

JOHN POINTED TO JESUS

John 3



Jesus and His disciples went out to the Judean countryside to baptize and minister to the people. John was also baptizing people in the same area.

One of John's disciples came to him and said, "Teacher, the one you testified about as the Messiah at the Jordan River is here baptizing people. And everyone is going to him!"

Instead of being jealous, John responded, "You heard me say that I am not the Messiah. I was sent to prepare the way for him."

John also said, "Jesus is like the groom at a wedding. He's the most important man at the event. I'm like the best man, who is glad to stand beside the groom and serve him. I am so happy that Jesus is here. Jesus must become greater, and I must become less important."

In his gospel, John taught other truths about Jesus. John said that Jesus is the one who came from heaven, and that He is above all. Jesus spoke God's words. God the Father loves His Son, Jesus, and has given everything to Him. God's anger toward sin remains on those who does not believe in Jesus, but whoever believes in Jesus has eternal life.

Christ Connection: John pointed people to believe

in Jesus as the Messiah. When people believe in Jesus as the Messiah, they receive eternal life and can point others to believe in Jesus too!



1 WELCOME TIME

Greet each preteen 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.

- **Have you ever helped someone by telling them how to get to a certain place?**
- **What did you do to help guide them in the right direction?**

2 SESSION STARTER

OPTION 1: WHAT AM I?

Before the session, create a list of *Who am I?* riddles varying from simple to challenging. Form kids into two teams and direct them to sit together. Call out a riddle and challenge team one to work together to answer the riddle within thirty seconds. If they answer correctly, they earn one point for their team. If they answer incorrectly or cannot come up with an answer, allow team two to try to answer the riddle within thirty seconds. If they answer correctly, they earn one point for their team. Continue calling out riddles alternating between each team. Increase the difficulty of the riddles as the activity progresses. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins.

SAY “ The clues in the riddles pointed you to specific objects or people. Through today’s Bible story we will see how **JOHN POINTED PEOPLE TO FOLLOW JESUS AS THE MESSIAH**. John told people that Jesus must become greater, and he must become less important. ”

OPTION 2: GOOD NEWS!



Direct kids to spread out around the room. Ask for one volunteer and direct the rest of the kids to close their eyes. Once all kids have closed their eyes, instruct the volunteer to move to an area of the room and call out, *Jesus is the Messiah!* Challenge all kids to try to slowly and carefully make their way to where they hear the voice, without opening their eyes. After a minute or two, direct kids to open their eyes and see how close they got to the kid calling out. Repeat using another volunteer.

SAY “ John was sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus. He shared the good news that Jesus, the promised Messiah, had finally arrived. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today we are going to hear about how John pointed to Jesus. We'll see that **JOHN POINTED PEOPLE TO FOLLOW JESUS AS THE MESSIAH**. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

Read from John 3.**•What does this story teach us about God?**

John said that Jesus must become more important and that he must become less important. John wanted all the focus to be on Jesus, the long-awaited, promised Messiah. John was a messenger sent to prepare the way for the Savior of the world, Jesus. Jesus alone deserves all the attention and praise. Only He can save us from our sins and give us eternal life.

•Who did John compare himself to?

John compared himself to the groom's friend at a wedding to show that he was not the Messiah but the one who was to joyfully point others to Him. **JOHN POINTED PEOPLE TO FOLLOW JESUS AS THE MESSIAH**.

Form groups of two or three and practice retelling the Bible story in your own words. Think of someone you could share the story with this week.

2 MISSIONS MOMENT

Explain that a missionary named Josh uses simple conversation hooks to move from talking about everyday things to talking about God and His love for people. By living among the people in Central Asia, Josh has learned what people of this culture might respond to as he tells them the good news about Jesus. Josh says that the meaning of peoples' names in Central Asia provide a great opportunity for him to point to biblical truths because their names often have a special meaning.

Talk about how spending time talking with someone might be the best way to have opportunities to talk about Jesus. Name a conversation topic, such as favorite foods. Ask kids how they could use a conversation about their favorite foods to tell someone about God and His Son, Jesus. (God provides food for us. God helps things grow that are needed to make our favorite foods.) Then, if time allows, introduce another topic, such as traveling or a place you haven't visited but would like to.

Thank God for missionaries like Josh who lead mission teams and help start new churches. Pray that the teams will be able to tell many people in Central Asia about Jesus.



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

Jesus came to earth as the Messiah to save sinners. God invites us to trust Jesus as Savior and have eternal life through Him. Have you trusted Jesus as your Savior?






4 PRAY

Thank You, Lord, for sending Jesus as the Messiah, our Rescuer, the One who saves us from our sins. Help us to point others to Jesus so that they, too, can have eternal life with You. In Jesus' name, amen.

THE GOSPEL

GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

The gospel is the good news—the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use Scripture and the guide provided below to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

				
GOD RULES	WE SINNED	GOD PROVIDED	JESUS GIVES	WE RESPOND
Ask: "Who is in charge at home?" Explain that because God created everything, He is in charge of everything. Read Revelation 4:11.	Ask: "Have you ever done something wrong?" Tell kids that everyone sins, or disobeys God. Our sin separates us from God. Read Romans 3:23.	Explain that God is holy and must punish sin. God sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment we deserve. Read John 3:16.	Ask: "What is the best gift you've ever received?" Say that Jesus took our punishment for sin by giving His life, and He gives us His righteousness. God sees us as if we lived the perfect life Jesus lived. This is the best gift ever! Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.	Explain that everyone has a choice to make. Ask: "Will you trust Jesus as your Savior and Lord? You can turn from self and sin and turn to Jesus." Read Romans 10:9-10.



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- If we are made in God's image, why do we still sin?
- If you have trusted in Jesus as your Savior, you can share the good news about Jesus with others. Who can you tell?

2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Distribute Bibles. Guide preteens to open their Bibles to John. Choose a volunteer to read aloud John 3:23-24.

Remind preteens that these verses give us a glimpse into what John would go through later in his life. John boldly followed the Lord and proclaimed the good news that Jesus had come. Some people did not like that **JOHN POINTED PEOPLE TO FOLLOW JESUS AS MESSIAH**, so they later threw him in jail. Eventually, John would be killed for telling people about Jesus. There are many people in the world today who are in danger because they follow Jesus and tell others about Him. We should pray for these Christ-followers as they share the good news of Jesus, even at risk to their own lives.

Choose another volunteer to read aloud John 3:23-24 again. Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. What does Messiah mean?

The title Messiah means Savior or Anointed One. God promised to send a Savior. The prophets of the Old Testament told of this Messiah's coming, and now Jesus, the Promised Messiah and Savior of the world, had finally arrived. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Titus 3:4-7.)

2. What did John mean when he said he had to become less important?

The ultimate purpose in our lives is to point other people to Jesus, not to draw attention to ourselves and our good works. John desired for all the attention to be put on Jesus and not on him. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matthew 6:1.)

3. Why is it important to tell other people about Jesus?

If we know Jesus as our Savior, we have good news to share! Jesus came to save people from their sins and have eternal life. We need to be like John and share the good news, pointing people to Jesus, the Messiah. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Romans 1:16.)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Did Jesus ever sin?

No, Jesus never sinned.



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Instruct kids to open their Bibles to 1 John 3:5. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together. Before this activity, write out the words to the key passage on individual pieces of paper. Tape the words to the verse on the floor in order, in a hopscotch pattern. Lead the kids to jump from paper to paper, saying each word to the key passage as they jump.

2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, thanking God for sending Jesus as the Messiah and asking Him to help us share this good news with others.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

GUESS THE BOOK

Before this activity, prepare clues about several books of the Bible such as, This is the first book of the Bible (Genesis); This book comes after the four Gospels in the New Testament (Acts); or This book is a collection of poems and songs (Psalms). Direct kids to line up, one behind the other. Challenge the first kid in line to listen closely as you read the clue and then say the name of the book you are describing. If he is correct, direct him to move to the back of the line. If he guesses incorrectly, direct him to take a seat. Continue until there is one winner. Repeat as time allows, inviting all kids who got out the first round to come back and play again.