



STORY FROM...
Matthew 3, 4 Mark 1
Luke 3, 4 John 1

Baptism & Temptation

◀ **REVIEW PREVIOUS STORIES** *(Guide the group as they give an overview of previous stories and retell the last story)*

▼ **TELL THE SCENE** *(Don't just read it—know it and bring it to life!)*

SCENE 1: Baptism

God sent a messenger named John to tell people to get ready because the Messiah was coming. John was a distant cousin of Jesus, born just six months before him. He was a rugged man who lived in the wilderness, ate locusts and wild honey, and wore clothes made out of camel hair.

John boldly challenged the Jews, *“Don't just say that you love God—prove it with your life. Turn from your sins and turn to God!”*

He became known as John the Baptizer as he dunked those who had confessed their sins in the Jordan River. Baptism was a symbol of being washed clean from your sins and choosing a new way of living.

When Jewish leaders asked John if he was the Messiah, he responded, *“No! But someone is coming soon who is far greater than me—I'm not worthy to untie his sandals or even to be his slave. You see... I baptize with water, but he will baptize with God's Spirit!”*

Soon after that Jesus came to be baptized. When John saw him he said, *“I'm the one who needs to be baptized by you.”*

But Jesus insisted, so John baptized him in front of the crowds. When Jesus came out of the water, God's Spirit came down from the sky—it looked like a dove floating down, and it rested on him. Then a voice from heaven said, *“You are my son who I love—you bring me great joy!”*

▲ **RETELL THE SCENE** *(This may seem redundant, but it is very effective in helping the listeners own the story)*

▼ **DIALOGUE** *(These questions are a good start for you to draw out the group's observations about the story)*

- What do we learn about John from this scene?
- What was John's message?
- Why do you think people came to be baptized by John?
- What do we learn about Jesus from this scene?

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SCENE 2: Temptation

After leaving the Jordan River, Jesus was led by God's Spirit to go into the wilderness. There, Satan, one of the angels that had rebelled against God, tempted him for forty days and forty nights. During that entire time, Jesus didn't eat anything and became very hungry.

Satan tried to deceive Jesus saying, *"Since you're God's Son, why don't you turn these rocks into loaves of bread to eat?"*

Jesus answered him, *"No—When God spoke to Moses he said, 'People need more than bread to live—they must find their life in the words of God.'"*

Then, Satan took Jesus to the top of the tallest building in Jerusalem and said, *"If you are God's Son, jump off! Your sacred writings say, 'God will send his angels to catch you, and you won't even hit the ground!'"*

Jesus replied, *"Moses also wrote, 'Do not even try to test God.'"*

Next, Satan took Jesus to the peak of a huge mountain. He showed Him all of the nations of the world in their brilliance. He said to Jesus, *"I will give you all of this—anything you want—if you'll kneel down and worship me."*

Jesus responded, *"Get away from me, Satan! It's commanded, 'Put God above everything else and only worship him!'"*

Satan went away and angels came and took care of Jesus. At this time, he was about thirty years old. Throughout Jesus' life, he never sinned or rebelled against God. He always chose to do what was good and right and true.

Not long after that, John saw Jesus coming toward him and yelled out, *"Look! There is God's Passover Lamb—he'll take away the sins of the world! God showed me he's the Messiah we've been waiting for."*

As Jesus walked along the sea, he told some of John's followers, *"Come and follow me!"* From then on, Jesus surrounded himself with a few close followers, called disciples, showing them how to live in the ways of God.

▲ **RETELL THE SCENE** *(This may seem redundant, but it is very effective in helping the listeners own the story)*

▼ **DIALOGUE** *(These questions are a good start for you to draw out the group's observations about the story)*

- **Where have we seen Satan or evil tempt a person in the stories before?**
How did that person respond?

- **How did Jesus respond in this scene to Satan's temptations?**
Resisted, quoted God's words to Satan

- **In your own words, what was Satan tempting Jesus with?** (3 things)

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SCENE 3: Disciples

Not long after that, John saw Jesus coming toward him and yelled out, *“Look! There is God’s Passover Lamb—he’ll take away the sins of the world! God showed me he’s the Messiah we’ve been waiting for.”*

As Jesus walked along the sea he told some of John’s followers, *“Come and follow me!”*

From then on Jesus surrounded himself with a few close followers, called disciples, showing them how to live in the ways of God.

Then Jesus traveled throughout the area meeting in market places, homes and Jewish synagogues, teaching people God’s ways. He brought a new message to them saying, *“The Kingdom of God has come—now turn from your sins and turn to God!”*

Jesus healed people with every kind of sickness and disease. News spread quickly about him and huge crowds began following him wherever he went. People traveled from miles away to be near him and see the amazing miracles he performed.

▲ **RETELL THE SCENE** *(This may seem redundant, but it is very effective in helping the listeners own the story)*

▼ **DIALOGUE** *(These questions are a good start for you to draw out the group’s observations about the story)*

- **Why did John say, “Look! There is God’s Passover Lamb”?**
- **What details do you remember about the first Passover lamb from our previous stories?**
- **Why do you think he was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah?**

- **Why do you think crowds of people wanted to be near Jesus?**

- **Who were the disciples? What was Jesus teaching and showing them?**

- **What do you think Jesus meant when he said, “the Kingdom of God has come”?**

- **What do we learn about Jesus from this story (all three scenes)?**
*He never rebelled against God. He is like God. God called him his son who he loves.
He has amazing powers. He knows the writings of his people—the Hebrews.
People wanted to be near him. He taught in new ways.*

◆ **APPLICATION** *(Optional questions that also work well in smaller groups)*

- What did you notice from the story for the first time?
- What questions do you have about the story? What do you wonder about?
- How did the story challenge or encourage you?

- How do you think you would have responded to Jesus?
- What does it mean to be tempted? What can we be tempted by?
- Which one of the three temptations would be the toughest for you resist right now? Why?