

John the Baptist

Lesson Aim: To challenge children to point others to Jesus throughout their entire lives just as John the Baptist did.

PROPHETS AND PROMISES PART 2

THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, & THE WAY

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The God of Peace

THE WORD

Bible Story: Luke 1:16-17, 41, 76-79; Matthew 3:4-6; John 1:29, 34-37

What He has done: God sent John the Baptist to point others to the promised Savior.

Key Verse: Luke 1:76-77

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Isaiah 40:3-5

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given:
and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,
The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6 (KJV)

For your own encouragement this week, read 2 Peter 1:16-17. Please join us in praying this week’s **Teacher’s Prayer:** “Thank you Lord, for each prophecy that points us to You. Help us point the children to You this Christmas. Help us trust Your timing in their lives and in our own. Amen.”

PREPARE

Highlight in your Bible:

- Luke 1:16-17, 41, 76-79;
- Matthew 3:4-6;
- John 1:29, 34-37
- Isaiah 40:2-5

Read:

- Teacher’s Guide
- At-A-Glance

TEACHER TIP

Complete THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, and THE WAY. If time allows, choose a Got Time? activity or create your own activity to illustrate the Bible Story, the Aim, or the Bible Memory Verse.

Resources: The additional resources referred to in this lesson and supplemental materials are available at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net. To be a resource yourself, click on the Teacher’s Blog tab to share your ideas with teachers worldwide.

PRESET

THE WELCOME

- Getting Started— Paper, floor tape or chalk

THE WORSHIP

- Advent Scripture Reading—John 1:6-9
- Bible Memory Verse Song—“For Unto Us”
- Advent Candle Lighting Ceremony: Table or stand, wreath of greenery with four candles, center candle, matches, Bible
- Other related music
- Worship Illustration or Storybook Lesson 50

THE WORD

- Golden Bowl—pencils & note cards
- Bibles, highlighters
- Timeline—The Birth of Jesus (Circa 0 A.D.)
- Map—Bethany, Israel
- Conceal the Bible Story and Christ Connection Scripture references to be unveiled during THE WORD and THE WAY.

THE WAY

- Daily Way Lesson 50
- Treasure Treat—ASK ME ABOUT JOHN THE BAPTIST sticker

GOT TIME?

Honey, bread, drinks, napkins, plates, cups, empty bottle, sand, heavy tape, cardboard, white craft foam, pencils, black permanent markers or pens, white feathers, wide ribbon, scissors, hole punch, tacky glue, glitter, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, chalkboard and chalk, or dry erase board and marker, or large paper and pencil, large ball, permanent marker



1. THE WELCOME

(10 minutes)

Getting Started

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's **Meet & Greet Question: What is your favorite Christmas sign?**

GAME: PREPARE A PATH

PURPOSE: Children will prepare paths for each other in a race as they are introduced to John the Baptist's role as the one who prepared people for Jesus' coming.

SUPPLIES: Paper, floor tape or chalk

PREPARE: Use the floor tape or chalk to mark a start and end line on opposite sides of the play area.

ASK> How quickly can you prepare a straight path for your friends? Let's find out by having a race! Some of you will lay a path that your partner must walk on to complete a race.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Form two teams. On each team, children find partners and form pairs.
2. Pairs each decide who will be the Walker and who will be the Path Layer.
3. Give two sheets of paper to each Path Layer.
4. First pairs on each team stand at the start line.
5. On your signal, each Path Layer places a sheet of paper on floor at the feet the Walker.
6. Walkers steps onto the papers.
7. Path Layers continue to move the paper from behind the Walker to in front of the Walker to create a moving path. The Walker can only step on the papers and may not touch the floor or ground.
8. When each pair reaches the finished line, the next pair on the team may begin the race.
9. The goal is to be the first team to have all pairs at the finish line.

SAY> Great job preparing the path for your partners. Today we are going to learn about John the Baptist. He is part of the Christmas story because he was born a few months before Jesus. God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus. He didn't make a path for Jesus' feet. He helped people make a path for Jesus to come into their hearts. He prepared them to listen to and follow Jesus. Let's find out more about John the Baptist.

Option: Limited Space? Let each pair make a fun directional sign using paper and assorted craft supplies. Children may copy a real sign or make up their own. Tell children that John the Baptist's words were like the directions on a sign. He told people how to live to get ready for Jesus' coming.



2. THE WORSHIP

(15 minutes)

Worship Theme: The God of Peace

Today we worship the God of Peace. Jesus brings peace between God and anyone who believes in Jesus. He brings peace between all people who believe in Jesus. He gives our hearts the peace that comes from knowing God loves us and we are forgiven. God sent John the Baptist to point people to Jesus. He was chosen to prepare their hearts for Jesus. He told them to repent and ask for God's forgiveness. Let's ask God to search our hearts and show us anything we are doing that is wrong in His eyes. When we ask Him to forgive us for these things, He will do it. (Sing: "Search Me O God" as the offering is collected.)

***Teacher Tip:** At this point in the lesson, you may choose to conduct the Advent Candle Lighting Ceremony located on the next page. It includes the reading of John 1:6-9.

Worship Elements:

Designate a special corner or area for worship.

Select songs that focus on God's forgiveness.

Advent Candle Light Ceremony: The Prophet's Candle

Advent Scripture Reading: John 1:6-9

Lead a prayer to bless the offering: collect offering

Perform Worship Illustration or read Storybook:

- Prophets & Promises Unit 10, Lesson 50

Unit 10 Song Suggestions:

Sheet music and recordings available at

www.childrensministrywarehouse.net.

- Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "For Unto Us"
- "I Bring You Good News"
- "For God So Loved The World"
- "At The Name Of Jesus"
- "Search Me, O God"
- "You Will Seek Me"

Unit 10 Hymn Suggestions:

- "Angels We Have Heard On High"
- "Away In A Manger"

Unit 10 Song Collection Suggestions:

- Worship Jamz Christmas—Worship Jamz
- Shout Praises Kids Christmas

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG



"For Unto Us"

Isaiah 9:6 (KJV)

(Verse)

For unto us a child is born,
unto us a Son is given,
unto us a Son is given,
unto us a Son is given.
And the government shall be
upon His shoulder.

(Chorus)

And His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor,
the Mighty God,
the Everlasting Father,
the Prince of Peace,
the Prince of Peace,
the Prince of Peace,
the Prince of Peace.

(Repeat Verse)

(Repeat Chorus)

For unto us a child is born,
For unto us a child is born,
For unto us a child is born,
unto us...

Sheet music and recordings available at

www.childrensministrywarehouse.net.

THE WORSHIP *continued...*

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Advent Week 3: The Prophet's Candle

Participants: Adult leader, one or two children to light candle and read

Supplies: Table or stand with wreath of greenery with four candles placed in wreath, one white candle (the Christ Candle) in the center of the wreath, matches, Bible opened to John 1:6-9

Prep Steps: None

SAY> Advent means coming—the coming of Jesus. The Advent season helps get our hearts ready to celebrate Christmas. Our Advent Wreath is round; it has no end just as God's love for us has no end.

SAY> Each candle on the Advent Wreath stands for one of the four Sundays before Christmas. The center candle is called the Christ Candle. We will light the Christ Candle on Christmas Eve when we join with many families to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

SAY> Today we light the third candle of Advent, the Prophet's Candle. As we light the Prophet's Candle, think about the way John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus. God sent John the Baptist to prepare the hearts of the people for the coming of God's Son, Jesus. Jesus is also called the Light of the World. (Child lights the third candle.)

SAY> As you look at the candlelight, listen to the prophecy Zechariah made when his son, John the Baptist, was born. (Child or Leader reads John 1:6-9 from the Bible.)

John 1:6-9

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe.

He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

***Teacher Tip:** Close the Advent Candle Lighting Ceremony with song or prayer.

Song suggestion: Sing one verse of "Joy to the World" and have the children think about the way we can prepare room in our hearts to put Jesus first.



3. THE WORD

(5 minutes)

John pointed others to Jesus.

Transition: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children’s focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write their name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God’s Word, let’s go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant. (Read Class Covenant.)

CLASS COVENANT
I will keep my  on my teacher,
my  in control,
my s on God’s Word;
knowing God is my goal.

BIBLE TIMELINE
If a Bible Timeline is available, point to The Birth of Jesus (Circa 0 A.D.). This segment of the Bible Timeline covering Prophets & Promises Units 7-10 spans from Circa 870 B.C through the birth of Christ (Circa 0 A.D.). For Bible Timeline Review information, see GOT TIME?

Last time we learned the angel Gabriel told Mary she would be the mother of God’s Son, Jesus. Today we’ll learn how Jesus’ cousin, John the Baptist, prepared the way for Jesus to come to the world.

John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus from the time he was in his mother’s belly all the way though his entire life. Let’s find out what the Bible says about that.



Let’s play Find It First! Bring out your Bible; keep it right in front of you. (Hand out spare Bibles.) Today’s Scripture verse is behind the curtain. (Or secret door, secret window, etc. Child unveils Bible Story Scripture reference: Luke 1:16-17, 41, 76-79; Matthew 3:4-6; John 1:29, 34-37.) Let’s start with the passages in Luke 1. Let’s see who can Find It First! Ready? Set? Go! (Children race through the pages to find it first. The winner helps others find it.) Let’s highlight our Key Verse: Luke 1:76-77.

Before we read, let’s stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to His Word today. Who’d like to pray that for us? (Child prays aloud.) Be seated.

Let’s read the angel Gabriel’s prophecy about John the Baptist. Remember, a prophecy is a prediction of a future event that comes from God. (Read Luke 1:16-17.)

While Mary was pregnant, she visited her cousin Elizabeth who was also pregnant. Check out how John pointed to Jesus while he was still in his mother’s belly. (Read Luke 1:41.)

Now let’s read Zechariah’s prophecy about his son. (Read Luke 1:76-79.)

Each prophecy about John came true. He told the people to repent and he baptized them in the Jordan River. (If map is available, point to the Jordan River near Bethany, Israel. Read Matthew 3:4-6.) John baptized Jesus there, too. A dove came down from heaven and God’s voice said, “This is My Son. I am very pleased with Him.” That is when John told the people who Jesus was and why He had come. (Read John 1:29, 34-37.)



4. THE WAY

(13 minutes)

We can point others to Jesus.

What did God send John the Baptist to go ahead of Jesus and do? (To prepare the way for Him.) **John told everyone to repent and be baptized to prepare their hearts for Jesus. What does repent mean?** (To turn from wrongdoing and do things God's way.) **What can you do to prepare your heart to grow closer to Jesus?** (Respond.)

Why was John called John the Baptist? (He baptized people in water.) **If someone wanted to repent and get their heart ready for Jesus, John took that person into the Jordan River. Going under the water was like a sign that he or she wanted to be washed clean from sin. Baptism is only a sign, because sins cannot be washed away by water. Who is the only one who can take away our sins?** (Jesus.) **Today, when believers are baptized, it is a sign to the world that Jesus has washed their sins away.**

What were the two names John the Baptist called Jesus? (Son of God, Lamb of God.) **What did John the Baptist tell the people Jesus would do about their sins?** (Jesus would save them from their sins and their sins would be forgiven.) **When John pointed to Jesus and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world," what did the people do?** (They believed in and followed Jesus.) **Everyone sins, so everyone needs to be saved and forgiven by God. What can you tell your friends and family about Jesus?** (Encourage children to share facts they know about Jesus as well as their feelings about their relationship with Jesus and way Jesus has changed their lives.)

CHRIST CONNECTION

Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament and Us

John told the people that he was the voice calling in the desert that Isaiah had described in his prophecy 700 years earlier. Isaiah described how John would prepare the people for Jesus.



FIND IT FIRST > **Everyone place your Bibles closed on your laps.** (Choose a child to unveil Christ Connection Scripture reference: Isaiah 40:3-5.) **Let's see who can Find It First! Ready? Set? Go! Find it and highlight it.** (Read Isaiah 40:3-5.)

Isaiah's prophecy came true when Jesus came to earth. God's salvation means being saved from the punishment of our sins. It means to be completely forgiven by God and to close with Him forever. How did everyone see God's salvation when Jesus came? (Jesus came to save the people from their sins.)

THE WAY *continued...*

GOLDEN BOWL

Revelation 5:8

The Golden Bowl contains names of classmates, a local church leader and a child in another nation.

The Bible says that our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. So I'm going to lift each one of you up to God's throne out loud as you pray for each person silently. Then we'll pray out loud the Lord's Prayer. (Matthew 6:9-13.) Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say out loud and the ones hidden in our hearts.

First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____ (read names in Golden Bowl).

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

TREASURE TREAT



Today, your Treasure Treat is an ASK ME ABOUT JOHN THE BAPTIST sticker. Tell everyone that John pointed people to Jesus as the Son of God who would save the world from sin.

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE



Did anyone bring in their completed Daily Way from last time? (Praise or reward those who returned Daily Way; collect in basket.) Take home this week's Daily Way. (Distribute Lesson 50 Daily Way 5-day Bible study.) Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Return it and place it in our class basket. When we fill the basket, we'll celebrate with a class surprise!

OFFERING OF ART



Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of John the Baptist baptizing people in the Jordan River. The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering to the teacher for display.

PRAYER REQUESTS



As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write individual requests in your teacher's prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG



Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



5. GOT TIME?

If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.



SNACK, GAME AND CRAFT

SNACK: LOCUSTS AND HONEY

PURPOSE: Children will eat a snack while personally connecting to the story.

SUPPLIES: Honey, bread, drinks, napkins, plates, cups

ASK > Who did we learn about today? (John the Baptist.) God sent John the Baptist to help people get their hearts ready for Jesus. John lived a very simple life in the desert. He focused his whole life on telling people how to prepare for Jesus. He wore rough camel fur clothes. He ate locusts and honey. As we eat a honey snack, let's talk about how you prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Distribute the snack and drink.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: "How do you prepare for Christmas?"

GAME: POINT TO JESUS

PURPOSE: Children will say facts they know about Jesus as they realize they can point people to Jesus; just as John the Baptist did.

SUPPLIES: Empty bottle, sand, heavy tape

PREPARE: Fill the empty bottle with sand. Seal the bottle top so the sand can not leak out.

ASK > God sent John the Baptist to do a special job. What was his job? (Prepare the way for Jesus.) When John was still in his mother's belly what did he do when his mother met Jesus' mother? (Leaped in her belly.) Even before John was born, he was pointing people to Jesus. You can point people to Jesus, too. You have been learning many things about Jesus. When the bottle points towards you, tell us one fact you know about Jesus.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Children sit in a circle.
2. Place the bottle in the center of the circle.
3. Choose one child to twist the bottle in the center of the circle so that it spins.
4. When the bottle stops, determine to which child the top of the bottle is pointing.
5. Child states one fact about Jesus. If child is unsure, teacher or other children can help the child.
6. Child spins the bottle to determine which child will take the next turn.

SAY > You can use all of those facts to point people to Jesus. Be sure to tell others what you know about Jesus so they can prepare to celebrate His birth at Christmas, too!

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: PEACEFUL DOVE ORNAMENTS

PURPOSE: To create a Christmas decoration that helps us point others to Jesus as the Prince of Peace.

SUPPLIES: Cardboard, white craft foam (or sturdy paper), pencils, black permanent markers or pens, white feathers, wide ribbon, scissors, hole punch, tacky glue (or hot glue or glue dots), glitter

PREPARE: Draw and cut out dove templates (at least 3-inch body width) from cardboard. Cut the wide ribbon into 10-inch lengths. Write where children can see to copy: **Prince of Peace**

ASK > Why did God send John the Baptist before He sent His Son, Jesus? (So John could help people prepare their hearts for Jesus.) **John pointed people to Jesus so their hearts would be ready for Him. In Luke 1:79 we read that Jesus will “guide our feet into the path of peace.” In our Bible Memory Verse, what is Jesus’ title as prince? (The Prince of Peace.) Jesus brings peace between God and anyone who believes in Jesus. He brings peace between all people who believe in Jesus. He gives our hearts the peace that comes from knowing that God loves us and we are forgiven. John the Baptist’s job was to point people to the Prince of Peace!**

SAY > The white dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The dove with an olive branch in its mouth is the symbol of peace. When John baptized Jesus, a dove came down from heaven to Jesus. Let’s make dove ornaments to help us remember Jesus is the Prince of Peace. You can point to your dove and tell people about Jesus, just as John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Use a dove template and a pencil to trace the outline of the dove onto the white craft foam.
2. Cut out the dove. (Teacher may assist younger children in cutting or pre-cut doves from white craft foam in advance.)
3. Punch a hole in the top of the dove’s back.
4. With a permanent marker write **Prince of Peace** on the body of the dove or on the wide ribbon.
5. Thread the ribbon through the hole in the dove and knot the ends to create a hanger.
6. Draw an eye on the dove with the permanent marker.
7. Glue feathers and glitter onto the dove to decorate.

Option: Instead of feathers, glue balls of white tissue paper to the dove.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

GAME: APPEARING ANGEL

PURPOSE: Children learn the meaning of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse: Isaiah 9:6.

SUPPLIES: Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, chalkboard and chalk, or dry erase board and marker or large piece of paper and pencil

PREPARE: Display the Bible Memory Verse poster

DIRECTIONS:

1. Choose one phrase from the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse from the list below.
2. Draw one line for each letter in the phrase. Include a blank space between each word.
3. Choose a volunteer to guess a letter. If the letter is found in the phrase, write it on every blank where it belongs. If the letter is not in the phrase, draw one part of an angel (such as a robe or a hand).
4. Choose another volunteer to guess a letter.
5. Continue playing until the children have guessed all of the letters and revealed the phrase or until the angel drawing is complete. (Robe, head, hands, feet, smile, eyes, nose, hair, etc.)
6. The goal is to complete the phrase before completing the angel drawing.
7. After the phrase is revealed, use the description below to explain that part of the verse.
8. If time allows, play again using another phrase. Use different phrases in each lesson of this unit.

Phrase

"For unto us a child is born"

"Unto us a Son is given"

"And the government shall be on His shoulders"

"And His name will be called"

"Wonderful Counselor"

"Mighty God"

"The Everlasting Father"

"The Prince of Peace"

Description

Jesus was born as a baby.

God sent His Son to earth to be our Savior.

Jesus will one day rule the world.

There are many names for God

The Holy Spirit will guide us to do things God's way.

God is so strong; He can do anything.

God is our heavenly Father.

Jesus gives us peace in our hearts.

GAME: TOSS-A-VERSE

PURPOSE: Children memorize the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse: Isaiah 9:6.

SUPPLIES: Large ball (inflatable beach ball, soccer ball, etc.), permanent marker

PREPARE: Write the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse on the ball.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Children stand in a circle.
2. One child holds the ball and says the first word of the verse.
3. Child tosses the ball to another child who says the next word.
4. Children toss the ball to each other until they have completed the verse.
5. They can use the verse written on the ball to help them remember the words. Encourage children to learn the verse so they do not need to look at the words on the ball.

***Teacher Tip:** Large group? Divide into one or more teams. Have teams race against each other to complete the game first.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE TIMELINE REVIEW

Review the recent Bible Stories studied to see the continuing story of God and His people. Hang the Bible Timeline on a wall or other visible location. Point to the Bible Timeline and ask the corresponding questions.

Malachi (Circa 430 B.C.)

Malachi was the last prophet to speak before the birth of Jesus. He gave the people God's message that they were robbing Him by not bringing their tithes and offerings to Him.

What is a tithe? (A tithe is ten percent of our money; God commands believers to give it to His church.) **God challenged the people to tithe and see how much God would bless them.**

400 Years of Silence (Circa 400-0 B.C.)

Malachi was the last Old Testament prophet to speak before the birth of Christ. This period is known as the 400 years of silence because there were no new prophecies. Over the previous 800 years, God's people had heard many prophecies from God's prophets, including Isaiah's prophecy about the coming of the Lord and what He would accomplish.

The Birth of Jesus (Circa 0 A.D.)

A.D. stands for Anno Domini, which means "the Year of our Lord." A.D. begins with Jesus' birth and continues until the end of time. Everything written in the law and the prophets led up to the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. God used the angels, Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zechariah, John the Baptist, shepherds, and the heavenly host to fulfill the prophecies about the coming Savior. Sin separates each person from God. So God gave His only Son, Jesus so that whoever believes in Him will have life forever close with God.

How to create a Bible Timeline from Elijah to the Birth of Christ:

1. Print Lesson title or person's name with historical date (whenever available) on a card. Before each lesson, add that new card to the Bible Timeline.
2. Attach card to wall or clothesline in the following order:
Elijah (Circa 870-845 B.C.) > Elisha (Circa 845-800 B.C.) > Joel (Circa 830 B.C.) > Jonah (Circa 781 B.C.) > Amos (Circa 760 B.C.) > Isaiah (Circa 710 B.C.) > Micah (Circa 700 B.C.) > Zephaniah (Circa 630 B.C.) > Jeremiah (Circa 626 B.C.) > Habakkuk (Circa 603 B.C.) > Ezekiel (Circa 593 B.C.) > Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Circa 580 B.C.) > Daniel (Circa 580) > Haggai and Zechariah (Circa 530 B.C.) > Malachi (Circa 430 B.C.) > 400 Years of Silence (Circa 400-0 B.C.) > The Birth of Jesus (Circa 0 A.D.)