

The Baptism of Jesus Christ

Purpose

To help the children want to keep their baptismal covenants.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Matthew 3:13–17; John 3:5; 2 Nephi 31:4–10, 17–21; Mosiah 18:8–17; and Doctrine and Covenants 33:15. Then study the lesson and decide how you want to teach the children the scripture account (see “Preparing Your Lessons,” p. vi, and “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii).
 2. Additional reading: John 1:29–34, Doctrine and Covenants 20:37, and *Gospel Principles*, chapter 20.
 3. Select the discussion questions and enrichment activities that will involve the children and best help them achieve the purpose of the lesson.
 4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible or a New Testament for each child.
 - b. A Book of Mormon.
 - c. Fourth Article of Faith chart (65004).
 - d. Picture 7-7, John the Baptist Baptizing Jesus (Gospel Art Picture Kit 208; 62133).
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Suggested Lesson Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Attention Activity

Have two children come to the front of the class, face each other, and hold hands above their heads to form an area the other children can walk under. Explain that these children represent a very important gate. Tell the children that this gate is the entrance to the strait and narrow path that leads to eternal life. Have a child read 2 Nephi 31:17. Explain that one of the first steps to eternal life is going through the gate (being baptized). Have the children walk through the gate.

Scripture Account

Show the picture of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus. Teach the account as found in the scriptures listed in the “Preparation” section. (For suggested ways to teach the scripture account, see “Teaching from the Scriptures,” p. vii.)

Discussion and Application Questions

Study the following questions and the scripture references as you prepare your lesson. Use the questions you feel will best help the children understand the scriptures and apply the principles in their lives. Reading the references with the children in class will help them gain insights into the scriptures.

- Who baptized Jesus? (Matthew 3:13.)
- Why did John the Baptist hesitate to baptize Jesus? (Matthew 3:14.)
- Why did Jesus want to be baptized? (Matthew 3:15; 2 Nephi 31:7, 9.)

- Why do we need to be baptized? (John 3:5.) What does *immersion* mean? Why must we be put completely under the water when we are baptized? (3 Nephi 11:26–28.)
- What happened right after Jesus was baptized? (Matthew 3:16–17.)
- How do we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? (D&C 33:15.)
- How did you feel when you were baptized? How did you feel when you were confirmed and given the gift of the Holy Ghost?
- What did you promise when you were baptized? What does Heavenly Father promise us? (Mosiah 18:8–13; D&C 20:37.)

Explain that these promises between us and Heavenly Father are the baptismal covenants. When we are baptized, we covenant to:

Become members of Jesus' church.
 Help others.
 Stand as witnesses of Heavenly Father at all times and in all places.
 Serve Heavenly Father and keep his commandments.

If we keep our covenants, Heavenly Father covenants to:

Forgive our sins.
 Give us many blessings.
 Give us daily guidance through the Holy Ghost.
 Give us eternal life. (See *Gospel Principles*, chapter 20.)

- When we go through the gateway of baptism, what are we entering? (2 Nephi 31:17–18.) What must we do after baptism to gain eternal life and be able to live forever with Heavenly Father? (2 Nephi 31:18–20.)

Article of Faith

Show the Fourth Article of Faith chart. Help the children memorize it.

Enrichment Activities

You may use one or more of the following activities any time during the lesson or as a review, summary, or challenge.

1. Write the following questions about baptism and their scripture references on the chalkboard or a piece of paper: Why are we baptized? (D&C 49:13; 2 Nephi 31:18.) How are we baptized? (D&C 20:72–74.) By whom are we baptized? (D&C 20:73.) When are we baptized? (D&C 68:27.) Have the children look up the scriptures and discuss the answers.
2. Write each of the following phrases on a separate piece of paper:
 - For the remission of our sins
 - To become members of the Church
 - So we can receive the gift of the Holy Ghost
 - To be obedient
 - To get on the strait and narrow path

Have the children pass through the gate used at the beginning of the lesson. As each child goes through, hand him or her one of the papers. Explain that these are reasons why we must be baptized. Discuss with the children how we can keep our baptismal covenants.

3. Using the picture of a child being baptized (62018) and the picture of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus, tell about your own baptism or have a child tell about his or her baptism.
4. Help the children memorize 2 Nephi 31:20.
5. Arrange for a group of children to sing “Baptism” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 100), or sing or read the words with the class.

Conclusion

Testimony	Bear testimony of the importance of baptism and that baptism is the gate to the strait and narrow path that leads to eternal life. Some of the children may also want to bear their testimonies about their own baptisms.
Suggested Home Reading	Suggest that the children study Matthew 3:13–17 at home as a review of this lesson. Invite a child to give the closing prayer.