was at the temple in Jerusalem when an angel appeared to him.

Choose another volunteer to read aloud Luke 1:16-17 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. What did Zechariah do after his son was born?

Prompt kids to recall that Zechariah named the baby John, just as the angel commanded. Then he was able to speak, and he prophesied about John, saying he would go before the Lord and get people ready for Him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Luke 1:67-68.)

2. The name John means “the Lord is gracious.” Where do you see God’s grace in the Bible story or in your own life?

Encourage kids to give examples. Help them recognize God’s grace in giving a son to Zechariah and Elizabeth. Guide them to consider undeserved favor in their lives, especially the gracious gift of salvation through Jesus. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Ex. 34:6.)

3. How can we get people ready for Jesus’ return?

Invite kids to share their ideas. Emphasize that Jesus commanded all believers to make disciples among the nations. (Matt. 28:19) We can all be involved by telling others about Jesus in our own communities, supporting missionaries through prayer or giving, or obeying God’s call to go to the nations. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Pet. 4:7-11.)

PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, praising God for the Bible and asking Him to help kids trust His Word. Thank Him for providing salvation through Jesus. Ask God for opportunities to serve others this week and show them the love of Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

(Key Passage Poster, 1 per group, Beanbag or Small Ball, 1 per group)

Instruct kids to stand in a circle. Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading John 1:1-2 aloud together.

Give one kid a beanbag or small ball. Prompt him to say the first word of the key passage and then toss the beanbag/ball to another player. That kid will say the next word, toss the beanbag/ball to another player who will say the next word, and so on. Encourage kids to toss to players who have not yet received it before a player gets a second turn.

For an added challenge, remove or cover the key passage poster so kids must say the key passage from memory.

SAY • Good work, everyone. Our key passage teaches us about Jesus, who is God the Son. He has always existed. John was born to prepare the way for Jesus. God the Father planned to send His Son to be the Savior of the world.

REFLECTION

(Journal Page - 1 per kid, Pencils)

Ask the kids the following questions:

What does this story teach me about God?

What does this story teach me about myself?

Who can I tell about this story?

If time allows, have kids complete the Journal Page provided with this session.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Older Kids Activity Page, 1 per kid)

Hand each 4th-5th grade kid an Older Kids Activity Page and encourage them to do it at home with their family this week.

OPTIONAL TAKE HOME:

(Preteen Learner Guide Option)

For 5th Graders that would like some additional God Time this week.