

Bible Study lesson - John the (Baptist) Witness

For 400 years, there was silence.

- No angel.
- No prophet.
- No miracle.
- No message.

And then...

An angel appeared to tell a man named Zechariah that his wife, Elizabeth, was going to have a baby. That baby was John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was a bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

(Stage Notes: Have two children come up - one should hold the Old Testament sign on one side of the bridge and the other should hold the New Testament sign on the opposite side. Have a child be "John" and stand on the bridge.)

Say, The Old Testament closed with a prophecy that John would come.

Read Malachi 4:5-6. This talks about someone like Elijah coming.

The New Testament opens with a fulfillment of that prophesy. All four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) talk about John in some way.

We will look at the book of John. (Have kids find John in their Bibles. The child portraying John can sit down.)

What do you already know about John the Baptist? (He ate grasshoppers! He ate honey. He wore itchy camel's hair clothing.)

Today, we are going to learn some more things about him.

Read John 1:1-8.

- In verse 6 it says John came as a witness. So, instead of John the Baptist, maybe he should really be called John the Witness!
- If you read all of Chapter 1, there are a lot of "nots" in there. In verses 8, 20, 21, and 27, John wants it to be clear that he's not the Messiah, a prophet, or

anything like that. In fact, in verse 27, he says he's not even worthy to loosen the sandle strap of Jesus. Sounds like John is humble.

- In verse 21, the religious leaders asked him who he was. Let's see how he responded. Read John 1:21-23. John said he's a voice.
- Read John 3:30. This really sums up who John is. He wanted Jesus to increase and himself to decrease.

John understood what he was here for.

He understood the PLAN.

From the very beginning, God had a plan to send Jesus. It's also His PLAN that the "Light" mentioned in John 1 (understanding of who Jesus is) would spread by the witness of people.

Have you ever looked out your window at night when it's storming and seen a lightning bolt light up the sky? It's like you can see everything in that moment!

God's plan to spread the Light of understanding about who Jesus is and salvation could have been like that. Jesus comes - and BOOM - everybody knows who He is instantly. But, that was not His PLAN. His plan is for the light to spread by human witness!

Read 1:35-37. John saw Jesus walking by. He told the two men standing with him, "That's Him! The Lamb of God." Immediately, those two men followed Jesus! They didn't all of a sudden see Jesus and know who He was. It was John's words (witness) that helped them see who Jesus was and follow Him.

Did you know that you're also a witness? And, like John, you're a bridge too!

(Stage Notes: Have the child with the Old Testament sign flip it to the side that says LOST. Have the child with the New Testament sign flip it to the side that says SAVED. Now have a random child come and stand on the bridge. Have several kids come to the LOST side of the bridge and hold unlit candles or battery operated ones switched off. Light the candle of the child on the bridge.)

Say, Do these kids have the light (are their candles lit?) No. This child on the bridge has the light. He can be a witness just like John - with the very same message, "Jesus is the Messiah, God's Son. He came to pay for your sins. You can believe that and trust Him as your Savior." (Have each child with an unlit candle walk up onto the bridge

single file and get their candle lit by the child on the bridge and move down to the SAVED side of the bridge.)

Ask, Do they have the light now? Yes. It was because of ___'s sharing the light (witness) that now they are here (on the saved side of the bridge).

Read John 17:20. Jesus prayed for those who would believe by their word, in other words by hearing about Jesus.

John understood the PLAN. Will you be a part of the PLAN? Will you be a witness?

(Stage Notes: Allow all the kids to walk across the bridge to line up to leave.)