

John Baptizes Jesus

(Mark 1:1-11)

Pre-Session Warm Up

Do you know why you take a bath? So you can clean your outside. Well, today we're going to learn how to get clean on the inside.

Higgledy Piggledy Needs a Bath

Goal: Decide if Higgledy Piggledy is dirty on the outside or the inside.

Materials:

- Clear plastic bottle (1 or 2 qt)
- Tape a construction paper face to the rim of the bottle.
- Cut an opening into the face to fit over the mouth of the bottle.
- Fill the bottle $\frac{3}{4}$ full with clean water
- Assorted food colors
- Wash basin
- Wash cloths
- Container with dirt, make into mud
- Sponge clipped to a clothes pin
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of bleach

Procedure:

1. Show children the clean, clear water inside Higgledy Piggledy and tell them that this represents her insides.
2. Read a scenario from the list below and ask the children if Higgledy Piggledy's action made her dirty on the outside or on the inside.
3. Let the child who answers come up and either apply dirt to her outside with a muddy sponge or "feed" her a drop of food coloring. (Note: letting the kids use 3 different food colors will make the water gray and dirty looking, which is what you want.)

Scenarios:

1. Higgledy Piggledy was playing tag and she slipped and fell in the mud.
2. Higgledy Piggledy was mad at her brother so she took his favorite toy and broke it.
3. Higgledy Piggledy and her friends were rolling down a hill and got grass stains and dirt all over them.
4. Higgledy Piggledy and her friends made a neat hideout under some bushes, but to get into it they had to crawl through the dirt and under some branches.
5. Higgledy Piggledy and her friend didn't want to play with another girl, so they hid when they saw her coming.
6. There was a girl that Higgledy Piggledy didn't like so she and her friends called her mean names and played mean tricks on her whenever they saw her.
7. Higgledy Piggledy and her friends played all afternoon in the creek digging in the mud to find pretty stones and trying to catch minnows and tadpoles.
8. Mother said that Higgledy Piggledy must play in her yard today, but when Mother wasn't looking, she snuck over to her friend's house.
9. Higgledy Piggledy told a lie about her brother so that he would get in trouble.

Discussion:

Higgledy Piggledy is really dirty, isn't she? What can she do to get clean on the outside? [Teacher, let the kids respond.] She could take a bath or put on clean clothes. [Teacher, with a wash basin and a clean sponge, give Higgledy Piggledy a "bath".]

But Higgledy Piggledy is still really dirty on the inside, isn't she! What kinds of things did she do to get so dirty on the inside? [Teacher, let the kids respond.] She was mean to her brother, told a lie, was mean to her friends, and disobeyed her mom.

When we do things that make us dirty on the inside, do we like to tell others what we did? No, we want to hide, or to keep it a secret. And sometimes we try to blame others.

What can she do to get clean on the inside? [Teacher, let the kids respond.] Once we are dirty on the inside, we can't make ourselves clean. There's only one way to get cleaned up on the inside. Do you know how to do that? Only God can make us clean on the inside. The Bible says...

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

When we ask Jesus to forgive us for all the wrong things we do, he forgives us and cleanses us from all the sinful things we have done. [Teacher, add the bleach to Higgledy Piggledy.]

Each of us is born with a "want to" to do things our own way rather than God's way. But when we do things that are un-godly, we call that sin. God sees our heart attitude. He knows when we have bad thoughts. He hears every word we say, so He hears when we say unkind things to people. And, God sees everything we do, so He sees us when we do mean things to people.

If we are really sorry for our sins, we can ask Jesus to forgive us and God the Holy Spirit cleans us on the inside. Then He helps us to stop doing wrong things and makes us want to live our lives in a way that is pleasing to God.

If you have asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins, can other people tell if you are clean on the inside? No! Only God can see inside your heart and know for sure if you really are forgiven of your sins.

What is a way that we can show people what happened inside of us? How can you show others that you have asked Jesus to forgive you and clean you on the inside? That's what baptism is all about.

Has anyone here been baptized? Why did you get baptized? We get baptized to show others that you have asked Jesus into your life to be your Savior and your Lord. He saves you when He forgives you of your sins. Then if you make Him your Lord, you will follow His example and do what He wants you to do. So, if you've made Jesus both your Savior and your Lord, He wants you to be baptized.

Baptism is like a wedding ceremony. At a wedding the man and the woman promise God that they will be faithful to each other. At a baptism you promise God that you will be faithful to Jesus. That means you promise to follow Him no matter what happens in your life.

Did you know that Jesus got baptized? Let's learn about that from the Bible. Please open your bibles to Mark 1.

Opening Prayer

Father, give us the desire to be clean on the inside as well as the outside. Look into our hearts and see if there is any sin in there that we need to tell You about so that Your Holy Spirit can clean us on the inside. Then help us to want to always live our lives in a way that is pleasing to You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Lesson

[Teacher, review with the children, who John the Baptist was...] An angel had appeared to Zechariah and told him that he and his wife, Elizabeth, were to have a special son and his name was to be John.

They knew that God had a special job for John to do. God had told them that before He sent Jesus, the Messiah, into the world that He wanted John to prepare people's hearts to listen to Jesus when He came.

God had made this plan known to the people through the Prophet Isaiah 700 years before John and Jesus were born.

Mark 1:1-3

This is the Good News about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God. It began just as the prophet Isaiah had written: "Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, and he will prepare your way. ³He is a voice shouting in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the LORD's coming! Clear the road for him!'"

The Prophet Isaiah told the people that God was going to send a messenger ahead to help people get ready for the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

Mark 1:4

This messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven.

John the Baptist was to tell people to get ready because the Lord was on His way! Jesus was going to be here soon and they needed to prepare themselves for His coming.

What would you do if you knew Jesus was on His way? [Teacher, let the children respond.] What would you want to be caught doing if He was to suddenly appear?

Do you think that God knows when you have been naughty? Yes, God sees and hears everything you do or say. He is all knowing. He even knows every thought that you have!

Mark 1:5

All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

Everyone went out to see and hear John. They heard his message. He told them to confess their sins so that they could have their hearts cleansed and ready before Jesus, the Messiah, came.

To confess your sins is just to tell God that you know you are a sinner. You can say, "Lord, I said that bad word." Or, "I was disrespectful to my mom." Or, "I disobeyed my dad." And when you tell Him that you are truly sorry for doing something that displeases Him and you ask Him to forgive you, "*He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" (1 John 1:9)

And the people did realize they were sinners and they confessed their sins. Then John led them into the Jordan River to baptize them.

Baptism shows other people that you have gone to the Lord, confessed your sins and are now cleansed on the inside.

John was helping people prepare their hearts for the coming of Jesus.

Then John told them that Someone greater than he, was coming.

Mark 1:7-8

John announced: "Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I'm not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and untie the straps of his sandals. ⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!"

Who was John talking about? Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior!

Mark 1:9

One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River.

Jesus traveled from his home in Nazareth out to the Jordan River where John was baptizing people.

When Jesus got to the river, His cousin, John, baptized Him.

Have you ever seen someone get baptized? You baptize someone by carefully helping them go under the water and come up again. It is not a game. It is a way to show other people that God has cleaned you on the inside.

Baptism is a symbol of the death and resurrection of Jesus. When you go down into the water it is a picture of your death to your old sinful ways and when you come up out of the water it is a picture that shows people you have been born again. We have a new start in life. God has forgiven you of your sins and filled you with the power of the Holy Spirit so that you can now live your life in a way that brings honor to God.

Mark 1:10-11

As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice from heaven said, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy."

Because Jesus obeyed the Father and was baptized, the Holy Spirit came down upon Him and the Father told Him that He was overjoyed with Him.

Jesus loves each one of us and wants to make each one of us clean on the inside. You can ask God to make you clean on the inside right now if you want to. All you need to do is ask God to forgive you of all the naughty things you have ever done and to make you clean in the inside. As I pray, you pray to God...

Closing Prayer

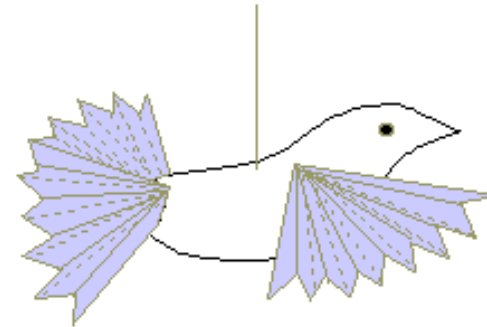
Father, all of us do wrong things that make us dirty on the inside. Some of us have been mean to our friends; some of us have been disrespectful to our moms; or disobedient to our dads. Some of us

have told lies. I ask you to forgive us our sins and to clean us on the inside. Then help us want to do what's right. Fill us with your Holy Spirit so that we might live our lives in a way that brings honor and glory to You. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Dove



Supplies needed:

- White construction paper or card stock
- White tissue paper, 6"x10"
- Ribbon
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Clear tape
- Optional: markers, glue, glitter, wiggly eyes

Procedures;

1. Cut the body out of stiff white paper.
2. Make a slit in the body for the wings.
3. Fold each piece of tissue like an accordion, ½” folds.
4. Insert the folded tissue paper (wings) into the slit in the bird's body.
5. Punch a hole and thread it with the ribbon to hang it up.
6. Optional: decorate the dove with markers or glitter or wiggly eyes.

Game Center**Who or What Am I —**

Before class, write short riddles on individual slips of paper based on this week's lesson. Provide one riddle per child. Put the slips of paper in a container. Let each child draw a riddle. Read it aloud and let the child try guess the answer. If he cannot, let the other children respond.

1. I am what makes you dirty on the inside. What am I? (Sin)
2. I am the Prophet that told people God was going to send a messenger to help people get ready for the coming Messiah. Who am I? (Isaiah)
3. I am the messenger that came to help people prepare for Jesus. Who am I? (John the Baptist)
4. I am the woman that gave birth to John the Baptist. Who am I? (Elizabeth)
5. I am the One who can see and hear everything you think, say, or do. Who am I? (God)

6. I am what you need to do *before* you get baptized. What am I? (Confession, repentance)
7. I am the place that people got baptized. What's my name? (River Jordan)
8. We came out to see and hear John. Who were we? (All the people from Judea)
9. I am the One that John said was coming Who was greater than he. Who am I? (Jesus)
10. I said, "You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy." Who am I? (God the Father)
11. I am the way you can show people that you are clean on the inside. What am I? (Baptism)
12. I am the two pictures or symbols of baptism. (Death and resurrection)

What's the Answer?

Write review questions and answers on separate cards. Hand out the answer cards to the students. Put the question cards in a bag. Pull out a question; give the child with the answer a piece of candy. *Variation:* put the answer cards up on the bulletin or white board and let the children take turns finding the answer.

1. Who was John the Baptist's mother? (Elizabeth)
2. Who prepared the way for Jesus? (John the Baptist)
3. What did John do to help people get ready for Jesus? (Told people to ask forgiveness for their sins)
4. What makes you dirty on the inside? (Sin)

5. What does it mean to confess your sins to God? (Tell Him I am sorry and ask Him to forgive me)
6. Where was John baptizing? (Jordan River)
7. What did John use the water for? (Baptism)
8. During baptism, when they put you under the water and when bring you up out of the water, what is this a picture of? (A picture of death to my old sinful ways and my new life in Christ)
9. Who said, "*You are my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased?*" (God)
10. Why do people get baptized? (To show people that I am clean on the inside and Jesus is my Lord and Savior)
11. Why did Jesus come to earth? (To take the punishment for my sins on the cross)
12. How can you get clean on the inside? (Ask God to forgive me of my sins)

